

MODERN DRUMMER™

The International Magazine Exclusively For Drummers

MAY 1982

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**AYNSLEY
DUNBAR**

**WIN NEIL
PEART'S DRUMS:
See Page 56**

ALEX ACUNA

**BOBBY
COLOMBY:
Past And Present**

DEREK HESS

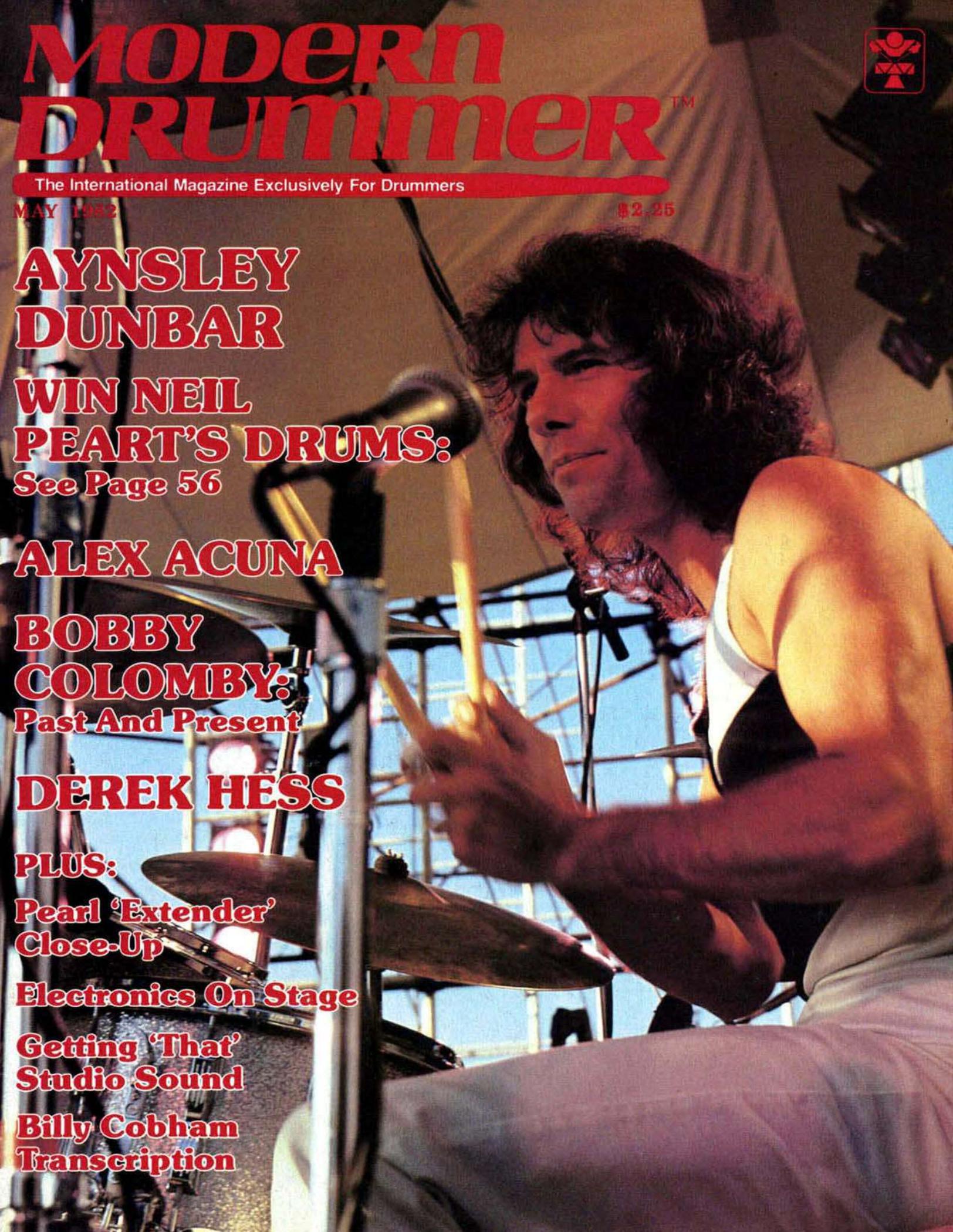
PLUS:

**Pearl 'Extender'
Close-Up**

Electronics On Stage

**Getting 'That'
Studio Sound**

**Billy Cobham
Transcription**





If there's one thing Buddy Rich can't take, it's a drum that can't take it. So the only drum he plays is Ludwig.
Play the drum that can't be beaten. **LUDWIG**

BUDDY vs LUDWIG

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Cover Photo by John Lee

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Currently with the Jefferson Starship, English-born drummer Aynsley Dunbar has played and recorded with such major artists as Frank Zappa, Journey, David Bowie, and John Mayall. He discusses his varied career and explains some of the techniques and philosophies that have helped him to become one of the most respected professionals in the business.
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ALEX ACUNA

Whether playing with polished Las Vegas show bands or with the free and inventive Weather Report, Alex Acuna feels right at home. Alex talks about his background, and how his many influences have come together to form a style which is as versatile as it is unique.
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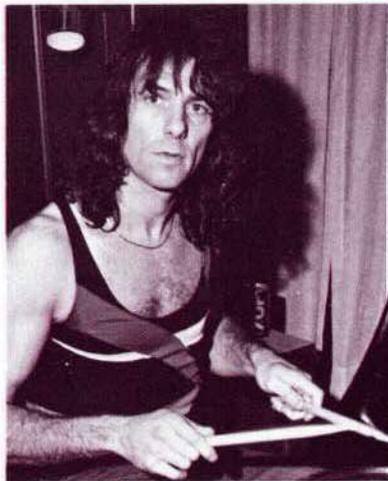
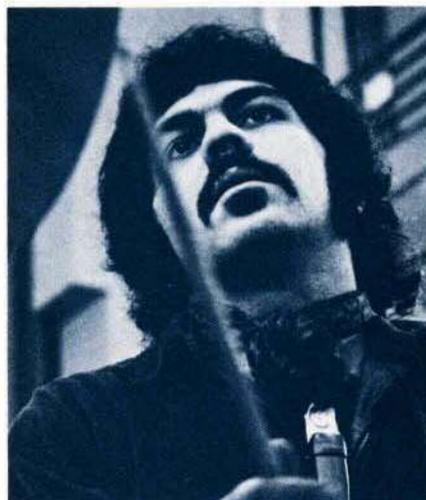


Photo by Rick Malkin



Photo by Lissa Wales



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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



Some time ago, I made mention that we'd be conducting another reader survey to focus in on the typical MD reader. Questionnaires were recently sent to 1000 randomly selected subscribers, and I'd like to take a moment to report on the results.

The typical MD reader? Well, he's male, between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five, married, with some college education. Our typical reader has been drumming between eleven and twenty years and categorizes himself as a semi-professional player. He plays drumset, tympani, Latin instruments and mallets, in that order. He reads music, and is most active in the areas of rock, jazz, commercial, r & b, studio, fusion and show drumming, also in that precise order.

Along with gathering basic demographic data, we also learned a great deal about how MD readers feel about the magazine. For example, when questioned on feature interviews, most felt that technique was the most important subject to discuss, followed by philosophy, equipment and bibliographical information.

We also asked our random sampling to rate MD's column departments. *Ask A Pro*, *It's Questionable*, *Just Drums*, *Product Close-Up*, *Concepts*, *Industry Happenings* and *Staying In Tune* proved to be among the most widely read. *Club Scene*, *Shop Talk*, *Strictly Technique*, *Rock 'n' Jazz Clinic* and *Portraits* were also highly rated. The survey also clearly red-flagged those departments which are not very popular.

Finally, we asked a series of questions to determine where more information was desired; your basic, "how can we be of more help to you"-type question. Most of the responding group requested more information on fusion, basic reading, odd-time signatures, tips on improving technique and coordination, and developing an approach to the instrument. More product information was another area which many readers wanted to see beefed up. Though opinion varied widely, we were able to detect a pattern, and many of those exact requests are now in the works.

Perhaps you're wondering why we go to all this trouble. First off, the data we gather is used to supply our advertisers with a more complete picture of just who you are. They *do* ask about you. More importantly, however, is the area of editorial guidance. The information you supply enables the editors to keep a firm handle on the direction of the magazine. Reader feedback is the only way we can stay accurately attuned to your likes, dislikes, needs and wants.

In general, we were happy to find that the majority of the readers who responded were content with the current balance of the magazine. Many had some very complimentary remarks. Nonetheless, we feel it's essential to ask.

In future issues, I'll be reporting on the alterations and additions we'll be making as a result of our findings. Meantime, my personal thanks to all who took the time to respond to the questionnaire. We appreciate it. Hopefully, we'll pay our debt the only way we know: through an ever-improving *Modern Drummer*.

RS

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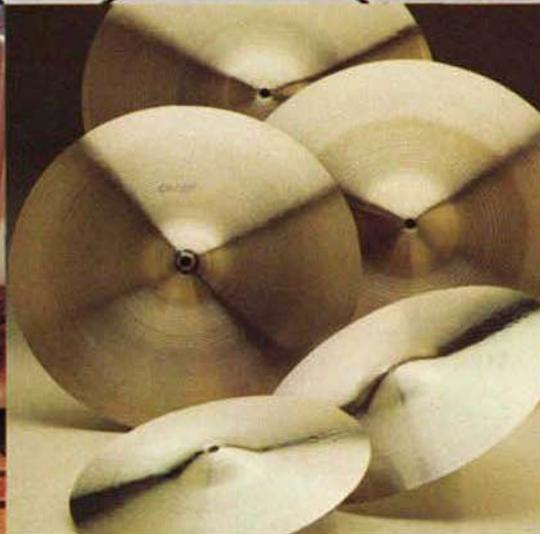
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READER'S PLATFORM

I'd like to comment on the state of drumming today. Looking at the NAMM Section of MD sometimes makes me sick. Drum companies introducing electronic gadgets, double and triple bass drum setups, and drumsets with twelve to fifteen or more drums. What's going on anyway? It seems that most young drummers today don't take the time to look at some of the great drummers who made drum history using very small drumsets and very large creative concepts. Buddy Rich does it. So do Mel Lewis, Shelly Manne, Elvin Jones. Ed Blackwell and Art Blakey.

I only hope there are more drummers like me. No amount of drums, cymbals, gimmicks or whatever can change the way I feel about drumming. It must continue to flourish in its simplest form. The state of the art cannot be overlooked.

MARK RIEGERT
GRIFFITH, INDIANA

I'm very surprised and disappointed that MD has done little to expose the talents of drummer/percussionists who are truly "modernists." There is a lot to learn from Philly Joe, Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Carmine Appice, Peter Criss, and Bill Bruford, but it's equally important to present the accomplishments of people like Ronald Shannon Jackson, Paul Motian, Sunny Murray, Jerome Cooper. Steve McCall, Denardo Coleman, Guilherme Franco, Nana Vasconcelos and Collin Wallcott, who've digested the work of artists like Philly Joe and gone on to lead their own bands, compose their own tunes, and say something new.

I've always thought of your publication as academic in nature. I feel it's very important to present players who look at rhythm in a different light, who can encourage your readers to play like themselves and not merely imitate others.

GREGG BENDIAN
TEANECK, NEW JERSEY

Editor's Note: Your point is excellent. We've had interviews with Paul Motian and Collin Walcott in the past. Currently, an MD correspondent is working on an interview with Sunny Murray, and we'll continue to present the "modernists."

Your article on the Drum Computer was great! I don't think drummers should be afraid of this new technology. Instead, they should plunge right in, learn to operate them, and get listed in

the Union Directory under Drum Computers.

On a recent tour, I picked up the Boss *Dr. Rhythm* and I use it all the time. I do all my practicing with it, and for the past year and a half, I've had it in the studio. It's nice to use in place of a click track. Your article left me with a good feeling about Drum Computers.

PAUL ANGERS
LAKE FOREST, CA

I feel compelled to respond after reading Rick Mattingly's interview with Philly Joe Jones. With all due respect to Philly Joe and the many other "Jazz Greats," whose interviews I've read, it seems that all too often I've noticed a "sour grapes" attitude toward rock musicians and specifically rock drummers. Some of the expressions I've heard are, "They hold their hands wrong"; "They use their whole body instead of their wrists"; "They look like they're playing but they're really not!"

This is not constructive criticism. It's a condescension. What usually follows afterwards is a remark about how much money rock musicians make.

I have been playing drums now for about eighteen years (I am twenty-eight). I have played almost every commonly known style of music: from country swing to new wave and I am proud of it. I don't have any money (due to my own misjudgments in the music business), but I don't criticize people who are financially better off than I am by saying that I am a "real" artist and they are not.

Entertainment is an art in itself. It is for the enjoyment of other people. The more people who enjoy a particular performer, the more he is worth on the commercial market. That is the nature of the business. I feel that people who have experienced some degree of success should carry it with some dignity and be GRATEFUL for it.

Neither technical proficiency, nor musical style preference, reflects a person's talent or sincerity. If musicians of any style are concerned about big money, they should learn about business, finance, promotion or whatever it takes to make them happy, rather than putting down their fellow musicians who have done well for themselves. This business is tough for all of us. These celebrated musicians set an example for thousands of young people. It is a lot of responsibility.

KENNY GREENE
PEEKSKILL, NEW YORK

Thanks for the article on the Percus-

sion Triumvirate of Earth, Wind & Fire. I've been an E, W & F fan for four years and have been waiting patiently for MD to do an article on these guys. I would personally like to thank Robyn Flans for the fantastic interview. And to Freddie, Ralph, and Philip—keep up the good work! You guys truly are "winners."

TONY LEWIS
BRONX, NEW YORK

First, let me congratulate both Mr. Read and his assistant Ken Mezines on a splendid historical document. *Evolution of the Drum Set*, which was well written, informative, and held the reader's interest. I loved it so because I lived through several of the eras this story encompassed. Had I known I was living through eras, I would have paid more attention!

Ludwig Drum Co. *did not* manufacture the first all-metal snare drum as the author suggests. I have in the Ludwig museum and library, located at the factory, a beautiful single-tension brass shell all-metal snare drum made in 1879 by Richard Ludwig (no relation) in Dresden, Germany.

Ludwig & Ludwig, Inc. (Wm. F. Ludwig Sr. and his brother Theobald Ludwig—both drummers) was the first drum company to commence full-scale production of all-metal drums in 1912. Leedy Mfg. Co. of Indianapolis followed in 1920.

Regarding snare throw-off strainers: the *world's first throw-off strainer* (to my knowledge) was invented by Robert C. Danly, a brilliant engineer and brother-in-law of my father. This took place in 1911 as evidenced by the catalogs in the Ludwig library and drums in the museum.

And lastly: Slingerland did not introduce the "Ray McKinley tom-tom holder" as stated on page 29. This remarkable holder—the world's first shell mount tom-tom holder—was designed exclusively by Bill Mather in his basement shop on W. 47th St. in New York City in the year 1939.

Again, my very heartiest congratulations to the authors of this splendid trip back into time and my congratulations to you and the entire staff of Modern Drummer which is doing such a great job keeping us all in touch. It makes me feel like we percussionists are *now* one big family!

WILLIAM F. LUDWIG, JR.
PRESIDENT
LUDWIG DRUM CO.

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ASK A PRO

NEIL PEART

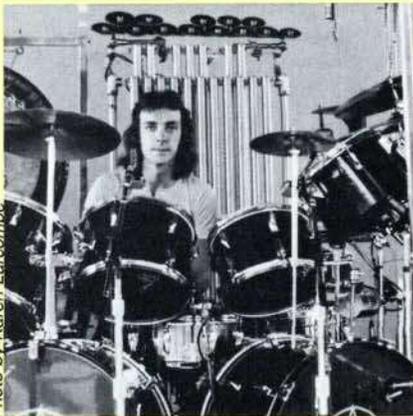


Photo by Karen Larcombe

Q. What is the significance of the logo on the front of your bass drums?

K.L.
Anaheim, California

A. The logo itself goes back to our 2112 album. The red star symbolizes the autocratic society that was projected into the future, where the giant computers controlled the whole society. The star was the symbol of their authority. In a way, it's an abstract symbol for all kinds of authoritarian governments of any kind, whether they be democratic, dictatorial, or whatever.

The man against it, of course, is the individual against this organized state, or anything that's larger than life, whether it be religion, government, or a creed of any kind that's supposed to be more important than a human life. In other words, the individual's life is important.

Q. I recently added a second bass drum to my kit. I need to move the bass drums closer together but that's impossible because my mounted toms are in the way. You have an odd-looking single tom holder mounted to the side of your left bass drum. What makes this tom holder and where can I obtain it?

A.G.
Brooklyn, NY

A. The mysterious piece of plumbing is an old Rogers Swivomatic tom mount. It has been retired by that company and I think I've bought up the remaining inventory in the U.S.! It is one of only two designs which permit mounting a tom holder anywhere but top center. It's really not a very solid arrangement by today's standards, but I haven't been able to find a modern substitute. Truly, they don't make 'em like they used to!

BILL BRUFORD

Q. What kind of snare did you use on the latest King Crimson Tour? What kind of heads did you use on it?

Scott Bonshire
Orland Park, Illinois

A. The snare drum was a Tama Bell Brass with Remo Ambassador heads.



Q. Could you tell me how you tuned your drumset—especially the snare—on the *One Of A Kind* album. What kind of heads do you use?

Rupert L. Huse
New York, New York

A. If I had five cents for every time someone has asked me how I tune my snare drum, I'd be a rich man! I can only reply that there is nothing special—no mirrors, no tricks—just a fairly highly tuned top head with an approximately equal bottom head (both Remo) and as little dampening as I can get away with. The particular sound is mostly created by the way the drum is struck; mostly rimshots for the loud notes and non-rimshots for the in-between stuff. The toms on that LP were actually Roto-toms with Remo Fiberskyn heads and some high EQ to make them "clang." Bass drum was an ordinary Ludwig 22" with Remo head.

JAKE HANNA

Q. Do you teach and do you still give drum clinics?

David Adessa
St. Louis, Mo.

A. I'm starting to teach soon at Danny Pucillo's on Reseda Boulevard in the Tarzana area of California, by referral only. I won't be taking beginners. I'm not going to bother with reading or anything like that. I'll listen to a student play, and then I'll straighten out what needs straightening out. I've sort of given up on clinics. Now I just do them for drum shops. I shoot for a narrow field covering the tuning of drums, brush playing at very fast tempos, slow brush playing on the ride cymbal and hi-hat, and what not to do when playing with a big band.



MEL LEWIS

Q. What is the most difficult thing about being the leader of a big band?

Ira Weintraub
Philadelphia, Pa.

A. Leading the band from behind the drums is much easier than one would think. However, that's in my particular band. The musicians are such good listeners, they make it easy for me. The biggest problems lie outside the band. For instance, booking the band. You must keep the band working, otherwise you will soon lose the personnel. We are fortunate to play at the Village Vanguard regularly. This helps to keep the band together.

JOE MORELLO

Q. What can I do to improve my endurance while playing fast tempos?

Sandy Filiponi
Boston, Mass.

A. Stay on one thing for a while. Practice it slowly at first with a metronome and then build it up. Extended periods of practice is the key.

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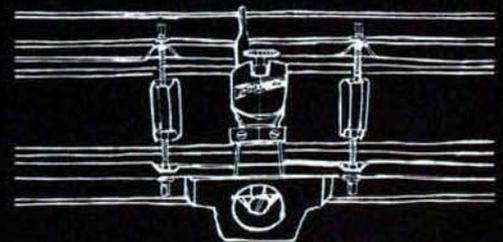
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Photo by John Lee

Did you ever meet someone who speaks only when it matters? And who means everything he says? Aynsley Dunbar plays drums like that. Not content to fill a song with superfluous drum chatter, Aynsley strikes each note with the conviction that comes from knowing exactly what can and should be done at any given moment. At the same time, he maintains the freedom to respond to whatever is being played by the musicians around him. If one word was needed to describe Aynsley's style, that word would be "eloquent."

RM: How did you first get involved with music?

AD: I started playing violin when I was nine. I wanted to play violin when I was seven, but my parents wouldn't buy me one because they thought I would just waste the time and money. They finally gave up and got me one, but by that time it was too late. If I had started two years earlier, I would have gone out and taken lessons, but by this time, I was too shy

and I didn't feel confident. So I decided to try and teach myself. I did manage to learn a lot about music by looking at it and trying to discern what was going on. Eventually I got bored with the screeching sound of the violin.

My sister started playing guitar at that time, and I didn't want to be in competition with her, so I decided there must be something else I would like. I saw this English rock and roll program where they had three drummers sitting together doing a drum trio, and I got knocked out by what they were doing. It wasn't anything special, but I thought it was neat. It was a different sound—sort of a power thing. So I decided to try drums.

I started out with tin cans actually, to see if I could develop anything, but I got bored trying to get a sound out of it so I finally got a drum and started practicing on that. For about six months, I worked with just a snare drum. Then I went out and got a bass drum and hi-hat and started playing with that. Next I got a

small tom-tom, then two cymbals, then a large tom, and sort of built up the kit bit by bit. It worked out better because if I'd had the whole drum kit, it might have been too much all at one time to understand. By just having the snare drum first, I spent more time practicing the basics. Then when it came to the rest of the kit, I could get used to the sounds and the feel of the drums one at a time, and not be overpowered by the immensity of the whole situation.

RM: I noticed you using traditional grip at times.

AD: In my solo, yeah. I use traditional grip when I'm playing anything other than rock and roll, because rock and roll doesn't call for a lot of notes. The matched grip keeps you simple enough to hit the drum that way. The traditional grip is more complicated, but it's easier for me to play.

RM: Where did you learn traditional grip? Did you take lessons?

AD: I picked up a feel for it by watching

Aynsley Dunbar

by Rick Mattingly

drummers, looking in books and practicing it.

RM: So you did buy drum books?

AD: Oh yes. Then I finally got lessons when I was about 13. By that time I was actually playing rudiments better than my teacher, so all he could do was help me read music and understand it. We'd sit down and play along with big-band charts. That was pretty interesting and he was a great help. But he didn't really extend my feelings—he just helped me understand something I wanted to be doing, which was reading music.

When I was with Zappa, I wanted to learn to play vibes, and I wanted to be able to read faster, so I took some lessons from Mitchell Peters, who is with the L.A. Philharmonic. After being on the road, I'd spend a couple of months studying with him once or twice a week. Then we'd go out on the road again and when I'd get back, I would have to start over again because I wouldn't have the chance to practice on the road. I got sick and tired of doing that because I wasn't advancing. When I get involved in something I like to keep it going, day by day. I've still got a set of vibes at home that I play, but it's not the same. Even now, I need a teacher to drive me so I practice and advance more. But I don't think there are too many people in San Francisco that I want teaching me. Most of them are in L.A.

RM: How did your professional career

develop?

AD: I left school when I was 15, and immediately formed a trio with a sax player and a keyboard player. We were just playing dance music, but because I had been practicing for a few years, I was able to play along with all of the people who were my heroes. I thought in my own mind that before you could even go out there and play, you had to be as good as the people you were listening to on records. So when I hit the scene in Liverpool, I startled a lot of the drummers that were hanging around, because they hadn't heard of me and all of a sudden I was getting gigs and playing all over the place. They sort of got uptight with me because I was much younger than they were. There was one guy who really gave me a hard time—taking apart everything I did. But when I went through Liverpool on a tour with Zappa in 1971, out of all the people I knew in Liverpool, he was the only one who actually turned up backstage to shake my hand and say how well I was playing.

RM: You started when?

AD: Early '60s.

RM: What type of music was being played in Liverpool?

AD: R&B was happening, and traditional jazz.

RM: What exactly is traditional jazz in England?

AD: Dixieland, or sometimes more of a swing-type sound. I used to play with a

group called the Merseysippi Jazz Band. All the other guys were about 40 and were married. They all worked in the daytime and they'd come together at night to play jazz. During one of my first gigs with them, they gave me a drum solo. So I'm up there playing away and I decided it was time I finished, and all of a sudden I look over at the bar, and they're all sitting by the bar drinking! So my drum solo lasted about 20 minutes. Nowadays I get complaints about long drum solos, but in those days they *wanted* me to keep on going so they could go over to the bar and have a drink.

RM: Who were the drummers you were listening to then?

AD: Joe Morello, Bellson, Roach, Elvin Jones, everybody who was playing modern jazz.

RM: So you were into bop?

AD: I was into *everything*. I was interested in anything I could get ideas from. But there was only so much I could get. In England, at that time, American records were about four years behind. It was through the Beatles that they started moving records across the ocean faster. So the Beatles not only opened up new designs of music, but also faster distribution. But before that it was ridiculous. I would read in *down heat* that so and so's new record was out, I'd go to the shop and never see it. Then one day a few years later it would finally turn up. So

Photo by Paul Naikin Photo Reserve



everything was really out of date. It made it really hard to keep up with the jazz.

RM: In America, a musician usually has to go to New York or L.A. to make it. Is it that way in England? Did you have to go to London?

AD: Oh yeah. I was taken to London by the Mojoes. They were one of the top bands in England at that time. I always had the idea in mind that you never go to a big town unless you go with a band. Never go as a musician because it doesn't work. So I just waited, knowing it was going to happen sometime. I had complete confidence in the whole process. Sure enough, I was playing a gig and they just popped in and said, "We're looking for a drummer and we'd like to know if you would like to move to London and join us." So fine—I couldn't have asked for a better opportunity. I spent 18 months with them, but they were going through a slow decline. So I left them and was out of work for two weeks, which was the longest I had ever been out of work.

Alexis Korner, the blues singer, invited me down to a club where he was playing. I went down there and sat in with him, and boy, it was horrible! He didn't have any idea of which side of the beat he was on half of the time. So I thought, "Oh no. This is not for me." I went home, and the next afternoon John Mayall called me up and said, "I was sitting in the audience last night and I was wondering if you'd come down and sit in with my band." I didn't know who

the hell John Mayall was, so I asked my wife, and she said she thought he was a country/western singer. Oh no! I had been uplifted when he called, but when I heard "country/western" I went back down. But he was nice enough to call me, so I thought I'd go on down and listen to him. I sat in the balcony and he had Peter Green and John McVie with him. I was completely overawed by Peter Green's playing, but I didn't think the band was backing him properly. He was doing all these great solos, but the band was always playing the same level of intensity behind him. I wanted to play.

So John said, "Well, we've got a gig tomorrow night. Be at my house at so-and-so, and have your drums there and we'll go up to the gig." So the first gig I did with him, I was just learning the songs. No rehearsal—just get on the stage and play. He'd just call out a song and tell me whether it was a shuffle or whatever, and give me a nod if there was a break. I just kept my eyes on him all evening. Then I did the *A Hard Road* album with him, and that helped me understand the songs a little better.

That only lasted for six months, because Mayall wanted me to stop playing as much as I was, and become more of a "blues drummer." I didn't want to do that, so I decided to leave. The next day, Jeff Beck called me and asked me if I'd like to join his band, with Rod Stewart and Ronnie Wood.

RM: This was the first Jeff Beck Group?

AD: Yeah. I did four months with Jeff, but he only liked to work about one day a

month, which was not enough for me. I went from playing seven days a week with Mayall to one day a month with Beck. Your playing tends to diminish from lack of work, so I formed my own band and worked it like Mayall did his.

I had that group [The Aynsley Dunbar Retaliation] for about three years, and we built a following around the country. Then the band's ego got too much for me to cope with and I had to dump them. They couldn't see any further than where they were at. They thought that because we had got to the point where we were selling out everywhere and making quite a bit of money, that we had reached stardom. No way could I tell them that they had just reached the first step and we had a lot more steps to go. They were already acting like stars. So I decided it was time to get rid of that band and start another one. I started Blue Whale, which was an 8-piece band.

I had an offer to join the Yardbirds, with Jimmy Page, when they did their last tour, but I'd just started Retaliation. I couldn't leave the people in my band just to do some wandering around the country, although it would have led to the Led Zeppelin gig, which was offered to me as well.

I also played with Jimi Hendrix. Jimi would come down and sit in with Retaliation and we would have a ball. He offered me the gig with him at 20 pounds a week, which at that point, was like 60 bucks. But they went on to make a lot of money. He was great at the beginning—very wide awake and eager to play. Then

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SON. THE LESS
YOU PLAY, THE
MORE THEY HEAR.
THE MORE YOU
PLAY, THE LESS
THEY HEAR. THAT'S
BASICALLY WHAT
IT'S ALL ABOUT."**

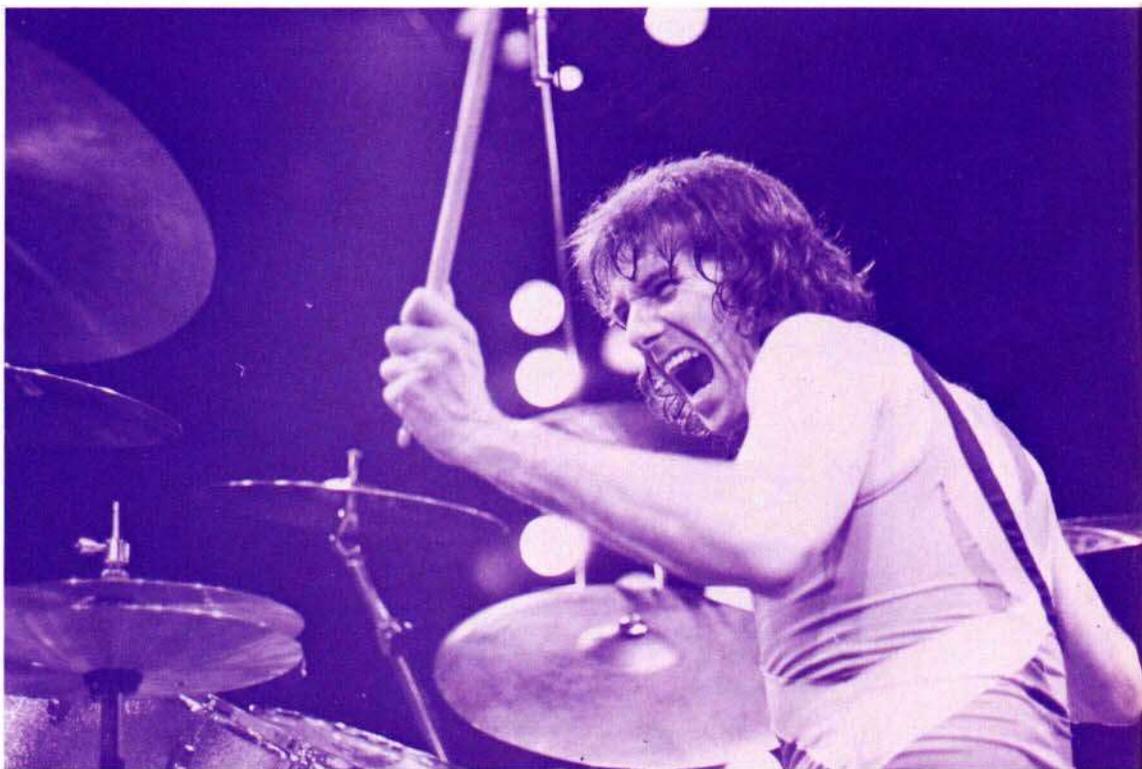


Photo by Randy Bachman

he started hitting the drugs, because I think he got bored, and he started becoming a space case. Every time I saw him he was more spaced out and blank.

I first met Zappa near the end of Retaliation, at a big rock and blues festival in Brussels. My band was there playing and Frank was on stage introducing the bands. I got a message that Frank wanted to sit in. So he sat in on two songs and then he came back and sat in my car and we started chatting about session work in Los Angeles and how much money could be made and how I could make a good living out of it if I moved over there. So I thought about it, you know, and I went back home.

Shortly after that, I disbanded Retaliation and formed Blue Whale, but I could never get the same brass section to stay in the band. They'd get a gig somewhere else paying a couple of pounds more, so they would send a substitute to play with me. The substitute would not know the charts, would not be able to solo or ad-lib or anything else.

RM: What kind of music was Blue Whale playing?

AD: It was sort of progressive rock. While all of that was going on, Zappa came to town and left a message for me to talk to him. So I went to this club and we chatted about me coming over and joining his band, but I couldn't give an answer because I wasn't sure if I wanted to disband my group. But a few more days of the hazards of what was going on made me decide that it was time to disband Blue Whale.

I didn't sign any contracts or anything else with Zappa—just moved out of England. He sent me the ticket the day before I left. I arrived in L.A. and his wife picked me up at the airport and took me to his house, where I lived for nine months. I played with him for nearly three years and had a great time.

RM: How much musical freedom does Zappa give his band?

AD: I never had any problem. If there was a certain part that he wanted me to play, he'd tell me. But most of the time I had a free hand.

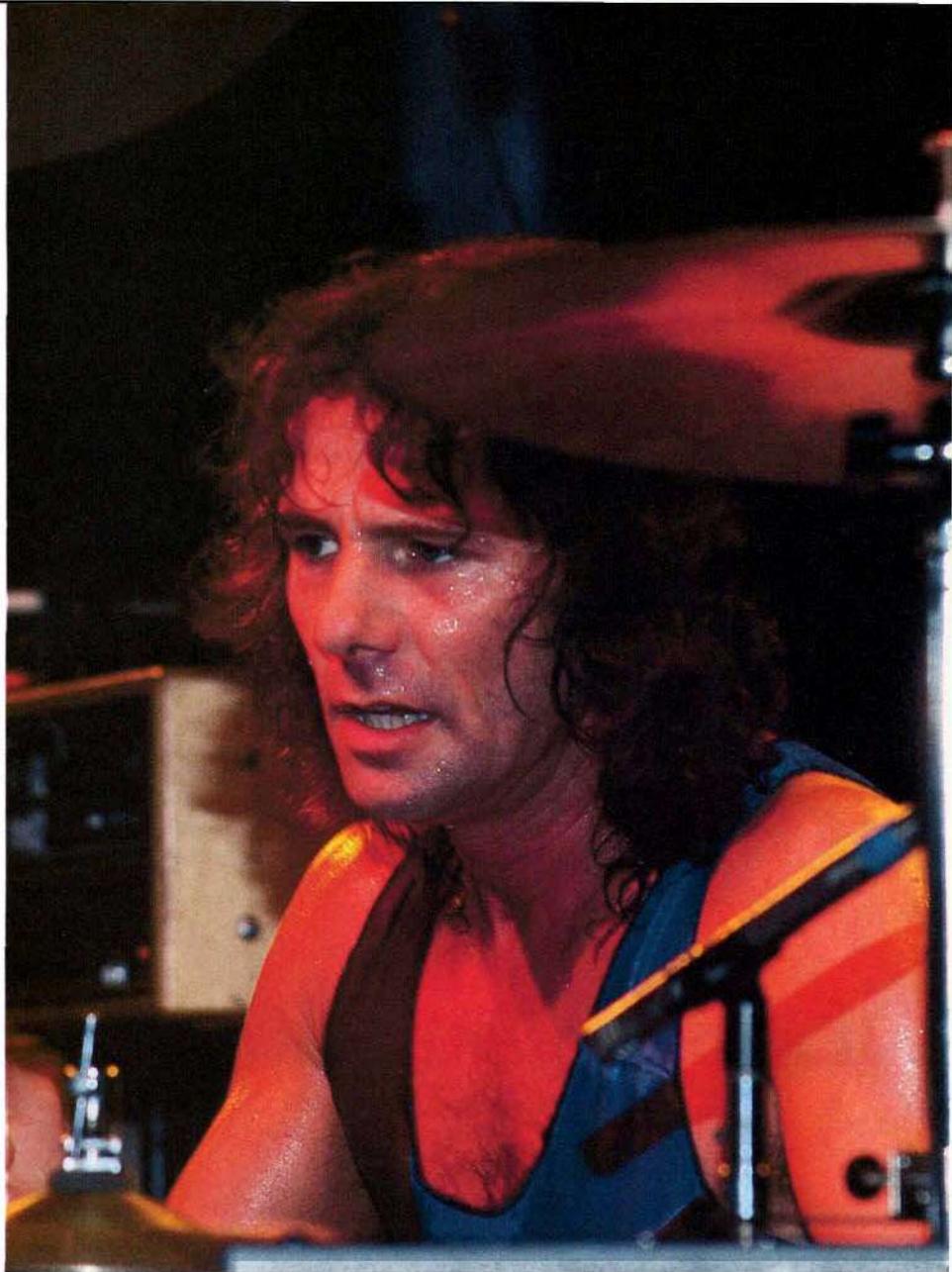
RM: You did a lot of different styles of music during those three years. For instance, *The Grand Wazoo* was almost a jazz big-band record.

AD: I did eight albums with Frank, starting with *Chunga's Revenge*. *Grand Wazoo* was charts. Most of the drum parts on that were written down. *Waka/Jawaka* was also a jazz album.

RM: Does Zappa know a lot about drums?

AD: He's a drummer by nature. He's great at all of the percussion things. But he is more of a marching-type rudimental drummer. On one song he gave me a chart that was all marching-type drumming—roll after roll, flams, drags.

Photo by John Lee



ruffs—and it was great. It was crazy, but it was great. I like doing that sort of thing because I've got the technique to play it. You forget about it if you don't play it, and most rock bands don't tend to play it. That's why I enjoy playing "White Rabbit" with the Starship. It has a lot of open rolls, 16th notes, 5-stroke rolls and triplets in nice little combinations. I like doing all of that.

RM: You also did the movie *200 Motels* with Ringo and Keith Moon.

AD: A funny thing happened with that. Jeff Simmons was our bass player, but when he read the script of the movie, he told Frank he wouldn't do it and left. We were all sitting in a room and Frank said, "Whoever comes through that door next will play bass in the movie," and Martin [Lickert] walked in. He was Ringo's chauffeur and funny enough, he played bass. But some little old woman could have walked in. It was crazy.

RM: Ruth Underwood also played on

200 Motels. Did you enjoy working with another drummer?

AD: The only times we would actually play together was maybe when she would be playing vibes. I was playing in the band, and Ruth played drums with the orchestra. She's the most amazing reader—very disciplined. I'm not that disciplined. I don't like to have everything I do so organized that I spend all of my time reading every little note. That part she had was incredibly difficult, but she did an amazing job. She would be on one side of the stage with the orchestra, and I would be on the other, so there was a gap between us. It was kind of weird, because as soon as we started cranking up, the orchestra sort of disappeared. We really couldn't hear them a lot of the time.

RM: What did you do when you left Zappa?

AD: I went out with Flo and Eddie and

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ALEX ACUNA

Transcending All Influences

by Michael Rozek

At 37, L.A.-based Alex Acuna could honestly call himself—if he weren't—so self-effacing—one of the world's most versatile drummer/percussionists. Though most people know his mid-Seventies work with the globe-hopping Weather Report, many are unaware of the depth of his Latin chops (schooled in Peru and Puerto Rico), his pit and show work (in Las Vegas and on the hotel strip in San Juan), his studio rep (now, in Los Angeles. He recently recorded with Chick Corea and Paco DeLucia), and even his rock-pop work (currently, with Lee Ritenour and Friendship). And fewer still have heard a new but sensational band Acuna helps fuel—Koinonia, a fixture in L.A. clubs for the last few years, and a group soon to record (also featuring bassist Abraham Laboriel, keyboardists Michael Omartian and Harlan Rogers, reedmen Justo Almario and John Phillips, guitarists Hadley Hocken-

smith and Dean Parks, and drummer Bill Maxwell). For Acuna, as an expression of both his recent conversion to Christianity and a relaxed sense of musical satisfaction, it may be the high point of his career. Point is, almost no one realizes that little Alejandro Neciosup Acuna has been playing the drums for over 20 years—and in the following interview, MD readers should begin to see that he's one singular musician.

MR: Where are you from originally, Alex?

AA: I grew up to the north of Lima, the capital of Peru, in a little town called Pativilca, by the Pacific Ocean. My mother is half Spanish, and I use her last name: Acuna. And my father is Greek, and his last name is Neciosup—that's the name you see on *Black Market*. I'm the eighth of nine children—six brothers and three sisters, and they all play music. My

father is a music teacher, and he plays drums, piano, trumpet, saxophone, everything.

MR: People think of Peruvian music as Incan, but that can't be entirely correct, can it?

AA: It seems like people don't understand that though Peruvians are descended from Indians, Peru is mostly a Spanish-speaking country. I didn't really have any Incan background. Although sometimes my mother would take me to her birthplace in the mountains, to carnivals the Indians celebrated. It was a little town that disappeared in the earthquake in 1968—Yungay.

MR: The whole city? The people? Everything?

AA: Yeah, the mountain came over and covered the valley. Anyway, she used to dance, and they played the Incan music, which is a nice, beautiful groove. It's like

Photo by Lissa Wales





the Brazilian maracatu, like "maracatu, maracatu, maracatu" . . . a 4/4 with that accent. And then, in another town, my birthplace, Chancay, they had a Black Peruvian music, like Cuban music, and with clave and all that. They played boxes, congas, bongos, and cowbells and sounded very African. My ear caught all these grooves as I was growing up. But mostly, my brothers had a band, and they played Latin music, so I learned boleros, charangas, dansons, merengues, guaranchas, mambos, and merecumbé from Columbia, which is what they call cumbia now. My brothers worked for dancing, and the name of the band was "Los Hermanos Neciosup y La Tropical Boys"—The Neciosup Brothers and the Tropical Boys.

MR: How did you get into jazz?

AA: I started listening to Duke Ellington when I was twelve years old. None of

my family liked jazz, but I found some LPs on the street, like, a record of Nat Cole playing with Lester Young. It sounded different, so I bought it.

MR: And when did you start playing?

AA: My father started me out on trumpet, and I didn't like the things it did to my lips. But my first instrument was always drums. I was always banging on all the traps, bongos, congas, and maracas that my brothers had, when they finished rehearsing. So, I was really self-taught.

MR: When did you actually start your career?

AA: When I was 16, my brothers called me to come to Lima. They were becoming very big studio musicians there—actually, some of them still are today, twenty years later. They play in jazz clubs, too. Anyway, I got to town and started gigging around. I had, and still

have, a very peculiar way of playing. On traps, I cover the bass *and* the conga pattern. So it got me a lot of work then. Plus, I knew how to read, from taking trumpet and piano from my father. And in those days, only two other drummers in Lima knew how to read, so I was working 18-hour days: TV, radio, clubs, shows, when I was only 16. I bought a car when I was 17, but I didn't know how to drive, so I got a chauffeur. And then, when I was 19, Perez Prado came to Peru and hired me to come to the U.S. I was so young, my mother wouldn't sign the papers: my brothers had to. With Perez, I went to Vegas. We even made an album, for United Artists: *Luces, Accion, Prado!* It was Beatles tunes, movie tunes . . .

MR: It's incredible to think I could actually hear Alex Acuna on a record eighteen years ago.



Photo by Lisa Wales

AA: If you could find it now.

MR: Did you stay in the U.S. then?

AA: At the end of 1964, Perez was going to work in Mexico, and since the union there didn't allow foreigners to join, he left me in L.A. and I started playing in bowling alleys. Finally, in '65, I went back to Peru, and then in 1966, I went to Puerto Rico, where I stayed until 1974.

MR: Why Puerto Rico?

AA: I went over with a band from Peru—some Brazilians, Argentinians and Peruvians. We played a lounge in a hotel for three years, and then when the band broke up, I stayed there.

MR: This was an incredible life for a kid in his early twenties. How were you feeling during this period? Were you learning a lot?

AA: Yeah, all the time. And, in Puerto Rico, I was one of the few trap drummers who liked jazz. I would buy Buddy Rich and Joe Morello records, and copy their techniques. I had the sense that I could tell how they did what they did, and so I just practiced. Then I heard Elvin Jones, and I liked his heart, so he was my favorite. And I also liked Tony Williams and Jack DeJohnette. But Elvin, he used the African rhythms—ones

that I was very familiar with. He played the jazz with the right hand, but his left hand and right leg were playing African: triples, and 6/8's.

Then I bought Jim Chapin books, and even enrolled in a conservatory for two years, learning about mallets and tympani, just to know the right technique, which I'd never learned before. I had all this time on my hands, just working at night, so I decided to use it.

MR: So what happened after that lounge band broke up?

AA: I did sessions and TV shows, all kinds of jobs, just like in Peru. I backed singers like Iris Chacon, who has a TV show there, and then on the public TV station, I played jazz every week. There were a lot of timbale and conga players, but not that many trap drummers, so, again, I worked a lot. I even did show drumming—the Royal De Paris, in one of the hotels, for a year. Everything I was offered, I took, even if I hadn't done it before. I wanted to learn. I had big ears.

MR: Were you learning anything from specific players during this period; guys you worked with?

AA: Sure, from everybody. Especially from the trap drummers in the hotel

shows. Acts like, say, Paul Anka, used to bring their drummers from Miami or Las Vegas, and so I'd go to rehearsals and talk to them. I met Sol Gubin that way. I didn't ask him anything specific—I just learned, from watching how relaxed he was. He didn't even look at his hands or feet. He just smoked a cigarette and played.

Then, there was Walfredo De Los Reyes, a great drummer from Cuba, who's in Vegas now. He'd studied in New York with Henry Adler. So he used to tell me, "Alex, this is what Joe Morello does with his fingers," and I paid attention. He got me some books on stick control, too.

MR: Did anybody tell you about, maybe, staying in clave?

AA: Absolutely. Even though I played Latin music in Peru, and with Perez Prado, when I went to Puerto Rico, I still sounded like a Peruvian Latin player. In Peru, we just listened to records and copied. We didn't know *why* things broke the way they did, for example. So, in Puerto Rico, I found another excellent drummer named Monchito Munoz, who played with Tito Rodriguez back in the Forties. He showed me clave, like, "When a tune starts a certain way, you automatically have to know which clave to use." For example, take "The Peanut Vendor." I used to start on three, and he said, "Start on two, which goes with the melody. The other way, it's like you and the melody are having a fight!" And I said, "Wow! I've been playing wrong all my life!" So, I started to find out. I don't want to say anything bad about them, but there are a lot of players here in L.A. now who don't play in clave, or play sambas correctly. I was lucky to meet Monchito.

MR: And during this whole period, were you also playing percussion?

AA: Everything. I never separated the two. Since I was a little kid, I'd always been told that even a guy on bongos played the drums. That *one* drum is a drum.

MR: Did you hang out with any great percussionists in Puerto Rico?

AA: Sure. On the streets, conga players got together every day, especially near the beach. And I was staying in a hotel near the ocean. So I listened, or I went down and played. The way you have to *hit* the congas there—the first time I played, I had blisters five minutes later, I was hitting so hard. But it's the right way to play. In Peru, I just played what I heard on record, soft stuff, on poorly made congas. In Puerto Rico, the congas had thick skins. You had to *hit* to be heard, and keep hitting. That's how I learned to play the guaguanco, and bembe. And then on bongos, I learned to get more strength into my fingers. I used to play just with my two index fingers,

"YOU LEARN ALL KINDS OF THINGS, AND THEN YOU JUST LET THEM GO, AND YOU'RE FREE. THAT'S HOW YOU PLAY IN WEATHER REPORT."



but Monchito told me to use my last two fingers on my left hand, and the three middle on my right. And then, to use some conga slaps—the whole hand.

MR: You mentioned earlier that a lot of people don't know clave here. Is it also true that a lot of non-Latins can't really play Latin percussion correctly?

AA: Yes. Too many don't know the difference between the guaguanco of Puerto Rico, and the more sophisticated guaguanco of Cuba.

MR: You said you left Puerto Rico in 1974. Then what?

AA: There was a Cuban bass player I knew in Puerto Rico who could sight-read *anything*—Orlando Hernandez, or "Papito." I admired him, and we got to be good enough friends so that when he eventually started working in Las Vegas, he made it possible for me to come. I wanted to take the next step up from Puerto Rico. I never like to *be* the best, but I'm *trying* to be, so I can grow. In Las Vegas, I started playing in the house band at the Hilton. I might play percussion for The Temptations, who had their own drummer, or traps for Ann-Margaret, who didn't bring a drummer, and for Olivia Newton-John, who was opening for Charlie Rich. I didn't even have to wait the standard six months to work, because of Papito's recommendations.

MR: A lot of drummers turn up their noses at show work. But I'll bet it taught you a lot.

AA: Absolutely. It really gave me the ability to drive a big band. I had to take them wherever I went, and I liked that. It was the first time I'd done that. I still had to play for the stage dancers, and yet be free to do splashes and breaks when they did choreography. It was a different kind

of freedom than playing jazz; more of an organized freedom. And then, I tried to sound like the other show drummers—precise, yet powerful.

MR: How did you join Weather Report?

AA: Well, I played in Las Vegas through 1975. One day, Don Alias, who was in town playing percussion for Lou Rawls, found me; he'd seen me with The Temptations. I'd played traps on just the first tune, the big opening number. And then, I switched to congas, and this knocked him out. It turned out a lot of Puerto Rican players that he knew in New York knew me, too. So, Don asked if I'd like to play some music, and I said, "Yeah." Don told me [bassist] Miroslav Vitous was forming a band, and he wanted me to be in it, so he and I could switch traps and congas. So Miroslav came to town and we played in my house. Anyway, nothing happened with that group, but as a result, Don got me a brief gig in San Francisco with Dave Liebman, and I knocked Dave out. Dave recommended me to Joe Zawinul shortly after that. So I was home, with my family—no show job, no *any* job—and one afternoon, Joe called. Since Puerto Rico, I had been listening to Weather Report. I couldn't believe it.

MR: Didn't you audition?

AA: Oh, sure (laughs). That's a story right there. The band was leaving within a week for a tour in Europe, off *Tale Spinnin'*. The manager called with all the terms, and I immediately accepted. But I didn't fly to L.A. right away. Instead, Zawinul told me to stay in Las Vegas. He was going to fly in to see *me*, because he said he could tell by *looking* at me how I played. So, the next day, I went to Caesars Palace to meet him, and my car

broke down. So I borrowed a friend's old, beat up station wagon, and I went in that. And when I met Zawinul, he just looked at me. He said, "What's your name?" I said, "Alejandro Neciosup." He said, "I *like* that name. Yeah, you can play." And then, when I took him to my car, he just looked at it and said, "Oh, you're *poor*." (laughter) Anyway, I didn't even know if I was gonna play drums or percussion. So then he asked me if I had any percussion instruments, and I had to say no. He said the band would rent them all: congas, bongos, timbales, tambora, guiro, maracas, cowbell, gongs, and cymbals. And when I went to L.A. the next day, I walked in to this rehearsal hall, and the band was playing, and there were six cases of stuff all waiting for me. Nobody said a word, so I just sat down and joined in. Chester Thompson was the drummer, and Al Johnson was on bass. An hour went by, and nobody *still* said anything. Finally, Wayne Shorter introduced himself, and said, "If I were ever a percussionist, I'd play like you." And I was in the band.

MR: So, then you toured.

AA: Yeah, New York and then Europe. Chester was incredible. So precise; his decisions of changing, to fit the music, were solid. He never made a mistake. And Al—his style was new to me too: his pedals, sounds, harmonics. This was all a level of music I had never heard before. The band just told me to be myself and fit in. And since the music was so new, I felt a little inhibited, and I started thinking, and that tied me all up. And finally, at the moment of the most confusion, when I didn't know what to do, and they still didn't tell me—I understood.

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INSIDE EAMES:



After being steam bent, the wood is allowed to dry for 48 hours.

Custom-Made With Tender Loving Care

by Richard Egart

When one thinks about the construction of a fine acoustic instrument, such as a violin or a guitar, the scene that comes to mind is one in which a craftsman carefully works with the wood by hand. Every step in the making of the instrument is carried out slowly and with a dedication to quality inspired by a true love of the instrument. This is not, however, the scene which comes to mind when one considers drum manufacturing. One is more likely to visualize a factory full of machines and assembly-line workers wearing safety goggles. Is it possible to make a drum with the same love and care that is used with other musical instruments? Joe MacSweeney, owner of Eames Drum Company, thinks that it is.

The Eames story began in 1950 when Ralph Eames purchased the tools and equipment that had been used by the Stone Drum Company of Boston. (Ralph Eames had been a student of George Lawrence Stone.) At the time, Eames was primarily interested in drum repair, and so he opened a "custom shop" in his basement. Because of the trend towards smaller bass drums, much of his early business involved cutting down larger bass drums to smaller sizes. One of Ralph's interests was in rope-tensioned drums, and he subsequently developed and began manufacturing his own design of Colonial-style drums.

Besides his drum business, Eames was an



Jim Standish bevels the edge of a snare drum shell, using the wheel which dates back to the 1890s, and was purchased from the Stone Drum Company.



Each shell is sanded by hand, inside and out.



The next step is the finishing of the shell, which is also done completely by hand.



Joe MacSweeney presents a finished shell to a customer.



The Eames "showroom." Shells can be fitted with whichever brand of hardware the customer desires.

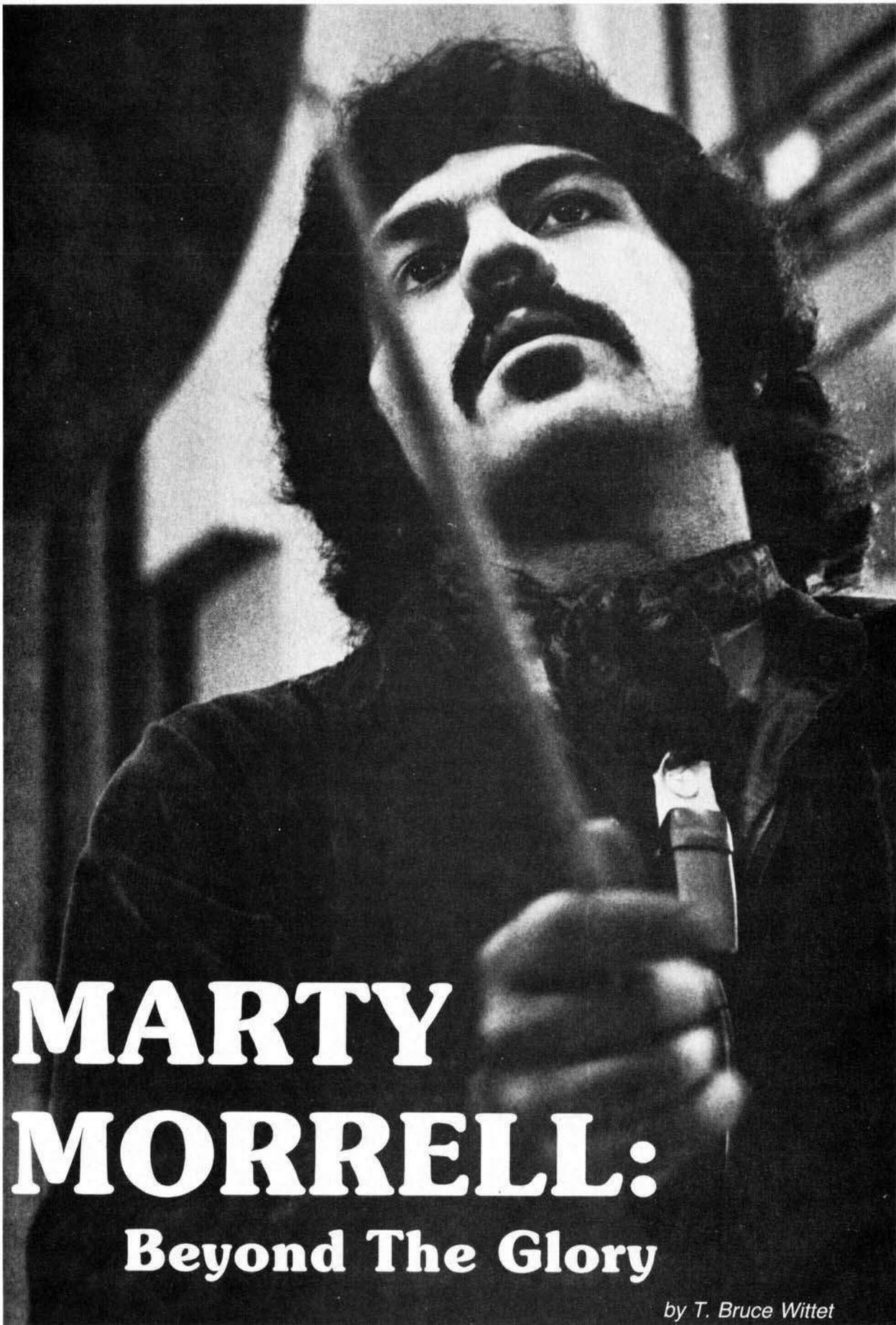
active teacher, and one of his students was Joe MacSweeney. In May of 1972, Joe asked Ralph if he could help out in the shop, and Ralph agreed to let him try it. It worked out very well. MacSweeney tells about his apprenticeship: "I enjoyed the work and found out that I had some ability in working with wood, although I didn't have a background in it. Ralph was pretty much just making rope-tension drums and doing repairs, but I was more interested in "modern" drums. I had only been working there a couple of weeks when I suggested that I could make a drum set using these shells. The difference was in the way the heads were tensioned—not in the shells themselves. So I made the first set in '72. I was basically satisfied with everything except the snare drum, which I thought had a very standard sound. So I continued to use a *Radio King*. I always wondered why I felt that sounded better, but I wasn't really in a position to do anything about it. The Bicentennial was coming up and until that was over, we were kept completely busy making rope-tension drums.

"I bought the company on January 1, 1978. At that point, the business had slowed down a lot because of the saturation of the rope drums during the Bicentennial. I knew I had to do something to keep the business alive, so I got the idea to offer the shells I had made for my own set to other people, to see if there was any interest. It went very slow at first. We got discouraged a couple of times and were ready to drop the whole thing, but then somebody would order something and we would stick with it.

"The construction was still the lightweight shell designed for rope tensioning. It did pretty well for toms and bass drums, but it didn't sell snare drums. The metal drum was so popular that no one had really come up with a wood drum that would project like the metal drum. I was interested in somehow trying to duplicate the *Radio King* and the *Stone Master Model*, but we were using different wood and a different construction. So I toyed around with ideas but never actually did too much experimenting. I finally did, however, decide to try and duplicate the *Stone Master Model* with the materials we had been using all along. We made up a 5 x 14 and a 6 1/2 x 14, and asked people to try it out and see what they thought of it. Danny Gottlieb took one out on the road with the Metheny Group. The response was great. It had quite a bit of projection but without that overtone that is associated with metal drums."

The drum that MacSweeney produced was constructed of 15-ply birch. He explained, "I didn't set out to make it a certain number of plies. I set out to make a strong, half-inch or better shell. It ended up being closer to 5/8 inch. It's not the plies that count. It's the overall thickness in relation to the solid mass. Much of it is actually dependent on the glue. Nobody ever talks about glue, because in the machine-made shell it is being applied automatically. But the glue is very important because it is bonding veneers. If the glue is stronger than the wood itself, those veneers then become quite solid and dense. When a head is suspended over a dense shell, the sound will be reflected rather than

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**MARTY
MORRELL:
Beyond The Glory**

Photo by Hans Harzheim

by T. Bruce Wittet

The night before I was to interview Marty Morrell, long-time drummer with the late jazz pianist Bill Evans, I sat up late in a downtown Toronto highrise listening to albums recorded in New York and Tokyo: Marty trading fours with Evans and Eddie Gomez. Crisp singles and tasty brush-work.

The next day I drove north for an hour, and, with bug-spattered windshield, entered the Morrell corral. The instant I opened my door I was surrounded by hens, chickens, roosters, and cats looking for food as if it always arrived in a Volkswagen Beetle.

We started our conversation over coffee and bagels in his lovely farmhouse, and concluded in his studio/office located in one of the outbuildings. In one corner were his home-finished Slingerlands, the ones he used with the Bill Evans trio. On the walls, above the piano and taping equipment, were some family shots and a post card from Evans congratulating Marty on the birth of his daughter.

TBW: I was surprised to find that you've been living in Canada.

MM: The first time I was here was in 1967 with Gabor Szabo and then I came up with Diahann Carroll once and, you know, on different occasions with other people. I always loved it here. I always felt it was sort of like Europe but with the U.S. overtones—a really nice combination. We came up to live in '74. My wife is Canadian so I got my papers in three weeks.

TBW: A minor miracle. Going back, what sort of schooling have you had?

MM: I studied classical music; the legit approach to percussion. I studied with Morris Goldenberg for mallets, and with Paul Price, and I studied tymps with Saul Goodman. I never touched anything relating to jazz; I just picked it up by listening.

TBW: This would be when you were going to school?

MM: This was in '61. I went to the Manhattan School of Music, but I had studied privately before that. I took drum lessons, and then in high school I started studying mallets with Stanley Krell, who was a Broadway show drummer. He told me all about the Manhattan School of Music and that I should go there. My dad agreed, which was nice, because he had to pay for it. I passed the entrance exam and went for three years, majoring in music and studying everything: theory, dictation, sight singing, percussion. I also played in percussion ensembles. That's something you don't find too much up here.

I started playing dance drums because my cousin was playing in a band and he was out making money, you know, and I was still in junior high school. He was out making fifteen bucks on a Saturday

night and I thought that was fantastic. So I just listened to the radio and heard what other drummers were doing and picked it up.

TBW: Was it initially jazz or R&B, for example?

MM: Well, I started listening to "Rock Around the Clock," Elvis Presley's "Hound Dog," you know. I used to play along to the radio, which was great because I had to use my ear and I had to change styles for every tune that came on.

TBW: Also, I guess you had to play at a volume such that you could still hear the radio.

MM: I used to turn the radio up full blast and drive my parents nuts. They can appreciate it now, having gone through all that, but then it was kind of tough for them.

TBW: Well, you've come a long way from New York. Were you born there?

MM: Yes, I was born in Manhattan and we lived in Queens until I was fifteen. Then my parents moved out to Long Island. When I was about nineteen I moved back into Manhattan and had my own apartment. I was more or less working, doing club dates and weddings.

TBW: Were you through school by that time?

MM: No, this was in conjunction with school but then I got a job to go on the road and I quit school. It was a gig with Robert Goulet when I was about twenty. The gig paid a whole lot of bread and I was getting restless: I wanted to get out and play, and the gig paid \$400 a week and at that time that was a lot of money. So I grabbed it and saved a bit of bread and got a lot of experience. We travelled and played Vegas and all over the U.S. It was a regular big-band thing with strings. I got into jazz for a little fun, you know, because basically I started out as a commercial player. So after the stint with Robert Goulet, I travelled with Diahann Carroll. I did a lot of that, going out with singers.

TBW: When did you make your first recording?

MM: Well, with Goulet we did some albums with Don Costa.

TBW: Anonymous stuff?

MM: Yeah, just sessions out in L.A. with strings. The first jazz album was with Steve Kuhn and Gary MacFarland called *October Suite* on Impulse. That was in 1966. That was recorded at A & R studios in New York. Ron Carter was on bass. It's quite an interesting album.

TBW: Are we jumping the gun a little—1966?

MM: No, before that I was essentially a student and travelling with singers, and that was it. Just freelancing, doing gigs around town and playing in rehearsal bands, trying to get by and keep the rent paid.

TBW: You mention travelling in the States. Did you make it to Europe? With Bill Evans, of course, there's *Live in Tokyo*.

MM: Oh, with Bill I did extensive touring, all through Europe; in fact, we used to go to Europe two or three times a year. We went to South America, to Japan twice, and across Canada too. That's how I met my wife, working with Bill in Toronto at the Old Town Tavern in 1970.

TBW: You were with Bill from '68 through '74. That's a long time with one group.

MM: Yeah, and it was great—just super.

TBW: For a guy who started in commercial bands and who had listened to a lot of rock and roll, did you come by small group playing easily?

MM: Well, I went through lots of brushes! I think I more or less got the brush thing together playing with Bill. They seemed to be the natural way to go.

TBW: Did he give you many instructions?

MM: Bill never said anything to me about how I should play or when I should play. He didn't care if I laid out or took a walk. The only thing he said was that he enjoyed my playing, which was really nice. I had total freedom.

TBW: That's why you stayed six years.

MM: Yes. And the group evolved. Certain tunes we'd play a certain way and then decide, "Let's have a bass solo first tonight," or "Let's trade choruses with bass and drums," like on "My Romance." That's as far as the discussion went.

TBW: Changing the subject for a moment, you do a lot of percussion work alongside drum set players. Have you any comments about the way drummers play?

MM: The only difficulty I have is playing with a drummer who doesn't know that there's a percussionist there. Percussion and drums should work together to some degree. I think that the drums lead more and it's up to the percussionist to lock in to what the drummer is doing, but both should lock in on the basic time feel. I especially enjoy playing with drummers who aren't terribly busy and who let the music happen.

TBW: I guess with Bill Evans you built a style around that sort of thing, of not clouding the piano.

MM: The whole idea of the trio was a conversation between three musicians, and you had to listen. I mean, music is listening. Guys get too involved in themselves and it sounds that way out front.

TBW: What instruments do you play on percussion dates?

MM: Vibes, glock, xylophone, marimba. All the mallets. I might do a TV special that requires all the mallets and congas too, and Latin percussion.



"IN THE JAZZ SCENE, SOME CATS ARE VERY SELF-DESTRUCTIVE ... I'M NOT GOING TO COMPLAIN OR BE BITTER. TAKE THAT ENERGY AND PRACTICE, OR GO DO A COUPLE OF WEDDINGS. TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS. BE THANKFUL YOU'VE GOT A GIG."

hearing it back often. You make adjustments.

TBW: Is there a different approach to playing Latin instruments in the studios as opposed to live?

MM: Playing in the studio, you don't have to strike as hard. To be heard in a live situation you have to play stronger, whereas in the studio, the mic' is there and you can go for more tone, rather than volume just to cut.

TBW: If you were to point someone toward one recording you're particularly pleased with, which one would it be?

MM: I'll tell you, I'm not terribly proud of anything I've recorded, because I always hear things I could have done better. Once you get a month away from it, you're playing differently, you've changed. Hopefully, you're always growing. I'm proud that I'm on a lot of records. I think that when I record my own album as a leader then that will be it. I've got the Latin group and I'll be playing vibes. Brian Leonard on drums who is a studio player, Dick Smith on congas, and Bob McLaren who is an excellent studio drummer, plays bass in the band, and Gary Williamson—superb piano player. If I can bring up Ramone I'll go into the studio. The kind of thing I enjoy doing is not earth shattering or world conquering. It's more or less middle-of-the-road, you know, like straight-ahead Latin.

TBW: Working in the studio often and under considerable constraint, you must get the urge to go out and just blow.

MM: Oh sure, once in a while. I'm approaching 40. When I was in my twenties and early thirties I had that energy, you know, "Let's play, let's play." But I think my creativity now is coming out more in a total context of playing vibes and writing. And also, I've never been one for super long drum solos—displays of technique—which is great, but I've never considered myself one of those drummers like Buddy Rich, Billy Cobham, or Jack DeJohnette who are all great soloists.

TBW: We talked a little outside about how dismal a life one can lead if it revolves around playing jazz. How do

TBW: Did you have any special Latin instruction?

MM: I did have a few lessons with Ramone Lopez, who is sort of a distant cousin. I met him in New York when I was thirteen. He was probably the first professional musician I knew and he helped me a lot.

TBW: Did you have any difficulties playing congas? To get it authentic is hard.

MM: I grew up with it. My parents listened to Latin music. The first drums I owned were the bongos. It was part of my life. I didn't really learn proper technique until I came up here to Canada because I never played congas professionally before. I knew some of the patterns.

TBW: How did you drift into percussion? I'd come up to Toronto and see you on kit, but lately I've seen you on TV playing percussion. There can't be that many drummers of your caliber or, at least, realm of experience in Toronto.

MM: I do a lot of kit work; probably a lot more than you think. I do a lot of work at CFTO where the band is never seen on camera. Let's face it, there are some great drummers in town: Bob McLaren, Terry Clarke. These guys are great. I'm just happy to get a call playing percussion next to them. I get a lot from it and hopefully they get something from it too. I don't feel, you know, that I wish I were

playing drums. I enjoy my percussion work just as much as my drum work.

TBW: After playing jazz gigs and then coming here and doing session work, did you have to make a lot of adaptations?

MM: You mean as far as ego goes? Sure. Studio work requires almost a selfless attitude. But there is a lot of input required and creativity on a different level. But sure, you have to adapt if you're doing a jingle and they're paying you a lot of money for that hour. It's a matter of being courteous and a good worker, and you get more work from it too.

TBW: Had you any prior exposure to the studio logic of playing sparsely and tuning the drums differently? A lot of your recordings that people would know are really different from the type of thing you do now.

MM: Well, I didn't get into all that until coming up to Canada. I've never been one, quite frankly, for spending a lot of time tuning my drums. You know, put the head on, tighten it and try to get a decent sound and just play. But the studio thing requires more attention in that area, sure. It's a matter of studying, listening to what cats are doing, and observing it more closely.

TBW: Which I guess you get a chance to do playing percussion beside other drummers.

MM: Yes, and doing it yourself and

you feel about young guys coming up now who are sure they want to play jazz exclusively?

MM: Well, I think it's a good thing from the educational standpoint; certainly the rock thing came out of it. Originally rock had a swing kind of beat and it gradually changed through the years where the dotted eighth/sixteenth evened-out more and it turned into eighth-note music. I think it's good to study and understand what happened before, but not to be limited and close oneself off.

TBW: Jazz was good to you. Among drummers your name is still a household word. But you're saying that the pay is low and the recognition was not a sufficient reward?

MM: Exactly. There was a period when money didn't matter. I had that energy and was, of course, single. I was on the road and having a ball, making a bit of bread, paying my rent at home and getting an education. If you're smart you can branch out to all kinds of music. Getting the jazz thing together is one of the harder forms of music, I think. But as time went on and priorities started changing (I wanted to start a family), being on the road all the time is tedious. I put in ten years on the road. You don't get a hell of a lot accomplished except the gig at night. It's tough, even to practice or to try other things, because you're staying in a hotel room. You go to the gig at night, you have a few tastes, you hang out afterwards, and you sleep all day and do the same thing over and over again. You might have had some exhilarating nights: "Wow, I played a couple of hot eights," but there's more to life than a pair of hot eights, man.

TBW: So you're definitely not devoted to the notion of the starving artist.

MM: No, no, I don't believe that. Nowadays is such a great time for musicians because a musician can earn a good living playing in the studios and can go out in the morning, do some dates and be at home at night with the family. It doesn't have to stop you from being creative: you have time to write and do projects and do some playing. After a while you want something more than the glory. For me the glory doesn't pay my bills, man. I can't afford to pay my bills or send my child to school. I've got to think about retiring some day, and what if I get sick and I can't play? What do I do then, sell shoes?

I think people should take a good look and go past just the hot eights and see life as more than groups of notes and shots. The sooner you think in terms of where you're headed in the future, the more you can take care of business now when you're young.

TBW: A friend of mine was speaking to Ralph Towner who was sort of lamenting the fact that nowadays, younger musi-

cians are really playing it safe, playing be-bop only as recreation. Of course, then you have the Ornette Coleman school.

MM: I don't know, it seems to go around in circles. I think the public has been bombarded with so many kinds of groups and sounds. You know, Ornette and Archie Shepp—I don't buy that at all. I don't enjoy listening to hostility and anger coming out in music.

TBW: Did you ever get any calls to play that music?

MM: Sure, I did when I was living in New York and I'd go and try to cover the gig because I needed the gig, not because my heart was in it. You know, "free jazz," and everything you play is cool. Sometimes that's fun to do. I've always found myself adapting to whatever gig it was so I could do the gig and get paid. Because however we're going to look at it, we're involved in an art, but just being *involved* in an art doesn't pay your rent and you don't want to be on skid row nowadays.

TBW: Have you seen many guys go down the tubes?

MM: Sure, friends—guys who are still playing little clubs and living in small apartments in New York, and always bitter, always complaining about the scene: "Oh man, I can't get a gig. I can't play what I want to play." I've never been one to complain like that. If I'm not working here or there, then I just don't have it together. There must be something I'm not doing right. Examine that carefully and then try to do what's necessary to cover the gig. I believe in working and I'm not going to be a starving jazz musician.

In the jazz scene, some cats are very self-destructive, very narrow, very bitter. I'm not going to complain or be bitter. Take that energy and practice, or go do a couple of weddings. Take care of business. Be thankful you've got a gig.

When I first got to Toronto, guys were saying that "He wouldn't take any kind of commercial gig." I just said, "Where's the gig, what time is it at, and what do I have to wear?"

TBW: Would you go back on the road now?

MM: No, I've had it. Maybe once every three or four years for a week. Some day I might enjoy taking my own band to Europe for some concerts, just for fun, but as a lifestyle, what you see here is *it* for me, man. I'm glad that I've got the studio thing together enough that I can do this. No matter how mundane people say the studios are, they require a very high level of musicianship. You never know what to expect on a date. You have to play in a lot of different styles. I draw on all my years and every situation I've been in.

TBW: It seems that the musicians who

get the good studio gigs are ones who've had years of road work.

MM: You have to go through it, man. And that's why it's good for young guys to play the be-bop thing. I don't think they'll ever really be able to play it, quite honestly, the way Philly Joe did or Charlie Parker did. Be-bop was an expression of the time. You can't really absorb the be-bop space—you might be able to study it on the outside—but you can never really get to the heart of it unless you've been there and grown through it. **TBW:** Do you think there's anything of the stature of be-bop now which reflects our society?

MM: I think that right now the "thing" is *everything*. Pop, jazz, Latin, rock. I think guys should get into it as much as they can—all the styles.

TBW: Speaking of getting into styles, a friend once remarked that a problem with interviews is that the younger player is told simply to go out and do it, in the absence of tips about woodshedding and practice routines.

MM: I'll tell you, I've never been one to practice. The only things I practiced were things requiring a lot of technique, such as legit snare drum, like out of the Podemski book. But those who've said to go out and do it—I'm a believer in that also. I did a little teaching, but students would come to me and want to find out what the secret was. There's no secret, man. You either hear it or you don't. If you've got some technique behind you, you have the chops to do the jazz thing. *Listen*, go out and watch guys play, see how they get the sound. If you really feel it in your heart and hear it, then you should get it.

TBW: Okay. Who did you listen to?

MM: I listened to Max Roach, Roy Haynes, Philly Joe, Tony Williams, Elvin. How anybody would want to go out and try to play be-bop after hearing Philly Joe Jones is beyond me. He said it all. In eight bars he defined be-bop.

TBW: In your (jazz) playing, I hear more Roy Haynes than Elvin.

MM: Well, don't forget, it's the kind of music, too. You wouldn't want to approach the Bill Evans Trio like you would playing with Coltrane in a quartet. **TBW:** I don't know. Elvin recorded with Oregon—what a mixture!

MM: Actually, Elvin sat in with Bill once. It sounded great. Bill didn't dig it at all, but I loved it.

TBW: Let's talk about some drum stuff. You've used that Slingerland set for a while.

MM: I've had that Slingerland set for years, and for the studios I have a set of Ludwig, five toms and a bass drum, and a set of Milestone drums.

TBW: Is there some quality you like about each?

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Derek Hess plays drums with the Rossington Collins Band, a group made up of Lynyrd Skynyrd band members plus some new faces. Derek is one of those new faces, and we first met at a Rossington Collins concert in Holmdel, New Jersey on July 16, 1981. I'd arrived a few hours before showtime and began reading the concert program. "We've always been very determined people," Gary Rossington says. "The word 'defeat' is not in our dictionary. We never learned how to quit. We've got some great musicians, people who care as much as we do, and we're excited and proud of what we've put together." To which Allen Collins added, "We have a goal to be the best band in the world and we will not be defeated."

My first impression of Skynyrd was from a carpenter who used to blast "Free Bird" on a cassette machine while he hammered on the house across the street at 7:00 AM, after I'd just rolled in at 5:00 AM from a gig! So, I had closed my mind to what that band had to offer. But, I liked "Sweet Home, Alabama," and when I heard the tape of the first Rossington Collins album Anytime, Anyplace, Anywhere—I was impressed! Seeing them perform live was even more impressive because they are "a band" in the best sense. Team players who support each other so that the whole is

greater than the parts.

Rossington Collins Band is not a remake of Lynyrd Skynyrd. The influence is there, to be sure, but this band is a whole different concept. Derek and I spoke after the concert and, later, over the phone. He's great to watch onstage, sitting behind his big kit of canary-yellow Slingerland drums, making every note mean something, and never overplaying.

During our phone interview we were fortunate to be able to discuss This Is The Way, the band's second album, and Derek was very candid throughout, giving excellent insight into the inner workings of the Rossington Collins Band.

SF: How did you get with the Rossington-Collins Band?

DH: A lot of people are probably wondering why I'm doing it and Artimus Pyle from Skynyrd isn't. I'm from Jacksonville. I've been here all my life. It's my home and likewise with Gary Rossington, Allen Collins and everybody that was in Lynyrd Skynyrd. I knew them back in the bar days. Me and Barry Harwood—the third guitarist in this band—had a real serious group going. People may have noticed that Barry did a couple of session things with Skynyrd on dobro and some other stuff. It was a matter of time. It seemed like the formula was waiting in line. Being from Jacksonville; knowing them for so long; I was

kind of laying low when they were putting the group together.

Way back between the first and second Skynyrd albums, Ronnie and Gary approached me about joining the band. Bob Burns, their original drummer, did the first two albums and then they got Artimus. But me and Barry had a pretty serious group, something we believed in, and at the time Barry had a role in Atlanta doing session work and had some people interested in our music. So I thought it was looking up for us. If Gary and Ronnie had pressed me for an answer, I probably would've passed it up because they weren't really doing anything. In all honesty, they weren't one of my major idols in music or as a band. This was way before "Sweet Home, Alabama" caught my attention. Their albums progressed on and on until *Street Survivor*, and I think that was a great tribute to Lynyrd Skynyrd.

SF: What was Gary and Allen's concept for this band?

DH: They could've taken the easy way out and put a few more Skynyrd favorites in our repertoire. "Free Bird" came about really as a crowd pleaser. There was no denying they wanted to hear it and it was kind of owed to them. All in all, Gary and Allen really wanted to try something new and different. It was never discussed at any length, but from what



DEREK HESS:

Rossington Collins Band

by Scott K. Fish

I gather, the Skynyrd members were going to approach some studio players to do an album. I think they ended up on a project on which they were all doing various parts. Gary and Allen were the producers. Billy and Leon were playing on it too, so they decided, "What's wrong with going with just what we've got?" They added to the four of them.

They had Barry pretty much already signed up. Dale Krantz came along and that was a story in itself. Any male, unless he was totally predominant, would be compared to Ronnie Van Zant. They figured they'd try something different, and they needed to polish it off with somebody playing drums.

SF: Is it true that you studied piano for several years?

DH: Yeah. I studied eight or nine years. I mess around on piano still. People go "God Almighty! You're good!" It's not that. I've got my favorite four licks. I can go on for about two minutes and then I've got to go on to the next one. That's all I can do.

SF: Who were the drummers that influenced you?

DH: Well, a total group was usually more of an influence than just the drummers. I have to get into the whole feel of a group. Perhaps that's from my music training outside of drumming. My drumming would be, in some instances, melodic.

There's a music approach going on besides pounding. I think I've really got an edge over a lot of drummers in a way, because I'm really aware of what's going on in the whole unit: guitars, piano, or whatever. I really feel blessed with an ear for the music end of it as well as applying the percussion to it.

There have been drummers that I've given ear to. Mitch Mitchell was tremendous; especially the material he had to work with with a three-piece band. I consider him a busy player, but he had plenty of room. He didn't overdo it. It was damn right. Mick Fleetwood's another influence. Any good funk drummer. I can't think of a lot of names. A couple of tunes Rufus turned out I loved. Just the feel. Mainly, I'm attracted to the whole feel of the music that I'm hearing and drummers have a lot to do with that.

One major influence was The Band. They were my Beatles.

SF: What did you like about The Band?

DH: It's really hard to put my finger on. They never really infiltrated down South that much. There is only one out of ten people who know who I mean when I mention The Band. They think I'm saying a band. But I was coming out of Grand Funk Railroad and this rock and roll bash era, '67 to '70, and I remember a friend turned me onto The Band. Their second album is the one that just ate me

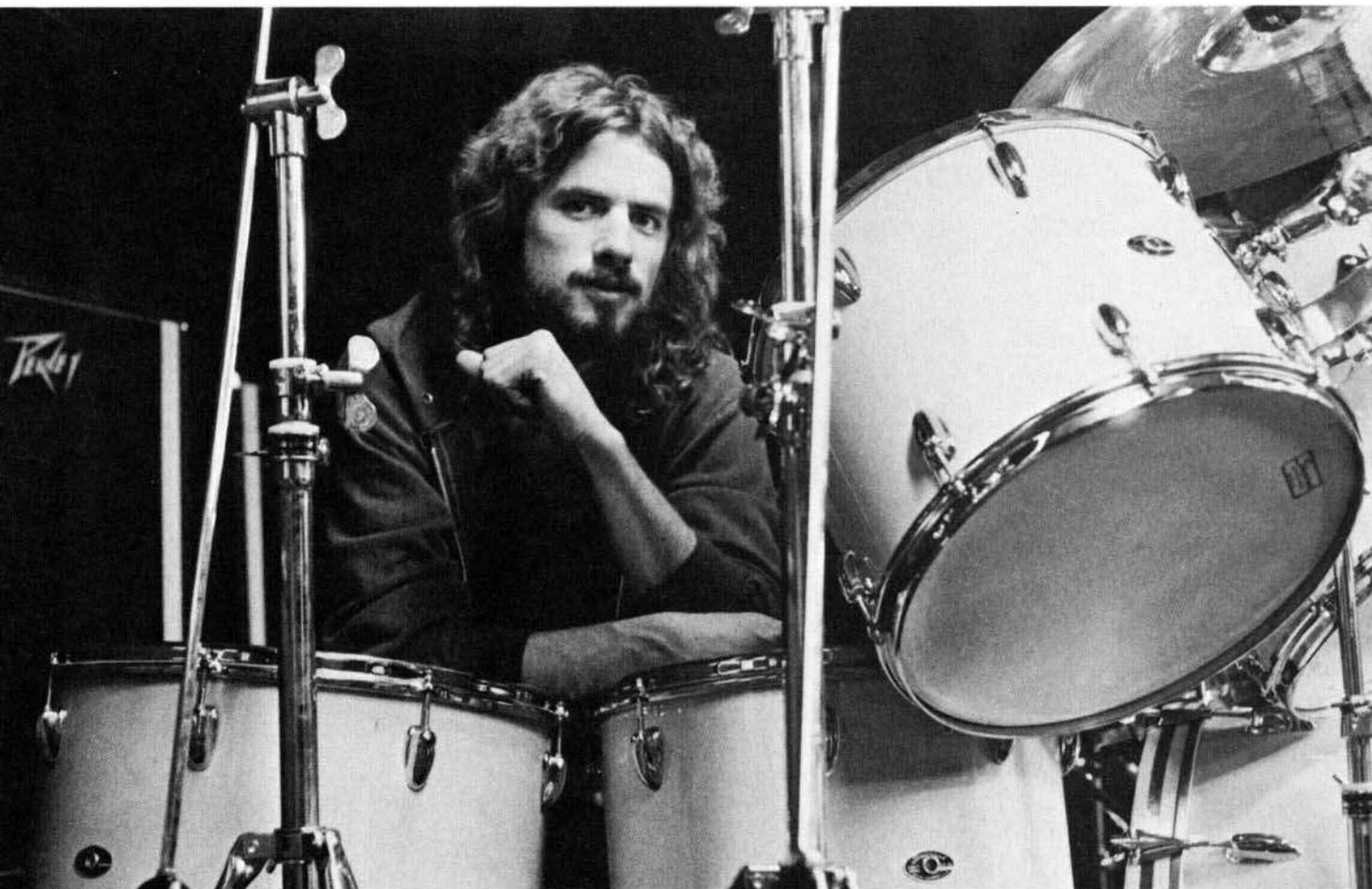
alive. They were a tremendous influence lyrically and musically. They just had a damn neat original approach all the way around.

SF: Do you think it had anything to do with them being together for so many years?

DH: Yeah, that's just so obvious. They were older players and had such a mature approach. If I hadn't had The Band to listen to I would've really been missing something. If I had to single out one group to meet, it would be them out of anybody.

SF: Did classical music influence you from your piano background?

DH: Some of it. When Tomita came out with *Snowflakes Are Dancing*, I really took to that. I probably took some of that music when I was into piano, but my mother always tended to influence the teacher to show me the boogie-woogie stuff or her favorites. But, I've got an ear for classical music. That Tomita album was Debussy's music. He wrote some beautiful music. To me, it moved air a lot, if that makes any sense. I heard "weather" in it. Does that sound nuts? It was like the same feeling with an old song when you hear it years later. It rejuvenates like nostalgia. Debussy's music was real nostalgic, but there was nothing for me to be nostalgic about! Like "Clare De Lune"—some of the



music in there sounds like wind. There's not one wind effect in it. I'm talking about the way the music rolls around; a force of nature-type effect.

I loved Glenn Miller, Jimmy Dorsey and that era of music, too. Melodic stuff. SF: Obviously you can read music. You've never had formal drum lessons, but have you ever cracked open a drum book and studied it on your own?

DH: If you laid out a basic rudiment pattern, or a school book, I'd have no idea what was going on. I swear. I could not do it. Sometimes I feel ashamed for not knowing, but . . .

SF: Well, it hasn't affected your playing.

DH: I think I've got a real good consistency or feel for playing real good for a band. A band has got to have what we call that "battery." Playing with a bass player like Leon Wilkeson is hog heaven. Drums and bass have so much to do with one another. Leon is just one of the cylinders, really. He has such solidity. He's not a fancy bass player—he just has very moving patterns that make the songs feel good. He makes you play. It's a real inspiration to play with a good bass player or a good rhythm section, if you've got a real solid foundation. I don't care who you are—if the band is famous or if you're doing complicated or complex material, to real simple, basic straight-ahead stuff: *Feel* is really where

it's at.

SF: Do you listen to a variety of music?

DH: When me and Barry first met in junior high school, he was playing clarinet and I played alto saxophone and piano. Saxophone was probably just a novelty or a whim that I went through for two years. I guess it kept my interest up. That was about when the Beatles came out. In the middle Sixties there were bands all over! The Yardbirds, Beau Brummels—they were just coming from everywhere. Now it seems like there's ten-thousand times more. But I was listening to Joan Baez when I was eight or nine years old. I just loved her. She was just straight folk music back there. With the Glenn Miller music—that was just some pretty music, the woodwinds and the melody in three-part harmony. That just had an effect on me.

I went through a jazz/rock phase for a while. I still like a lot of it. There's some incredible players out there. I actually got to where I probably disliked the run-of-the-mill, Southern rock and roll. Or, I had a resistance to this type of music when I went through the Stanley Clarke/Chick Corea phase. That music wasn't any major influence, but I went through it and I still listen to groups like that. I ventured into that and got my chops up, and developed the ability to be able to wander a little bit, from side to side of

the straight-ahead rock and roll.

I'm a Stevie Wonder idiot/fanatic, and Earth, Wind, & Fire, and I frequently listen to bluegrass and reggae. I've also listened to Fleetwood Mac, John Mayall, Clapton, Beck, and blues stuff.

SF: What were you doing in Jacksonville when Lynyrd Skynyrd was making it big?

DH: I was working in a music store for what seemed like half my life. Eight years running the drum department! Everybody's thinking, "Oh, that's a happening job you got." I said, "The hell with that." It was as much a drag as anything could've been. I mean, it wasn't all bad, mainly because we had some real good guys working there that had a good time and got along real good.

SF: You were in Melanie's band for a while, weren't you?

DH: Yeah, I was. I tell you, she's still as potent as they come. We did a real short-lived gig about two summers ago. I had a jazz-rock group that did some demo tapes. Well, the piano player, myself, and the guitar player had a group and went out and did a little road thing in different States for a while, and it was terrible. It was just depressing. We weren't making any money, and it was awful! We could afford a sound man and that was it. The musicians were the roadies and the players. We had this

booking agent that would jack us from Pensacola, Florida to somewhere in Tennessee on a Sunday to Monday. That means packing up Sunday, driving all night, getting there, setting up and playing that next night. It would just tear you up!

We gave that up pretty quick. Ricky Medlock and Blackfoot were up in Ohio, and they had a show with Melanie. She had her own band and was striking out on an electric go around for a time. She had a pretty good band, but they were having some problems. Blackfoot turned Melanie onto us. At *that* time we were on break in this club in Gainesville, Florida. Our guitar player said, "Ricky's on the phone saying Melanie needs a band." I just came *off* the wall. We ended up with her, put a show together, and went out and did some of her new material, plus some of her old things.

The highlight was a big show at Lake Geneva in Switzerland. That was probably my first big supercharge in front of a massive audience. There were about 12,000 the first night, and Melanie was headlining. It was like a miniature Woodstock. There were ethnic bands and some incredible music. Bands that had crazy-looking percussion instruments which I couldn't believe. A lot of different cultures of music. We were probably the only thing relevant to rock music on the bill.

We lasted with her about six or seven weeks. We were really into the whole thing as far as our feelings and our sincerity, but they were just having problems financially. They couldn't keep up salaries and I went into the hole real bad—and I've got a wife and two kids.

SF: How old are you now?

DH: Thirty. I've got a daughter who's thirteen and a boy about six and a half. I came fresh out of high school and I was married at seventeen and had a kid at eighteen. That was all back in them band days. It was a struggle there for a while. Because of my overhead, I couldn't fool around for long, so I went into this God-awful job. A friend of the family had a ship-service place, and I drove this truck around delivering to big freighters and tankers that would come into port. Jacksonville's a major shipping port. It was miserable and depressing, probably my all-time low. I worked there through the hottest part of the summer into the coldest part of the winter in these awful trucks that didn't have any heat in them. It would be freezing cold and I'd go to work at eight in the morning. It was eighteen or nineteen degrees before the sun really got going. I'd walk down this half-a-mile pier for three or four months. I hated it. All this was happening at the end of 1979. There was nowhere for me to turn. Our local band wasn't doing anything. We were *trying* to get some-

thing together, and about three o'clock one morning the phone rang and it was Billy Powell, our piano player. I knew they were getting the Rossington Collins band together and intended to use Artimus as their drummer. Then Artimus tore up his leg real bad in a motorcycle accident, and there was internal conflict over material and direction. There was that morning phone call and Billy said, "You want a gig?"

SF: What did you think about when you were driving that truck?

DH: I thought about what I was going to do and about how miserable I was. Just nothing was happening.

SF: What did you want to do?

DH: I guess I really didn't know. I was so inhibited because my life was at such a downhill thing, with the exception of the band we were trying to put together with the players from Melanie. So, when Billy called me in the middle of the week, he said, "Artimus has quit and you're the natural choice. Would you be interested?" I'd already rolled off the bed by then. It was just like a rescue. Unbelievable. Then, after he pumps me up. Billy says, "It's not for sure. Don't count on anything. They might change their mind." I said, "Don't even bother me!"

I was rattling in the sheets because times were bad for me. In two or three days I was out there to rehearse. Allen's got a building out in back of his house set up like a studio. We all knew each other and they respected the way I played. We just had to see if I was going to work. There was a stipulation hanging that if I worked out, and Artimus got better, he might join back up. Nothing personal, but I just don't think I could function with a two-drummer band. A percussion player is one thing, but I don't think I could play with another drumset player because of the way I play. Another thing, they said that if I was playing okay and they could live with my playing, it would suffice until Artimus could play again—then they'd pay me off and see me down the road! But, within four rehearsals that was over with. I was going to be the one and only!

SF: That must have been tough trying to get the band rolling again.

DH: It's been hard all along. It hasn't got that much easier yet, I swear. It seems like it was easier putting it together than keeping it going. But, last year Allen commented that this was the most happening thing he'd ever done and he was the most content. That's a pretty bold statement. Aside from really trying to split off from what they'd done with Skynyrd . . . well, the only thing that's ever brought Skynyrd into the picture is when it's forced on us in the media or through promoters. Anything to publicize who they were and what we're doing now. That's the only time it's ever

fed off of. The media guys will feed off that much more than Gary or Allen will.

I mean, we've got a female singer, the material is different, but there are things that do feed through. It's got to, because the majority of the players still play as they did with Skynyrd, but in a different set of gears. The three of us that weren't in Skynyrd definitely have got to affect what's different with this band. There's just no way around it. Any three different people would have to change it to a degree.

SF: How long did you get to rehearse before the band first started touring?

DH: They had about six or seven definite ideas for arrangements of tunes which made up six or seven tunes on the first album. It was a matter of me learning them and the band finishing them up. The third or fourth day in my involvement, we were offered this big Superdome Show gig in New Orleans at the tail end of the Mardi Gras. It was The Dirt Band, Crystal Gayle, Jimmy Buffett, Willie Nelson, and us. Here I was four days into this group and we had three weeks to rehearse if we wanted to do it. I was in the band the last week in January. The show was February 18. We put together seven tunes and we smoked it pretty good. That was our first major showing. We got back, cut the album, and then put the regular tour out. Together we went on the road, off and on, probably three or four months.

SF: There were some dates on that tour that the band cancelled on, and I'm told that was primarily for musical reasons.

DH: Gary and Allen didn't want to go back and do something which was stale to them. I'd love to do "Sweet Home, Alabama." I love the song, but we just have never gotten near it. There are real touchy, detailed reasons for not doing that. There are people thinking that the band needs to do it. In my own opinion. Gary and Allen would probably rather not do "Free Bird." Then again, maybe they like to because it was such an anthem type wrap-up to the Lynyrd Skynyrd show. It's probably because people have just got to hear it. It was a monster. A real simple, basic song. It's something that just always hits home. An identifying thing.

SF: How is it different backing up Melanie as opposed to Dale?

DH: In a way, Melanie occupied herself more by playing guitar. She always had something to grasp. I can't imagine myself out there in front of people at the front of the stage with nothing to hold on to. Players and drummers always have something they can put their hands on. Melanie and Dale are the same in that they're real foot stomping and get-it-out-there in their delivery, but there's something different about them and it's kind

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Your band has been playing for a couple of years now. The sound has come together, you have some original material, bookings are coming in steadily, everyone seems to like you, and yet, you don't seem to be able to get past a certain point. Perhaps it is time to think about acquiring a personal manager—someone who can help the band move into the mainstream of the music business. Sounds great. But how do you find such a person? And once you have found a manager, what can you realistically expect him or her to do for you?

Before deciding whether or not to acquire a personal manager, it is important that you understand exactly what it is that a personal manager does. The following definition comes from a pamphlet put out by the Conference of Personal Managers, a professional association of managers from all fields of the entertainment industry: "A personal manager is one who is engaged in the occupation of advising and counseling talent in the theatrical, entertainment and literary professions. A personal manager cannot by law seek employment or engagements for artists and entertainers whom he represents. He is one who has special knowledge to guide, advise, advance and promote the careers of clients who retain his professional services to develop new talent and create opportunities for the clients whom he represents. A personal manager shall act as a liaison between the clients whom he represents. A personal manager shall act as a liaison between his clients and theatrical agents as well as all others in the field of entertainment."

"... artists are given valuable services by lawyers, accountants, publicity directors, choreographers, musical conductors, arrangers, recording supervisors—but the *only* person they rely on for overall guidance in all areas—the person who helps the artists create, the person who gives totally of himself—who nurtures, grooms, guides, befriends, and at all times, is the force that is in front to break through the barriers of frustration and difficulty is the personal manager. It is he who believes in and keeps fighting for his clients when all others have given up."

Kiss manager. Bill Aucoin, elaborated on this and also explained the difference between a manager and an agent: "An agent's job is to find work. There are all kinds of agents, from those who book bands that are just beginning into local clubs, all the way to agents who book the top bands for tours around the world. Personal managers are responsible for guiding an artist's career; making decisions, like maybe deciding on which agents could best represent the artist; letting the artist know where the marketplace is today, and what kind of music is

Signing With A Personal Manager

by Rick Mattingly

most applicable to the areas the artist wants to play in; some managers even back artists after they have reached a certain stage so they can go further and devote themselves totally to their career. But it's *mainly* concerned with the creative approach to an artist which will help that artist become a success." Drummer Paul T. Riddle put it this way: "The management talks music to the heads of the record companies, the booking agency, the PR people, etc., and deals with them on a day to day basis."

There is no easy answer to the question, "How does one find a personal manager?" Each situation is unique. In some cases, it is the manager who finds the artist. In other cases, the artist works hard to attract the attention of a manager through audition tapes, phone calls, or whatever. In still other cases, someone who is personally close to the artist will become the personal manager. There are many situations in which an artist is represented by the person the artist is married to. Often, a new artist will sign with a booking agency, and when the artist's career looks as though it is beginning to take off, the agent will either become the artist's manager, or will help the artist hook up with a personal manager. (It should be noted that in most States, it is illegal for the same person to serve as both agent and manager, as this could constitute a conflict of interests. Even where it is not illegal, it is usually not a good idea.)

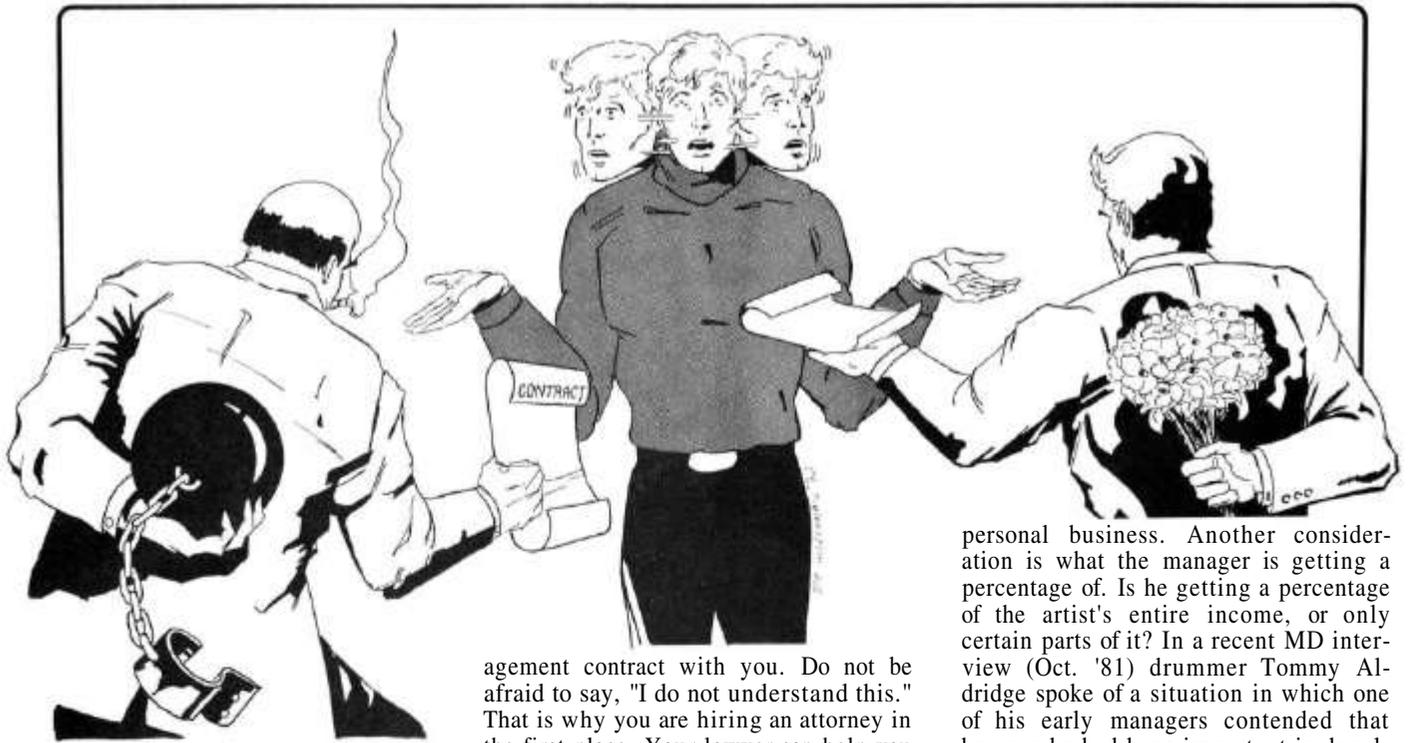
Although there is no rule for exactly how to go about finding a personal manager, there are a few guidelines which can be helpful in making a decision. Probably the most important thing is finding someone who is genuinely interested in your career. This would immediately rule out a manager who already handles a number of artists, as this person will not have the time to give you the individual attention that is needed. This would not, however, necessarily rule out one of the large management agencies. These agencies employ a number of per-

sonal managers and because of the many artists such an agency handles, they would have many contacts in the business. Dave Snowden, President of the International Theatrical Agencies Association, offered the following caution: "Be sure that such an agency assigns you a particular manager, and be sure that this manager is the only person you deal with. Do not be content to deal with secretaries."

The first point that everyone I spoke to mentioned was the importance of having a good lawyer. Bill Aucoin even has it written into the contract that the artists must have their own lawyer. He explains: "What you are really trying to do here is build a team. Probably the first thing an artist should do, once he decides he wants a manager, is to find a lawyer that he trusts and has a rapport with. It is also important that the lawyer and the manager work together well. Any time I negotiate something for an artist, I always make sure that the artist's lawyer knows what's happening at all times. It is good for the lawyer not only to understand it, but also to be able to help."

Equally important as finding a lawyer is finding the *right* lawyer. Dave Snowden stressed the importance of having a lawyer who knows and understands the music business. Even though a certain lawyer might be very successful when it comes to large corporations, small business, etc., if he has never dealt with a management contract before, he will be of little use to you. One should not make the mistake of thinking that *any* lawyer will do. As with a doctor, if you have a specialized problem you should go to a specialist.

It is not hard to find a competent lawyer, provided you look in the right places. If you want someone who is knowledgeable about the entertainment business, you should seek that person in



a place where a lot of that business is carried out. New York or L.A. would be reasonable places to look. Paul T. Riddle tells about the situation the Marshall Tucker Band encountered in their home state of South Carolina: "We had to go to New York to get good legal advice. He's an entertainment lawyer—someone who is well-versed in all of the different fields and knows exactly what is going on. Our trouble here at home was that we had good attorneys who were trying to help us, and although they were used to million-dollar corporations, they were not used to the type of cash flow that exists in the music business. It wasn't that they weren't good attorneys or accountants; they just weren't used to dealing with the music business. So now, as far as legal advice, everything is done for us in New York."

Once you have made the decision to try and find a lawyer, start asking questions. The Musician's Union is certainly in a position to recommend lawyers with music-business experience. You could also contact some of the large management agencies for their recommendations. The advice of fellow musicians who have worked with these lawyers would also be beneficial. After you have collected a few names, contact the lawyers themselves and meet with them. Do not sign with someone unless you have a good feeling about the future of the relationship. Your attorney has got to be as serious about what you hope to accomplish as you are. If you make a mistake about choosing your legal representative, you could end up paying for that mistake for years to come.

The lawyer should go over the man-

agement contract with you. Do not be afraid to say, "I do not understand this." That is why you are hiring an attorney in the first place. Your lawyer can help you understand exactly what the contract says, in terms of what your responsibilities are to the manager and what the manager's responsibilities are to you. Providing the lawyer has experience in dealing with management contracts, he will also be able to make sure that you are getting a fair deal.

Certainly, the contract is very important. But yet, it should not be viewed as something threatening. As Bill Aucoin explained: "It should be there in case there is ever a question in years to come. Both parties can look at it and know what they meant at the time. But generally, and this is true with almost all of the contracts I have ever signed, they have gone in the file and never been brought out again."

Regarding the details of the contract, every situation is unique and so, it is possible to give only the most general guidelines. The first area would probably be the length of time the contract covers. Generally, a contract will cover at least a two-year period. As Sid Bernstein commented: "It usually takes two years just to launch a career. It doesn't happen overnight." He stated that most contracts probably fall within the three to five year range.

The next area of importance concerns how the manager will be paid for his services. The usual way is some sort of percentage deal. Bill Aucoin has seen percentages as low as 5% and as high as 50%, but suggests that an average is probably 20%. A lot of it will depend on what the manager is doing for the artist. Some managers handle only professional business for the artist while other managers will also handle some of the artist's

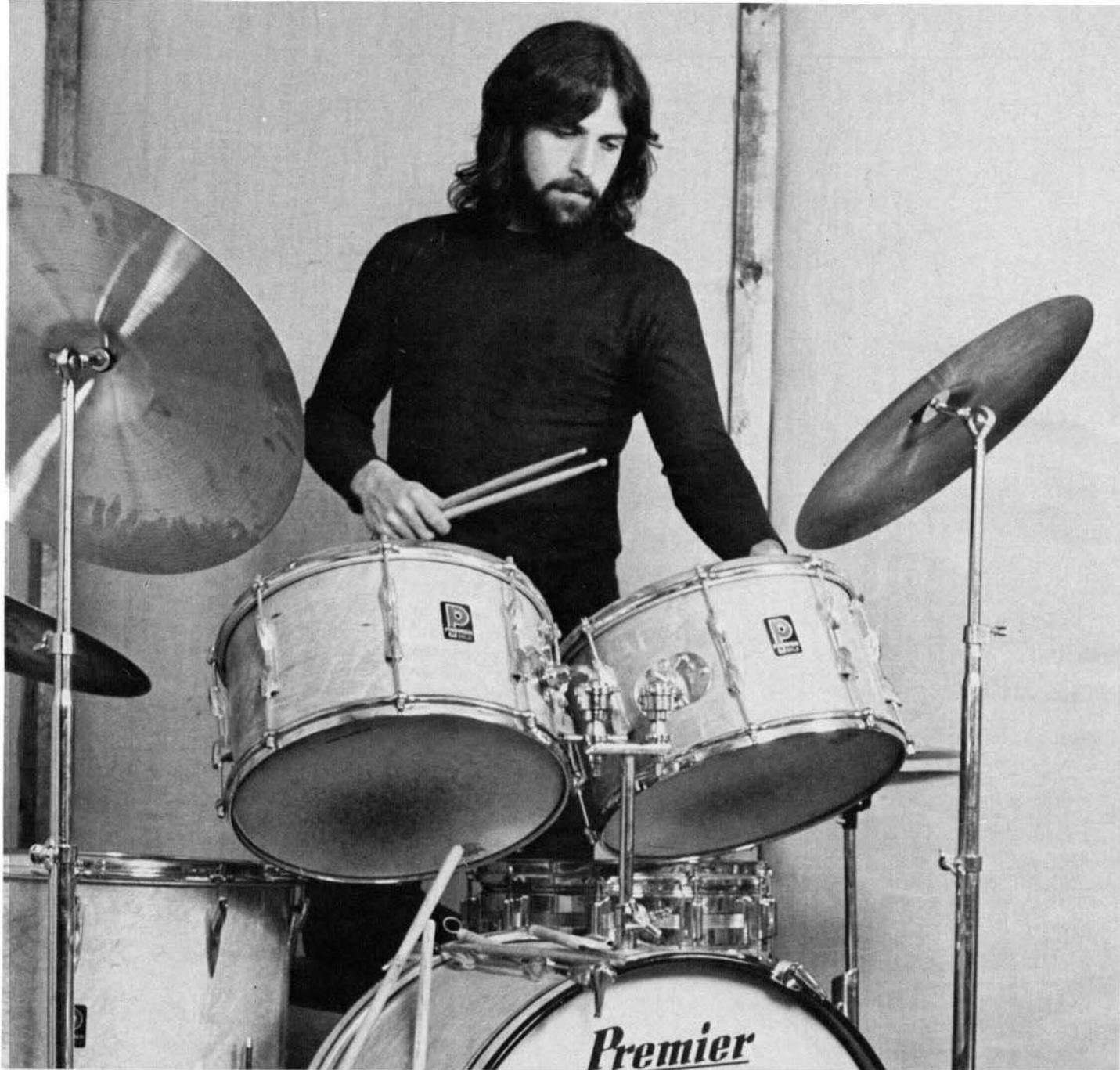
personal business. Another consideration is what the manager is getting a percentage of. Is he getting a percentage of the artist's entire income, or only certain parts of it? In a recent MD interview (Oct. '81) drummer Tommy Aldridge spoke of a situation in which one of his early managers contended that because he had been important in developing Tommy's career, he was entitled to a percentage of Tommy's earnings for the rest of Tommy's life! That is certainly an extreme example, but it points out once again the importance of having a good lawyer.

From this point, the details of the contract will vary significantly from artist to artist, but, generally, the contract will cover the specific responsibilities of the artist and the manager. The artist must know exactly what the manager will be doing to advance the artist's career, and the manager must be assured of the freedom to make certain decisions. For instance, the artist needs assurance that the manager will strive to get bookings. The manager, in turn, needs assurance that the artist is willing to work enough to pay the bills.

When it comes to career moves, the personal manager and the artist should make important decisions together. A successful career in music is a combination of high artistic standards and good business knowledge. The musicians provide the art; the manager takes care of the business. It is very important that they each understand how these two aspects influence each other, and this is why communication between artist and manager is so very necessary. This is also why the artist and manager must get to know and trust each other before any agreement is signed. The artist must have absolute faith in the manager's ability to handle the business. The manager must have absolute faith in the artistry of the musicians.

When looking for a manager, ask a lot of questions. Try to talk to people who

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by Robyn Flans

Many drummers have cited Bobby Colomby as one of the driving forces behind a new sound during the '60s. As a founding member of Blood, Sweat & Tears, Colomby was indeed a significant contributor in the creation of that jazz rock fusion.

While his livelihood is no longer in playing the drums, Colomby is still instrumental in a portion of the music we hear today through his position in Capitol Records' A&R department.

In the following interview, which took place in his office, Colomby shares his accounts of the past in his usual articulate and humor-filled manner, as well as, speaking candidly about the present state of the music industry.

RF: When and why did you start playing the drums?

BC: I grew up in New York City, which is quite an advantage for someone who is interested in music. My two older brothers were involved in the business side of the jazz world, as they managed Thelonious Monk. They were involved in the careers of many jazz artists who frequented the apartment where I lived with my mother. She cooked for the likes of Miles Davis and a long list, and the only music I heard in my house when I was a young man was be-bop. Since I got so used to that sound, it became virtually impossible for me to understand why kids liked rock & roll of the '50s and very early '60s. Harmonically it seemed lame, and rhythmically it suffered and it was just not interesting. When I would hear records, I would find myself playing with

a pair of brushes on the backs of albums and I would keep time with the records.

RF: How old were you?

BC: Ten, eleven, twelve; a little kid. It was just my way of being a participant in what was going on in my house. Aside from athletics, school at that early stage in my life was not the most interesting or exciting phase of my life, so I was fascinated by jazz. I almost automatically started playing the drums because there was no other instrument in the house that I could just pick up and be a part of. Being an impatient fellow, I didn't have to worry about the sound because there was an album jacket and brushes. January 20, 1960, my brother got me a set of Gretsch silver-sparkle drums with a hand-made 18" bass drum, the first ever of that size, that had belonged to Max Roach. I didn't have cymbals yet. I had

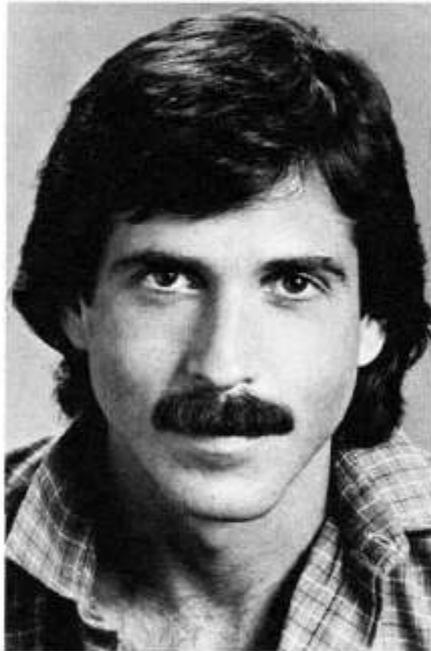
Bobby Colomby: Past And Present

to borrow \$30 from my friend, Harold Bloomfield, so I could have a cymbal. Before I had the official set of drums, I was playing on an old snare drum with a jacket over it. What I had done after the brushes and album jacket, was, I had a little game which had two round, sort of like tamborines with heads but no jingles, with a birdie you would knock back and forth. I don't recall the exact name of the game, but I used those as tomtoms and I put the snare drum with the jacket over it on a floor-standing ash tray. (That became the recording technique of the '70s.) The vertical pole of a lamp was my cymbal. There was no hi-hat or bass drum. I would play along with things, which now, I realize how complicated they were. There was a Tadd Dameron record on Prestige that was called "Philly J. J.," featuring Clifford Brown, a trumpet player, and the drumming of Philly Joe Jones and it was incredible. I learned all the solos, of course not with the same hand stroking technique, but kind of a sound-a-like style. And I would go from record to record like that, even "Topsy, Part II" which was relatively easy to play if you had gotten by the "Philly J. J." But it was a source of delight for my brother who would bring people in and say, "You've got to hear my little brother, who is 13 years old, play this music. He's close. I mean, it's not great, but damned close."

So then I got the set of drums and the cymbal, and two weeks into my having a set, and right about the time I was able to get a hi-hat, cymbals and a bass drum, I played with a band for a NYU fraternity party at the Broadway Central Hotel on New Year's Eve. I was 16 and there I was playing with a big jazz band. The upright bass player who was standing over me had the unique ability to, from a smile, vomit. He gave you no indication that he was getting sick. So, he was standing to my left while we were playing, and since it was New Year's, he found it a prerequisite to get very drunk in order to play this gig. While he was smiling at me, he vomited on my left shoulder, which is about the time I realized that I did not want to do this professionally. Absolutely true story. So then I found myself being a ringer for rock and roll bands. In other words, the drummers who were playing rock and roll at that time were a sorry lot. It was usually a bunch of kids in a neighborhood all play-

ing the guitar and they would all turn to one and say, "Since you're the worst guitar player, why don't you learn to play the drums so we can have a drummer." That's how most rock and roll drummers, especially out of the folk scene and pop scene, got started. So I had quite a head start. I was listening to far more complicated music and I aspired to heights, not stardom heights, but prowess heights. I really wanted to know how to play that instrument. I really enjoyed it.

I never took formal lessons. Late in my career, after I'd achieved some notoriety, I had a lesson with a person whose



name I won't mention, out of respect. For the first hour of the lesson, he told me what trouble I was in because everything I did was wrong and that I had a long way to go. After that, when I gave him my name and he recognized that I was the drummer in BS&T, he asked me how to play half the stuff on the record he had on hand. So from being a colossal mess, I became his idol in one name. It kind of made me feel okay about not having studied for a long time.

Studying is very important, though. I mean, you have to learn, but to my way of thinking, the best way to do it, although many will disagree, is to learn to play yourself. If you maximize your basic talent and *then* study, it's great. You hear from people, "Yeah, but if you do that, you have to unlearn all these bad

habits." I would sooner unlearn bad habits than realize that my basic musicality was never realized because I was simply imitating some teacher and that's all I've done and I've never gotten the chance to realize what it is in me, musically, that is special. Everybody who plays an instrument has a special feel and may never realize it because he's simply a clone of his teacher.

Drums to many people are simply a matter of athletics. Who is the fastest runner; who is the fastest drummer? That's what kids appreciate. Their values are pretty twisted, because they're kids. Their values are immature, obviously, so it really is the guy who can jump the highest, the longest or the fastest. That's fun too, but sometimes it gets overemphasized because the great drummers usually are great drummers, not because of a technical prowess. I had people ogle in awe, thinking I was an incredible technician. I'm not at all. I have all substitutions for things that are supposed to be played. I just have my own little tricks to make things sound exactly as they sound with the least amount of effort. I'm not a great technician. As the instructor did indicate to me, I play all wrong.

RF: Did you learn those little tricks just from yourself?

BC: Yeah, because I wanted to sound like Elvin Jones and Max Roach. I wanted to play like that, but you see, I was miked well. I was in the right place at the right time and people thought I was a genius. I wasn't. I was a very average jazz drummer. The secret to my success was simply a matter of being with a band that was perfect for me and typified what I could play best. It was a band that would take those jazz elements and convert them into a pop performance.

RF: How did you learn that? That was something that was new with BS&T.

BC: There was no way to learn it. There was no one playing that way.

RF: Exactly, but you said that is what you knew best.

BC: Because of the fact that I was one of the only people who enjoyed playing jazz who would "stoop," in quotes, to play rock and roll. It was the absolute sacrilegious thing *if a jazz* drummer was caught playing with a rock band. I frankly didn't give a shit because I had fun playing, and if it meant I was a ringer in a rock and roll band. cool. If it meant that I was going to play at a Bar Mitzvah, cool. No

problem. I loved music, so it didn't really matter. If I was playing with some people and someone said to play a merengue, great. That's some of the hippest stuff in the world, or to play in a Latin band. To me, you're an idiot if you stick with one type of style forever, because you're limiting yourself. You should be in a situation where for a week of your life, you actually play as a lefty, because if you do that, you'll be a different person. You'll start hearing completely different licks. You won't get bored of your own licks, which is what happens to a lot of musicians, not just drummers. You should find a way to really give yourself a kick in the ass so you can grow. Once you stop growing, go get another gig. Find something else to do. That's why I stopped playing the drums. I got real bored with my playing. I was just doing the same thing too long. I could be enticed into playing again. There are certain groups and styles, names withheld, that I would certainly love playing with on an occasion, but not for employment or on a permanent basis, because I'd get bored with that eventually.

When you go to a concert and hear a great drummer, you don't know how much more he can do than what you've heard. You also don't know how long it took him to get to even play one of those things. You also don't know that there's a good possibility that he's played every lick exactly the same, with the same expression, every night that week, or every day that year. The problem is that kids idolize so damn easily. Learn to idolize yourself, not that you have to go into massive ego erection, but you should give yourself a little credit and understand that everyone has magic. Everyone has his own little magic that no

one can duplicate. Here's the most important thing I'm going to say today, I think. When you imitate somebody, the best you're going to do is be *almost* as good as what you're imitating. It is impossible to be as good as something you're imitating. Theoretically, it's impossible. So the best you do is that you're almost as good as that thing you're imitating. Is that worth it? Take your influences, gather them, throw them in a big pot and then find out who you are. Those are your influences simply because they were the ones you were drawn to, so it's the closest to what you instinctively feel.

RF: How did BS&T come about?

BC: I was in graduate school and I was playing with some different people. I had stumbled upon a scene in Greenwich Village in New York City where there's a million types of music and people to play with and there weren't any drummers who were saying anything. So I became a genius because I knew how to roll. That was a miracle to these people. They had never dealt with a drummer who had even the slightest idea of what the instrument could do.

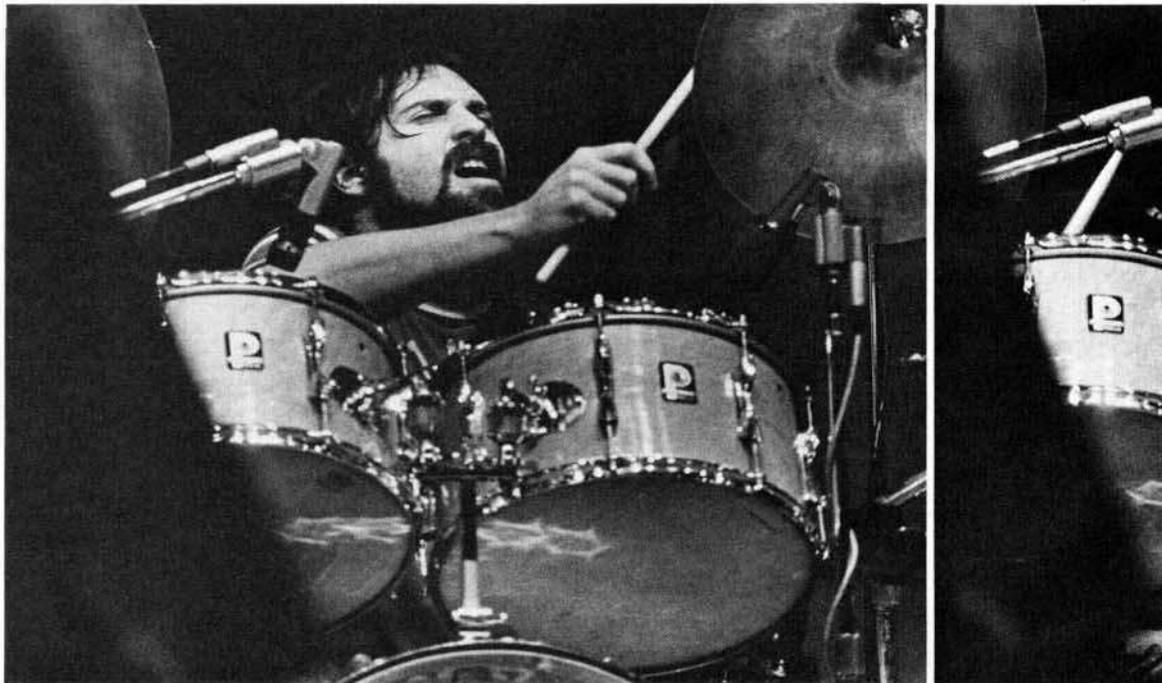
RF: What were you studying in school at the time?

BC: Psychology. I was playing with different people and I was very friendly with a fellow named Steve Katz, who was in a band called the Blues Project, that was nearing its demise. Since Steve and I were so close, we thought we would continue together and come up with something. Al Kooper was also in that band and quit before its demise and he decided he was going to go to England to be a record producer. To get enough money to go, he was going to do one last performance at Cafe Au Go Go on

Bleeker Street in the Village. He had asked me to play with him and I had said, "sure enough." He had a bass player by the name of Jimmy Fielder and I suggested that since Al and Steve had had a real angry parting of the ways, it would be nice if they played together again on this day. I was confident that Steve would, in fact, come and play this date for him. It was all gratis from our standpoint. Joining us on the bill, to help get people into this club which held 250, were Judy Collins and Paul Simon and we didn't have enough people there to draw flies. So the four of us played this date and I loved the tunes.

A lot of the tunes were Al's and I said, "Ya know, Steve and I are going to start this band and those tunes are great. It's going to be a jazzy feel and we're going to have horns in it." And Al said, "Yeah, I always wanted to start a band with horns in it." And that was that. And all of a sudden, I found out later, that not only had Steve asked Al for the tunes, but he invited Al to be in the band. Al not only had decided not to go to England, but he decided to be in the band and take over the band, which was just a bit much and in the long run, it didn't work out. After six months, after he realized the band was a failure, he quit. He quit because there was a mutual problem and it became a mutual decision for him to leave. He'd really had it anyway, but he kind of insisted that he was forced out. He was, in a sense, but he had been leaving anyway. The fact is, there were people in the band who felt, not that he should leave, but that we should get another singer who would have the strength to carry over the horns. Al didn't want another singer, so he left and we got David Clayton-Thomas.

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RF: Let's back up for a second. You're on Al's last gig and you're saying that you had this conception in your mind of a jazzy/pop feel. Where did this conception come from, since it was something that had never been done?

BC: Out of a complete hedonistic approach to music. I could not stand rock and roll. Rock and roll has changed since. I loved the Beatles and stuff like that, but didn't like most of the rest. So I found myself wanting to combine jazz with some of the elements of pop. I liked the rhythmic strength that emphasized things less subtly, having a vocalist who sang decent songs and having a youthful presentation, which were the pop things. On the jazz side, I wanted chords that were voiced much richer, a horn section so you're doing other things than just a rhythm guitar part, and saxophone and trumpet solos rather than guitar solos all night long.

RF: Where were these tunes going to come from?

BC: Most of the material of the band, not at that point, but when we were successful, came from outside the band. We would find tunes on records that we knew we could arrange our way and make it sound palatable and fun for us to play. The Eric Satie tune obviously was written a long time before, and "God Bless the Child" was obviously written by Billie Holiday and Al Hertzog years before. "When I Die" was a contemporary piece by Laura Nyro, which was on her first album, so it was more in the arranging and the approach than in the songwriting. Although "Spinning Wheel" was penned by David Clayton-Thomas, those chord structures have obviously appeared more than once, and it's a cute little ditty, but I don't think it's

going to turn music around. It was the arrangement of that song. It was really intended to be comedic. When it was being put together, it was supposed to be funny. Why would you put a horn line, which I can't sing in an interview, in a song like that? The horn lines are absurd for that song. It was comedic, but we were so hot that everyone took every damn thing we did, seriously. Why put a jazz be-bop solo right smack in the middle of that song? I mean, it was a little pop song and all of a sudden it went into a be-bop thing and back to the other. It was a joke. It was fun.

RF: But it sounded so good.

BC: Yeah, and everyone loved it because it was a relief from the crap they were hearing. Don't get me wrong, I am a firm believer in the theory of right place, right time, when it comes to most success stories.

RF: How much input did each member have at that point?

BC: It was not quite as democratic as we wanted people to feel. There were people who were more pushy than others and I was one of the very pushy people.

RF: So in what year was the group actually formed?

BC: 1967.

RF: And you stayed until?

BC: 1976 or 1977. I didn't participate as a drummer up until the end, but I produced and was involved in the business part of the band.

RF: When did you stop playing?

BC: I officially stopped playing in 1975.

RF: You were into production. Where did that come from?

BC: I was as fascinated with the recording aspect of music as I was with the music itself, from day one. I was always playing and tinkering with tape record-

ers, editing and trying crazy things. I was very much into audio as well, more than just needing to have the best hi-fi set on the block. I loved it. I was a consultant to some rather large companies in fact.

RF: So when did you start producing?

BC: 1970. I did a lot of the BS&T albums. And every time I would produce an album I played on, everyone complained that they couldn't hear the drums. It was always the case, because I knew what I was playing, so I knew it already and would make it softer and softer until there was nothing left.

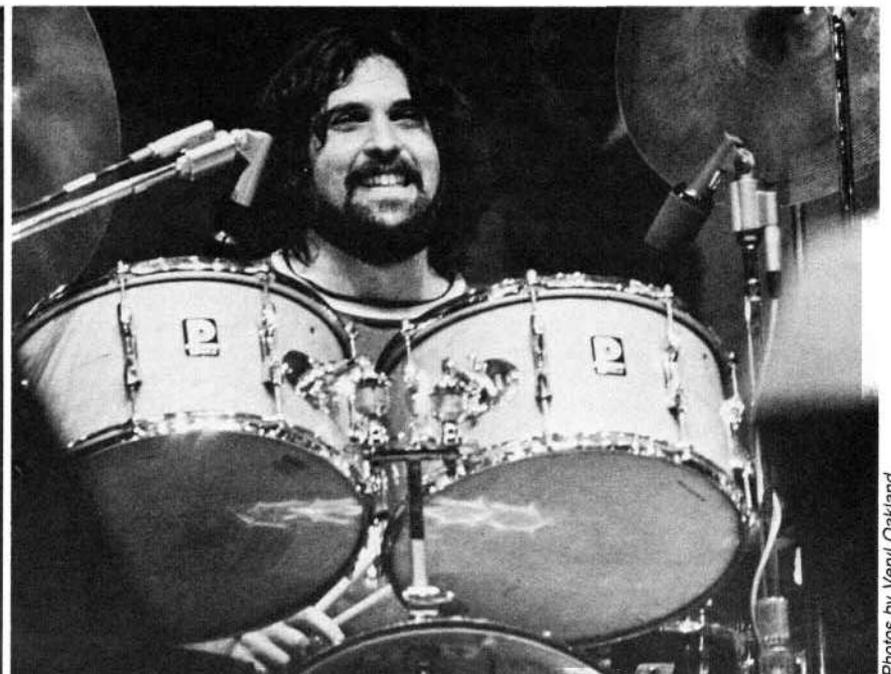
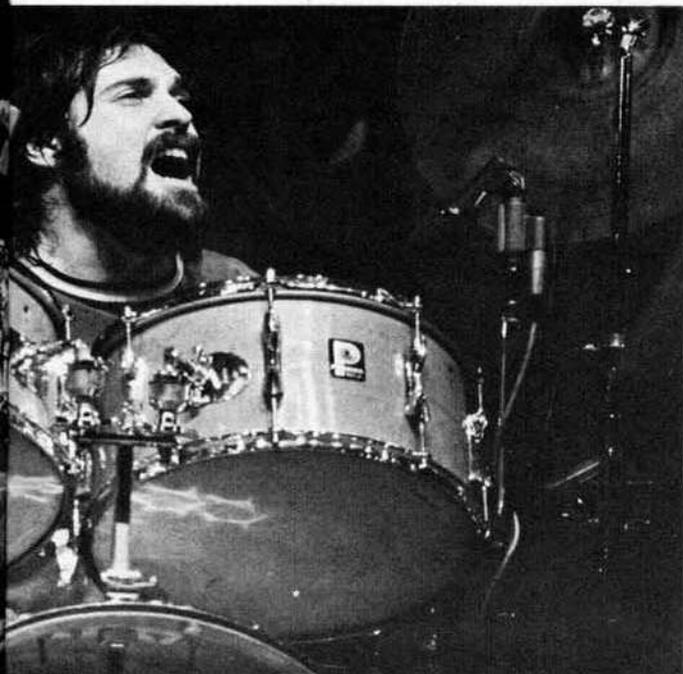
RF: You said you got bored with the music.

BC: Yeah, playing the same music, but I couldn't disassociate myself from the band because it was still my love, so I just got involved in other aspects.

RF: Did you lose your love for your instrument?

BC: Absolutely. There was just not enough to be said, or that I could say, on that particular instrument, and I found that the art of recording could allow me more latitude. The horizons were expanded to an unlimited height, as opposed to being what I had found to be very limiting in the drums. Again, as strange as it may sound, I had very little confidence in my drumming. I didn't think of myself as very good and I thought of myself as having been at the right place at the right time. I never really gave a lot of credence to my ability as a drummer. I think I was more an inventor than a drummer. I also found that more interesting. If I was concerned with my talent as a drummer, I would have practiced more than five minutes in my entire career. I never, ever did. I never cared about that. It came very

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Photos by Veryl Oakland

Electronic Percussion on Stage

I'm a great believer in variety. I think the more sounds one can achieve on a drum set, the more creative one can be. And so, when electronic percussion came on the market a few years ago, I was very excited. I purchased a pair of Synare 3 synthesizers and put them on my set. This was at the height of the disco phase in California, so I immediately set up the classic disco "swoop" sounds.

But then I started to hear different effects being used on records in other styles of music. The Eagles opened "Heartache Tonight" with a clap sound created on Synares using white noise. Some rock groups used synthesizers to make super-deep tom effects. I heard bell and chime sounds, and what appeared to be repeater effects apparently created with some sort of delay. I joyfully went to work on my Synares to duplicate these effects on stage. I was generally successful, except for one maddening limitation. I had mounted my Synares above and behind my rack toms over my bass drum. In this position, they were easy to strike with my sticks and very convenient to play. But because the control knobs were on the units themselves, rather than on a separate console, the knobs were hard to see and even harder to reach. This made changing settings very awkward.

The difficulty lay in the difference between using a synthesizer in a studio, versus live performance. Whereas the musicians on the original recordings had plenty of time to set up the effects they wanted, on stage I had only seconds between tunes to make adjustments. I was faced with a choice: 1) Select a single setting for each unit and stick with it all night, though that seemed to defeat the purpose for which I had purchased the synthesizers in the first place. 2) Buy a different Synare for each effect I wanted (economically impossible). 3) Find a way to make setting adjustments more rapid and convenient.

I liked the playing position of the Synares over the toms, and I didn't have anyplace else to put them anyway, so moving them to a place more easily

within reach was not a viable solution. I knew that some synthesizer units, such as the Pollard Syndrum, used remote-control consoles and had the sensor devices in the playing pads themselves. But the Syndrum had been too expensive at the time I was shopping for synthesizers, and that's why I went for the Synares in the first place.

I realized I needed a way to make the controls of my Synares more accessible so I could make changes for the next tune during the one I was currently playing, the same as a keyboard player would pre-set his multiple synthesizers. I use a console on my left to mount the controls for our stage lighting system, which I run from the drums. I figured this would be the logical place to put my Synare controls, since I could adjust them with my left hand while playing with my right, and set up quickly for the next song. What I needed to do was remove the electronics from the Synare 3 units, leaving only the sensor pad in the metal case, and then place the electronics in a small box which would fit on my light console within easy reach.

While I was considering the solution, I also thought about another problem of using synthesizers live: how to hear what you've set up ahead of time without actually playing the effect through the system. It seemed silly to create a *special effect* and then have to play it before the song starts to make sure it's correct. The *special* quality is blown before you get a chance to incorporate it into the song. I wanted to be able to control the volume of both units in such a way as to softly monitor the effect on stage, but not play it loud enough to make the audience aware of it. Naturally, each Synare unit has its own volume control. But each unit is very individual, with unique response and characteristics, so the volume controls don't necessarily equate. I wanted to combine the two units under one master volume control, so I could balance the two individual volumes and bring them up or down together with only one control. This meant combining the pre-amp signals from each Synare unit into one without each affecting the other.

I am not an electronics wizard. But my friend Mike Hoover, of Second Unit Productions in San Diego, is. I went to him with my concept, and he didn't think it would be too difficult to remove the circuitry from the Synare units and replace it into a remote box. He also came up with the idea of "piggybacking" the signal from the first unit across to the second, and then using a four-conductor cable to carry both signals from the second unit to the remote box. This little added improvement eliminated the need for two separate cables to carry the two Synare signals. From the control box, the combined signals would go to the amp via one cable.

The circuit board in a Synare 3 is semi-circular, with the potentiometers arranged around the outside of the half-circle. What Mike did was to disconnect all the pots, and place them in a new configuration in the remote box. He then arranged a cable harness to re-connect the circuitry to the pots. He did not change the actual hookup scheme in any way. He added a fairly simple op-amp active combiner to provide a master volume control with no interaction between the individual units.

We also attempted to add an AC-power conversion unit within the box, since the Synare 3's originally were battery-powered. We had a problem with picking up AC hum, which was amplified along with whatever effect was set up, so Mike re-installed the batteries. However, even with the batteries, we still had a noise problem which we couldn't seem to eliminate. The situation was infuriating. We had successfully created the physical arrangement that I wanted; the synthesizer electronics worked fine; but we now had some foreign noise source that we couldn't isolate. Thus the system was unusable.

It was at this point we decided to go to the ultimate authority on Synare units. I contacted Bill Katoski, chief engineer and designer for Star Instruments. I explained what we were trying to achieve, along with our problems. He graciously offered to examine the system we had created and see if he could help. We sent Bill the whole system, and he made the

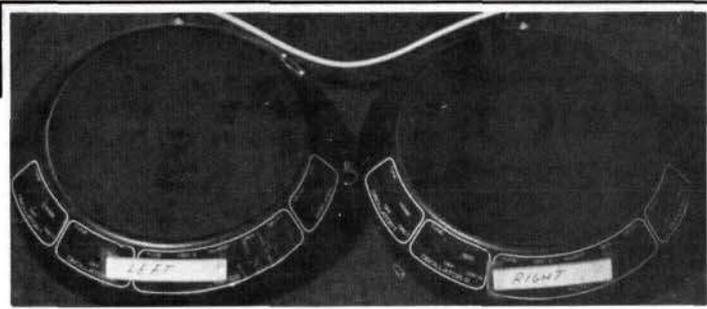


FIGURE 1: With pots removed, signal from right unit cabled over to left, and jack for 4-conductor cable at upper right, Synare 3 is ready to have both signals carried to the remote box by one cable.

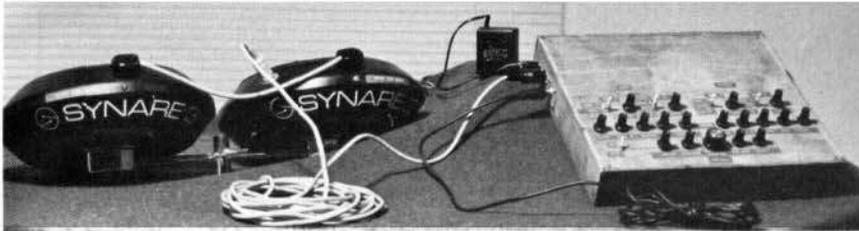


FIGURE 2: The completed hookup shows Synare units linked to remote box via 4-conductor cable, using Din plugs. AC-adaptor plugs into remote box via mini-plug, and signal from box plugs into amp via standard guitar cord.

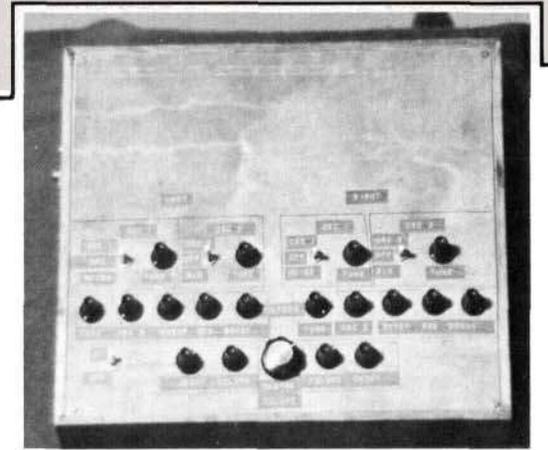


FIGURE 3: The remote control box with new pot configuration. Note large master volume control, bottom center.

following improvements:

- 1) He removed our AC power supply circuit and replaced it with a familiar AC adaptor using a transformer which plugs into the AC power source and connects to the control box with a mini-plug. This prevented actually bringing AC into the box circuitry at all.
- 2) He replaced our output mixer (master volume control) with a simpler circuit, incorporating resistors of smaller value, to reduce clip and foreign signal pickup.
- 3) He explained that the oscillator hum occurred because the chip that produces the effects created by two of the Synare's oscillators (along with the associated wires and controls) acts as a little radio station, sending out lots of electromagnetic energy. Wires in general tend to act like antennas picking up energy of this sort, and the closer they are to the source of the energy, and the longer they are, the more sensitive they are going to be in picking up this energy. In the setup we had created, we had lots of wires to act like antennas. Worse yet, they were all neatly tied very close together in our cable harness, which travelled directly over those components which created the energy in the first place. To correct this, Bill and his assistant Linda Drouin, separated the volume wires from the harness (using coaxial cable to minimize pickup) and made these wires as short as possible. They also grounded the metal panel that the pots and switches were connected to (on top of the console box itself) and moved all the wires around to

find their best position for the least leak of oscillator noise. This solution reduced the oscillator hum to tolerable levels. When those particular oscillators aren't being used to create the desired special effect, Bill recommended they be turned down to their lowest point, because the lower frequencies pick up to a lesser degree than the high.

Bill left me with a cautionary word: in general, Star doesn't suggest people try this type of "home brew" arrangement because they invariably run into trouble similar to mine. But in the same breath, he offered to help anyone who still wants to try it. He does suggest that they call the manufacturer first for suggestions. He also has some general technical tips:

- 1) Keep all wires as short as possible, and use coaxial cable to reduce pickup.
- 2) Keep volume and output wires away from interference sources (transformers, oscillators, white noise) meaning both circuitry and associated wires.
- 3) Try not to use resistors that are too high in value. 10K-50K is good. 1M is too high.

The end result is that I now have both the playing units and the control box precisely where I want them. The box contains all the individual controls for each Synare, and the master volume output control for the combined signal of both. Both units are powered by the single AC adaptor, and the combined output connects to the amplifier by means of a standard, shielded guitar cable. I now have the ability to use the

Synares with an infinite variety of settings, without disrupting the pace of my band's performance.



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Questions, Questions, Questions, and a Few Answers

Each year, young drummers ask themselves, and others, the same questions. Anyone who has had the opportunity to do clinics or to teach, soon notices that the same questions are asked over and over.

Some professionals, not accustomed to teaching or working with young people, occasionally become irritated at having to repeatedly answer these questions. More experienced clinicians and teachers accept this as part of the learning process. After all, the question may be an old one but it may be new to the young person asking it.

I've made a list of some of the most-asked questions on clinics, including some of the more bizarre ones, and included my answers.

Q: Who is the world's greatest drummer?

A: This one is asked continually. For what style of playing? Rock, big band, country, symphony, studio, jazz, funk, rudimental, percussion ensemble?

There are many great players in each and every style. No one drummer plays every style better than everyone else. Just enjoy each great player for what he does best. Keep an open mind and learn from everyone.

Q: Should I learn to read or should I remain a "natural" drummer?

A: Learning to read will not make you an "un-natural" drummer. It is just another skill that is part of music. Learning to read does not require any special talent. Just practice your reading everyday and it will continue to improve. A good teacher is a must.

Q: How long will it take me to become a really good drummer?

A: This is an easy one. *All your life!*

Q: How many hours should I practice?

A: Whatever it takes! More important than the number of hours is the consistency. One or two hours, everyday without fail, will yield better results than a fanatic practice schedule which often results in a "burn-out"! The important thing is to concentrate. Make every second of your practice time count. After all, it is how much and how well you learn, not how long it takes, that is important.

Q: Can I develop a faster foot by tightening the spring on my bass drum pedal?

A: No, but you can hurt your foot. The myth that a tighter spring comes back faster and improves speed is *only* a myth. It is also important to consider how the pedal is adjusted. The type of beater (wood, acrylic or felt); the length of the beater rod; your foot relative to the size of the footboard; and how the bass drum is tuned and muffled will affect how the pedal performs.

Most good players have the spring tension just "medium." "Medium" will depend on your age, physical strength and the length of time you have been playing. Just avoid extremes.

Q: Should I take lessons or should I develop my own style?

A: Why not do both? A good drum teacher gives you information, support and the benefit of his experience. He can't teach you how to play. You learn how to play by playing. You acquire information by studying. Your style is the result of everything you have experienced. The more experience, the richer the style.

Q: Why aren't cymbals and drum heads guaranteed?

A: For the same reason that drumsticks are not guaranteed. If a Karate expert can break a brick with his bare hand, any

untrained person can break a cymbal or a drum head with a big drumstick. If you are breaking lots of cymbals and drum heads, you might benefit from lessons. The manner in which you strike a cymbal or a drum is just as critical as how hard you strike it. Skill makes the difference.

Q: Which sticks are the fastest?

A: Easy. Any sticks used by a really fast drummer. The only sticks that are really difficult to play fast with are unusually small and thin ones. Rudimental drummers play with pretty large sticks and some of them are very fast. Of course, they are used to the sticks they use and they are suited to the size of the drums on which they play.

Any stick from a 5A on up is okay, depending upon the style of music being played.

Q: If I practice with metal drumsticks will I have more endurance?

A: Not really. You will get tired fast and run the risk of a bone bruise, irritated skin or worse. I recommend practicing with the same sticks you play with. Most drummers lack control, not strength.

Q: If I practice on a pillow will it improve my technique?

A: Not really, unless you intend to play on a pillow. Horn players don't stuff a pillow into their horns to make them harder to blow. They just practice consistently on their instrument. Your instrument is the drum, not a pillow.

Q: How do I get the big break in the music business?

A: Usually, you get a series of small breaks on which a career is built. There is no certain formula for success. There is one for failure however. Don't practice! Don't study! Don't listen! *Guaranteed to fail.*

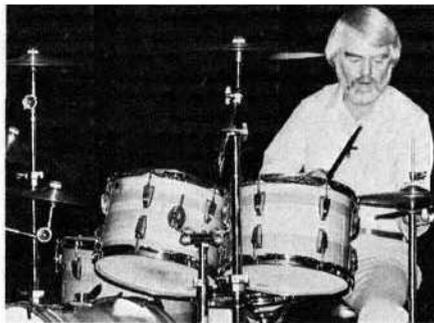


Photo by John W. Wright

by Roy Burns

If you have talent and you apply yourself, you will usually attract breaks. How do you attract breaks?

The answer is by playing well. If you do, other people hear it, they recommend you and you are on your way. And with a little luck you will get your share of breaks in the long run.

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

1) Make a list of your daily activities and realistically estimate the time needed for each activity. In most instances, even if you have a busy schedule, you will be surprised at how much time you waste each day. It is easy to find the time to practice if you really want to.

2) Set a reasonable pace for yourself. Consistent practice, over a long period of time, yields the best results. Decide where you want to be in a few years and work toward that goal.

3) There are no shortcuts. You can't force yourself to learn any faster than you are capable of. However, remember that "haste makes waste."

It's like reading a book. If you go too fast you miss a lot. *Thorough* learning is much better in the long run than fast learning.

4) Avoid either/or questions in your own mind. Such questions as "should I stay in school or should I quit and practice the drumset" are good examples of this kind of thinking.

My answer is always, "Why not do both?" You usually can find the time if you are really sincere.

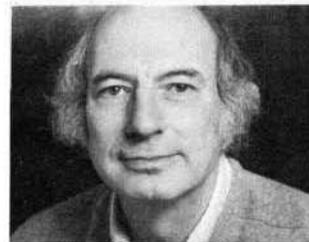
5) Avoid extremes. Weird theories, strange exercises and strange people won't help you. They may be interesting but you must remember this: You are the only one who can determine how much you want to learn.

A little planning, some patience and some hard work can do wonders in the long run. It's all up to you.



PRACTICE CAN BE DANGEROUS TO THE HEALTH OF YOUR DRUMMING TALENT!

I'm Stanley Spector and my students are among the most successful drummers throughout America and the Free World. But I would like to talk about you.



You say you have an idea you'd like to express. You say you're unable to accomplish it because you lack technique. You say you practice technique every day expecting that with effort and time it will help you to express that idea. Is such an expectation justified?

First, please tell me what you mean by an idea? I understand an idea to be an aspect of knowledge. Since knowledge is always of the past, an idea must also be of the past. If I'm happy with my drumming it is because I'm happy now in the present. I don't need an idea about either my drumming or my being happy. But if I'm not happy, I may think back to the past when I was happy about my drumming, and when I do that I do have an idea about my drumming and being happy with it. Unfortunately the idea can in no way help me to play the drums happily now. The more I attempt to practice and capture the ideas of past memories, the more I remain welded to the past.

Second, tell me what you mean by a technique? Yes, technique is the means of expressing an idea. But can technique ever be your technique? Is not technique either a copy of another drummer along with his idea, or is it something that is alleged to be a technique that you learn out of a method book? In either case it will be something you repeat endlessly. That being the case, is not technique itself always something of the past?

Do you remember your goal? Your goal was to produce a performance involving improvisation that is spontaneous, free, and totally in the present. But yet you are approaching it through practice, ideas, and techniques which are entirely and totally of the past. If you were not already so far down this path of confusion and frustration, the situation would be hilarious.

What many consider to be a solution to this uncertainty, puzzlement, and confusion is actually when you perform the past and pretend it is the present. When you are already up to your nostrils and

about to go down for the third time it is a small matter that your solution violates fact, reality, and logic. If you continue following such a path your practice and study is based upon nothing but pretence and ignorance.

Fear is the reason you have practiced yourself into such a corner. You are nobody today but want to be somebody tomorrow. You like music and drumming. Others have become somebody through it. Perhaps you too may become somebody through it. The inside information has always been: study long, practice hard and you'll eventually become somebody. The reason for practice is the fear that today you are nobody. And the amazing thing above all else is that you have or are now actually paying a private teacher or a college of music to perpetuate the confusion and the fear.

Practice, technique, and ideas are not things which you thought up or discovered by yourself. They have been imposed on you through conformity, cultural conditioning, and brainwashing. In fact, they are so cleverly imposed that you yourself eventually come to believe that practice, technique, and ideas are things that you actually did think up for your own good.

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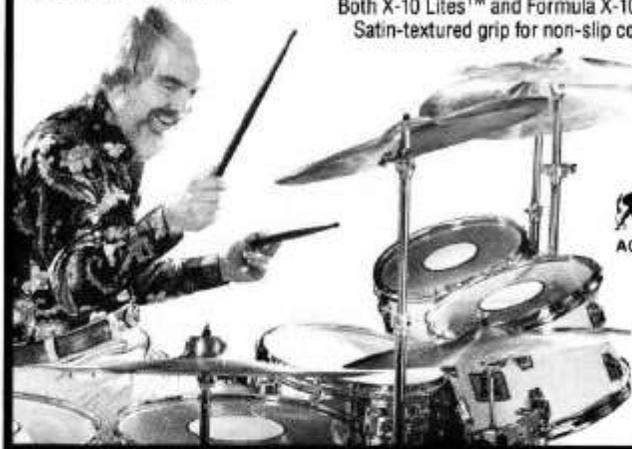
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Roy Burns



Dunbar continued from page 11

played around the world with them. I stayed with them for about six months, just to help them out because there wasn't really any band around that I could join that could take over from Zappa. I had to cool out a little bit. It was like getting over some kind of love affair, you know. I had to spend some time doing something which didn't take too much mental thought—something I could just have fun with. So I went out with Flo and Eddie, working as the opening act for Alice Cooper.

Then I got a call from Bob Ezrin, the producer, and he asked me if I would do an album with Lou Reed. So I went to Toronto and looked at the charts, and then went to London to work on Lou Reed's *Berlin* album. While I was doing that, David Bowie called and invited me to one of his gigs. Lou had called a day off, so I was going to go, but when Lou found out about it, he called a recording session for that night. I think he disliked Bowie so he was giving him a hard time, and me too. I ended up going to Bowie's party after Lou's session, and Bowie asked me if I'd like to join him. I told him what my deal was and he agreed to it. While I was with him we did the *Pinups* album, and *Diamond Dogs*.

During the time I was with Bowie, I also did Nils Lofgren's first solo album.

Then I had trouble with Bowie's management. The manager sent me a piece of legal paper with about ten different things on it, written out by hand, and said, "Sign it." I told him I never sign contracts that are one-sided. So he said, "Well, if that's the case, I guess we don't need you in our organization." I said, "That's okay with me. Bye."

I left London and went to San Francisco to check out Journey, because they had been calling me up ever since I had been with Bowie. I thought what they were doing was interesting, but what I didn't realize was that what they tend to do is copy themselves. There was no ad-lib with them. The guitar solos are note for note just like the album. They wanted me to play note for note behind them, and I wouldn't do it. So they put up with it for about 4 1/2 years before they told me to get out. So I have a lawsuit against them. It was a pretty heavy situation.

Everyone thought I would move back to L.A., but the Starship required a drummer at that time so I joined them. After being with them for 3 years, I'm still having a good time. The band is getting better and better, and with everyone writing, I have more opportunities to play different feelings on songs.

RM: I was listening to your Starship recordings, and then I listened to the records you did with Zappa ten years

ago, and I noticed that you played a lot more notes with Zappa. Would you say that your style has changed over the years, or is it just the difference in the music you are playing?

AD: It's the difference that's required by the song. Now, I'm not playing with the idea of filling in a lot, but if I were to go back and play with Zappa, I'd play as much now as I did then because Frank's music creates more freedom. When I'm playing rock and roll with the Starship, if I sat there filling in all over the place, it would sound messy. I've decided in my own head what sells records and what doesn't. What doesn't is a scrappy rhythm backing. If you want to make a song a hit record, it's got to be clean, crisp, and to the point. You can't have million-note fills all over the place because people can't hear them, they can't understand it, and so they won't want to buy it. It might appeal to all of the drummers in the world, but we only have X amount of drummers who are going to go out and buy that record. We have a million other people out there who want to hear something.

You can play as much as you want when it comes to solos, but when you're playing behind vocals, you don't want to be scratching around all over the place. You want to leave it so you're backing them, rather than leading them. When there's a soloist happening out front, I can push him along, and then when it comes to *my* solo, I can do whatever the hell I want. Which is basically the way I like to do it.

RM: Do you structure your solos any particular way?

AD: Completely ad-lib. Sometimes I like to come out of a song, explode into life, and then create a dynamic situation. Other times, I might just powerhouse it right through, depending on the time I have, what the audience is like, and what's going on. It's easy to keep going at a high level of intensity for a four-minute solo, and just go through fast and end it. A lot of times, that goes down a lot better than sitting there being a technician. Only certain people understand the technique parts. Most of them get bored by it. Speed is what most people see. The idea of playing tunes on drums is beyond most people. They don't understand it.

Sometimes in the paper they'll write, "He played a boring, 20-minute drum solo," and I know perfectly well the guy just doesn't like drum solos, because I never play anything that long. The only time in my life I ever did was that time I was forced into it when the rest of the band was at the bar drinking. But I didn't want to play that long. I think anything beyond a 5 or 6-minute solo is a waste of time. There is only so much you can do

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before it bores everybody to death. To have write ups like that, I know the guy just doesn't like drum solos. I look at it like this: as long as the solo went down well—that's fine. Reviewers can curse about them and reconstruct their ideas about them or give you a lousy write up, but as long as the solo went down well that night, you can't believe anything a critic says. A lot of them are criticizing you because they are frustrated musicians. They like to criticize you note for note as though they have higher ideas about what should be happening up there.

RM: It looks as though you are singing to yourself while you solo.

AD: I am. I sing with myself all the time I'm playing.

RM: Are there any particular drummers whose solos you like?

AD: I've always liked Max Roach. His solos are always very musical and he always has something new to say. But I recently heard another famous jazz drummer, and I got very bored. Every song the band did lasted about 25 minutes, and they were all the same structure—head; solos; head. Every guy in the band would take about a 10-chorus solo on each tune. You can only repeat the same structure over and over so many times before it gets monotonous. It wasn't like, "Well, I've played everything I want to play, so now I'll give it up." It was more like, "I got this far. I'll keep going and see if I can get anything else out of it." But nothing really got any hotter. It was self-indulgent music.

RM: Of all the albums you've played on, which ones stand out in your mind?

AD: I like the albums I've done with the Starship, of course. Before that, it's hard for me to remember which would be the most interesting. The *Waka/Jawaka* album was an interesting session, just because it was completely off the wall ad-lib. Zappa let me do whatever I wanted to with it, so I played like a frustrated drummer. I could play a million notes a minute and get away with it. It was actually overkill for me, but it was interesting because it was so different.

I suppose the first Journey album was interesting as well. I had a lot of double kicking happening and it almost sounds like there were two bass drums being used. On the third Journey album, I started using double bass drums. I never had much chance to practice them at home—I practically learned to play them on stage.

I found that I liked using two bass drums. A lot of times, I drive the band, not by playing every 16th note, but by playing the second, third and fourth 16th note, leaving the downbeat and the upbeat open. It sort of gives a rush in the feel, without actually rushing. I leave a gap on the downbeat and upbeat so if I

want to play the snare there, it cuts right through without being diminished by the low-end sound of the bass drum. If you play the bass and snare at the same time, you'll find that the snare drum sound disappears. If you leave that hole, the snare stands out big, and it still sounds like you're playing the bass drum on that beat.

RM: What set-up are you using these days?

AD: Ludwig. I've been with them for about four years now.

RM: Didn't you use Ludwigs with the Mothers?

AD: Yes I did, at one point. I used a small, jazz Ludwig kit for the *Grand Wazoo* and *Waka/Jawaka* albums—a little 20" bass, an 8 x 12 tom-tom, and a pair of 14 x 14 floor toms.

Now, I'm using two 20" bass drums, 10", 12" and 14" power toms on top of the kit, 16" and 18" floor toms, and an 8 x 14 wood-shell snare drum, which is really a good-sounding drum.

All of the toms have both heads, and so do the bass drums. At the moment, I have Ludwig *Rockers* underneath, Canasonics on top, and Duralines on the bass drums. To cut out the over-ring on the bass drums, I have them lined with half-inch thick foam rubber.

I use Ludwig cymbal stands and Zildjian cymbals. I'm using those new *Quick-Beat* hi-hats, with no bell on the bottom and holes drilled in it. They're really good. I have four 19" crash cymbals, a 21" swish on the left and a 21" Chinese on the right, and a 22" *Earth* ride cymbal.

RM: Not too many rock drummers use 20" bass drums. Do you find that the smaller drums give more "punch"?

AD: Yes, less overtones and more solid "thump," which is what I'm after. The bigger the drum, the more damping you put inside it, and so you're playing on less area anyway. So why bother having it? With the smaller drum, I can get a more solid, compact sound, which is better for the audience out front to hear. And the bigger drum doesn't give you any more sound on stage. By the time you damp a larger drum, you'll end up with a 20" head anyway.

RM: What size sticks?

AD: Regal 2B, all wood.

RM: Do you customize your drums at all?

AD: No. I just tune them and that's about it.

RM: Do you do all of your own tuning, or is your roadie able to do some of it?

AD: I tune them. But I've taught Scotty Ross how to do it as well, and he's quite good at it. If he has to replace a head for me in the middle of a set, he'll tune it so it's comparable to me. He's been with me since about 1976, so he's really got it down.

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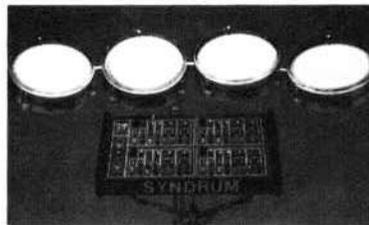
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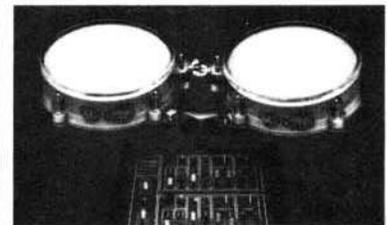
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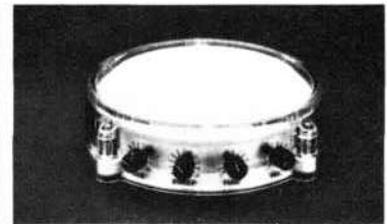
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RM: What do you demand from a drum?

AD: Tone quality, more than anything else. At certain times, I've had a drum lose its tone because it has been dropped and the shell has cracked, or something has gone wrong and it's deader than the other drums and I've had to replace it. But a lot of times it's the head. Ludwig has these cast hoops that fit perfectly. Even if you get a loose tension rod, it will still keep the tone of the drum because it's so well cast that the rods on either side of the loose one will keep the head seated perfectly. With most rims, if they get dented a little bit, the head will never seat right and you'll never be able to tune the drum. I found that out with my 14" drum. I could never tune it properly, but then I put one of the cast rims on it and it made such a big difference, it's unbelievable.

RM: I presume you could have your choice of drum companies.

AD: Yeah, but I've always like Ludwig.

RM: Have you experimented with any electronic percussion?

AD: No, I haven't. It's something I was thinking about, but it is to the point where it sounds like everybody's done it all with what's there. I was on an ELP tour, and Carl Palmer was using a sequencer, so he had that happening. Then I listened to Billy Cobham on the *Spectrum* album, and I like what he was doing. But I don't feel I want to jump on that particular bandwagon. I'll just leave it a while and see what else develops, and then I'll get something. I'd like to sit at home and work on that sort of stuff.

RM: You're not opposed to electronic percussion in principle?

AD: Oh no. Not at all. They're bringing out electronic drum kits now, that you can play on stage. Everything's electronic. The only thing is, it doesn't look like a drum kit. I like the idea of a drum kit, meaning that when you hit something, you have a percussive feel. I'd most likely end up breaking the pickups if I played them, because I don't like to play lightly. I want to play so there's something to look at. If you're playing nice and relaxed in front of 20,000 people, they're not going to pick up any energy from that. You can play quietly in a small area and it doesn't matter, but in big areas, people have to see movement on stage. Electronically, you have to be careful with that because you've got electronic components in there that are going to get smashed if you hit them too hard.

RM: Do you do anything to stay in shape so that you can play as hard as you do night after night?

AD: I used to do a lot of push-ups, sit-ups, and all that to keep myself feeling healthy, but I was still getting drained. For about 5 years, every day I'd get out

continued on page 42

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of bed and do exercises, and then I'd do one arm push-ups to pump blood into my arms before I went on stage. But I would always come off stage at the end of a set feeling totally and utterly exhausted, and I was always getting sick on the road because I would be so run down from pushing myself to the limit all of the time. It was getting annoying.

We came off the road for several months to work in the studio, and I thought maybe I should try some other way to keep myself feeling fit, because I was feeling tired and weird all of the time. David Frieberg, our bass and keyboard player, had been going to Nautilus for about a year, so I decided to go along and try it and see what it was like. I went down there and found it to be great. It's an hour-long workout, in which you push yourself to the maximum. They have machines for all the different muscles in your body. At first, I was scared about really doing it, because I thought, "What would it be like to be muscle-bound and go on stage? It would really slow me down." But then we started playing again and I couldn't believe it! I came off stage feeling perfectly happy and wonderful, whereas I used to come off stage being on the very edge. If somebody said anything to me, I'd blow up, because my nerves were shattered from being in a complete state of exhaustion. Now, I come off stage feeling great, happy, and everything else. On our third gig, we played two, 2-hour sets, one after the other. After not having played on stage for several months, that was a lot of strain, but afterwards, I felt like I could have gone on and played some more. That, to me, is completely amazing. I would suggest that anybody who feels tired and worn out on stage, check out the nearest Nautilus center and go into a program.

RM: How often do you go?

AD: Three days a week. There are different ways you can work it. I work hard the first day, then take one day off; then sort of a lighter workout on the middle day, with a day off; and then tough on the third day, with two days off afterward. The idea is not to go in there and try to be Mr. America; the idea is to help yourself. A lot of people go in there and try to blast their way through everything, and then they don't want to come back because they've pushed themselves too hard.

Another thing: I used to race bicycles when I was a kid, so I know about second-wind and going into overdrive. I used to always push for that when I was playing on stage. I would go into overdrive on certain things. But that can make you perspire too much and you can get cramps from the lack of salt. I find that now, though, even when I push myself, I don't have to go into overdrive.

If I did, I might start breaking drums. I still perspire a lot, but it's just my body working. I don't feel I'm perspiring my energy away, like I used to. I feel in control of the situation.

RM: What kind of practicing are you able to do on the road?

AD: I work out for about an hour before I play, going through a lot of rudiments and practicing coordination between my hands and feet. That way, when I go on stage, there's no sloppiness. Of course, there are days when no matter how much warming up you've done, your mind still doesn't want to do anything.

RM: Do you have a set of pads in your dressing room?

AD: I have a snare drum with a vacuum pad over it—the old Gladstone pad. I just work out on that and tap my feet on the floor.

At home, I've got a drum kit, but the trouble with a drum kit at home is that it's so damn loud, it blows your hearing. So I'm setting up a situation now where I'm going to be wearing headphones and have a live mic' in the room, and also have a click track. I like having a click track to work with, but I don't just play along with it for hours. I use it to find out how I'm playing—where I rush or where I slow down.

RM: How did you decide on your particular style?

AD: I basically understood what I should be doing by common sense. For instance, a recording studio is one of the best places to teach somebody what they should be doing and what they shouldn't. Whenever I do a session, I'll usually play a million different feels on the first take. It worries the hell out of everybody else because I'm changing things all over the place and it almost sounds like a drum solo. They'll tell me, "I think you should simplify it." But the reason I do that is so I can listen back to all the things I played and pick out the parts that worked and sounded good. On the next take, I know what should be happening.

After you've been around a while, you understand that you can't play everything you've ever wanted to play. But it's hard to teach kids that. It's something you learn through understanding what your job is and what it should sound like as a finished product. Less means more to the average person. The less you play, the more they hear. The more you play, the less they hear. That's basically what it's all about. That's how I look at rock and roll drums, or drumming as a whole, actually. The more accurately you play something and make it more defined, the better it can be used as music. We can all play crush rolls around the drum kit, and play every note possible in a drum fill, but it will just sound like mush to the average person. If you were to play maybe 8th notes at that

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point, people could hear it and understand it.

RM: You seem to have definite ideas about these things. Have you considered doing any teaching?

AD: No, but Ludwig wants me to start doing clinics. I'm definitely thinking about doing it, but I want to have a plan of approach. I still feel like I'm learning to play. I don't want to do it like some of the clinics I've seen where the guy will come out and say, "This is how it is and this is the God's truth and believe me, this is the way you should do it." The way I play is based on feeling—not on something I've been told to do.

RM: Let's talk about the Jefferson Starship. How do you go about working up new material?

AD: When Craig writes a song, he will actually make a demo tape with a drum track on it, which is great because it gives me ideas. But he puts the drum track together one drum at a time, so it can sometimes be very abstract. But it's always interesting because he is a very good musician.

Pete writes these big, off the wall, sort of English rock songs, with big dramatic openings and classical-type things. He will just come in with an idea of what he wants to hear, and we'll all work it out. Pete is a good guy to jam with because he's a good bass player and he is capable of hearing things and moving right into them from what he was doing.

Paul comes in with the basic song. He plays rhythm guitar and sings it for a while and we just add our parts to it.

On stage, Craig is the person I react to the most because solo-wise, he's the one who is always doing something new. He is the major soloist in the band. Craig hears drums more so than anybody else because he has a drum kit at home and he likes to fool around with it. So he and I interact the most on stage. Pete also has a lot of input when he's playing bass. He will sort of jump out and start putting ideas down which I often jump on. We amalgamate our ideas and that usually gets Craig going.

RM: I noticed you and Craig looking at each other a lot.

AD: When he's soloing, I tend to try and watch him because it's not only hearing—it's also eye contact. But sometimes I can just close my eyes and let him ride out a while. Then I'll jump in and push him a little bit into other areas.

RM: And he, in turn, will take you to different places.

AD: Exactly.

RM: This all ties in with what you were telling me the other night about how you base most of what you do on listening to the melody.

AD: When I started off listening to music as a child, I always followed the lead

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instrument. Then I was playing lead lines on the violin. So I got a basic instinct for listening to leads, whether it be a guitar solo or the lyric.

RM: Do you ever write out charts for yourself?

AD: Sometimes I'll write out something just to remind myself at rehearsal, but I'll usually just remember it. Hearing the music rather than counting it is always the best way. As soon as you get stuck into counting, you forget what is happening out front. You spend more time counting out the bars than you do listening to the music and understanding it. So I find it better to listen to what is being played on the top and then react to that. Once I lock into a song, the rest of the band comes together fast, so I've decided that it's my job to learn the arrangement and then just play it.

RM: The Starship rhythm section is really solid.

AD: The guys in the Starship know how to lock in and play as a band. Anybody who plays in a group must realize that everybody in the group must always be aware of everybody else. There are other people playing with you and there's a courtesy involved—you can't be trekking on each other's toes.

It's a situation that you have to grow into. It took years for me. When you're first starting out, you have to make a name for yourself, and you don't make a name for yourself by being hidden under the name of something else. Once you've made your name, you can go into a band, say the Jefferson Starship, and people will say, "There's Aynsley Dunbar. He's with the Starship." But if you don't have a name, then you'll always be "the Starship's drummer." There are a lot of good musicians out there whose names are not known—even with some of the top bands. When I did the "Stable of Stars" ad for Ludwig, I was talking to a lot of people I didn't know, and they were the drummers for certain bands.

RM: Earlier, you mentioned that you don't like playing songs note for note the same everytime. How do you draw the line between playing freely enough for yourself and at the same time, being consistent enough that the rest of the band knows what you're doing?

AD: On "Freedom at Point Zero," I play a 16-bar drum opening, and it has to be the same, basically. It might change a little bit in the middle, but there's a definite lead-off and a definite end. Otherwise, the band would never know where the hell I was. So, there are certain parts of the song which have to be played the same because they are part of the music. Drums become a lead instrument at that point. I agree to that, but I don't agree that everytime you have a fill, you have to play exactly the same thing that's on the record. If the fill is

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part of the song, fine. But if you're backing up a soloist, the fill you played on the record might not fit behind what he's doing on stage at that particular moment, because he's doing something different. So you can't rehash what you did before if somebody else is playing something new.

RM: You've done quite a bit of recording. Would you ever be interested in doing "regular" studio work, such as commercials?

AD: I stay away from commercials. I have to price myself above that sort of stuff. See, if you price yourself as an average session man, you get every Tom, Dick and Harry calling you up for sessions, and I'm not into doing just anybody's session. I like to do studio work for people who want *me*—where they respect what I'm doing and why.

I find studio work less fulfilling, actually. I like to do it when I'm not on the road. It's fun while you're there, especially if you're building something you want to build—like a song that you will be performing on stage. For a while, I was doing too many studio gigs, and I couldn't wait to get on the road. In the studio, the only appreciation you get is from the guy you're doing the session for, or the producer. That's self-indulgent as far as I'm concerned. I like to play on stage and have that good feeling that comes from the people. But then, the grass is always greener.

RM: You've had your own groups in the past. Do you think you'll have your own group again sometime?

AD: There's always the chance. I know I'm going to do an album sometime. I've been collecting material for it. At this point, it seems that it will be a rock and roll album.

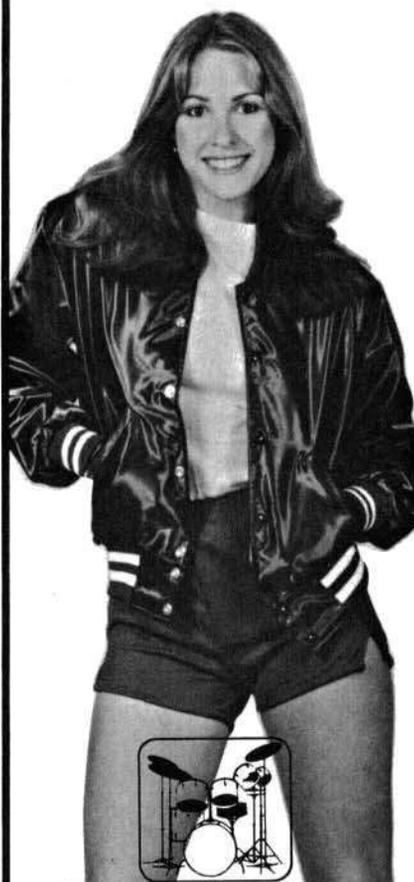
RM: Will you sing?

AD: "Sink" would be the word. No, I'll leave that to somebody who can do it professionally. I only sing in the shower. 

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by Nick Forte

Eighth Notes

To understand fully how rhythms are written and played we must become familiar with note *Durations*. The thing to remember is: The duration of any note depends on the tempo. Many musical arrangements have (usually at the top left-hand corner) what is known as a Metronome Marking (M.M.). The M.M. marking includes the note value and the number of those notes per minute. For example: $\text{♩} = 60$ indicates that there are 60 Quarter-note counts (or equivalents) in one minute's time; or said differently—a beat a second.

If the time signature is 4/4 and the quarter note equals 60, the eighth note would equal 120, exactly twice the number of quarter notes, because one eighth note is half the value (dura-

tion) of a quarter.

In example #1 we see one measure of quarter notes followed immediately by one measure of eighth notes. Notice that the bass drum is played on the numbers only. The word "an" or the " + " sign is used to locate the exact center (time-wise) between the numbers. It is suggested that you count out loud as shown. Play the two measures repeatedly, until hand and mind can move from quarters to eighths to quarters effortlessly.

(In a future lesson, the principles of Jazz/Swing interpretation in which the "an" is modified will be discussed. However, in rock, Latin and concert music, the "an" is almost always dead center.)

Ex. #1
• = 60m.m.

Note: When three or four eighth notes are written consecutively, they most often share one "beam," rather than a separate "flag" on each. However, it is not a good practice to beam eighth notes between the "an" of two and the third beat of the bar.

DYNAMICS

One of the most important, and least understood, aspects of music is the meaning and correct use of dynamics. For all musicians it is vital to artistic achievement that dynamics be used in a thoughtful, musical manner. Drummers especially have much to gain from the skillful control of volume.

Refer to the following chart, which describes the most often used dynamic markings.

The Accent:

When you see (>) or (^) placed over or under the note it means that the note is played with special emphasis; a bit louder.

Script Letters (*f*) (*mf*) (*p*) Are used to denote volume levels. They are Italian words, which I will define for you. There are markings that go to further extremes, but for now, practice the three most common:

"f" Stands for the word *Forte*, which means strong. (But not ear shattering.)

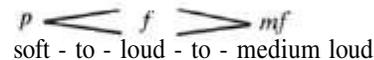
"mf" Stands for the words *Mezzo Forte*, which means half the volume of forte.

"p" Stands for the word *Piano*, which means soft.

When any of the above letters appear, it is understood (unless there is a change) that the music is maintained at that volume level until another marking is used.

A very dramatic effect can be achieved with the use of a *Crescendo* (abbreviated "Cresc.") and/or *Decrescendo* (abbreviated "Decr." or "Dim."—which actually means Diminuen-do.) The "Cresc." < indicates to the player that any notes (or measures) that are located just above are to be subject to a *gradual* increase in volume. The reverse is true for the "Decr." > which many players find more difficult.

When the "Cresc./Decr." signs are used in conjunction with the lettered markings, the player can tell exactly how loud or soft to begin or end each cresc. or decr. i.e.



Practice each line of Example #2 repeatedly until you are able to accurately project each volume. Remember to maintain the level of each mark until another appears.

Ex. #2

SNARE DRUM READING

Remember: Count out loud. Keep a steady tempo. Alternate strokes. Play the bass drum "in 4" (numbers only; even on the rests.) You may also try using the hi-hats, on 2 and 4.

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 2 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 4 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

DRUM SET EXERCISES

In example #3 we have three, eight-bar phrases. Play each repeatedly until you obtain a smooth flow of arm/wrist/sound, before moving on to the next. Students may need to practice each bar separately, before an attempt is made at the complete phrase.

Ex. #3

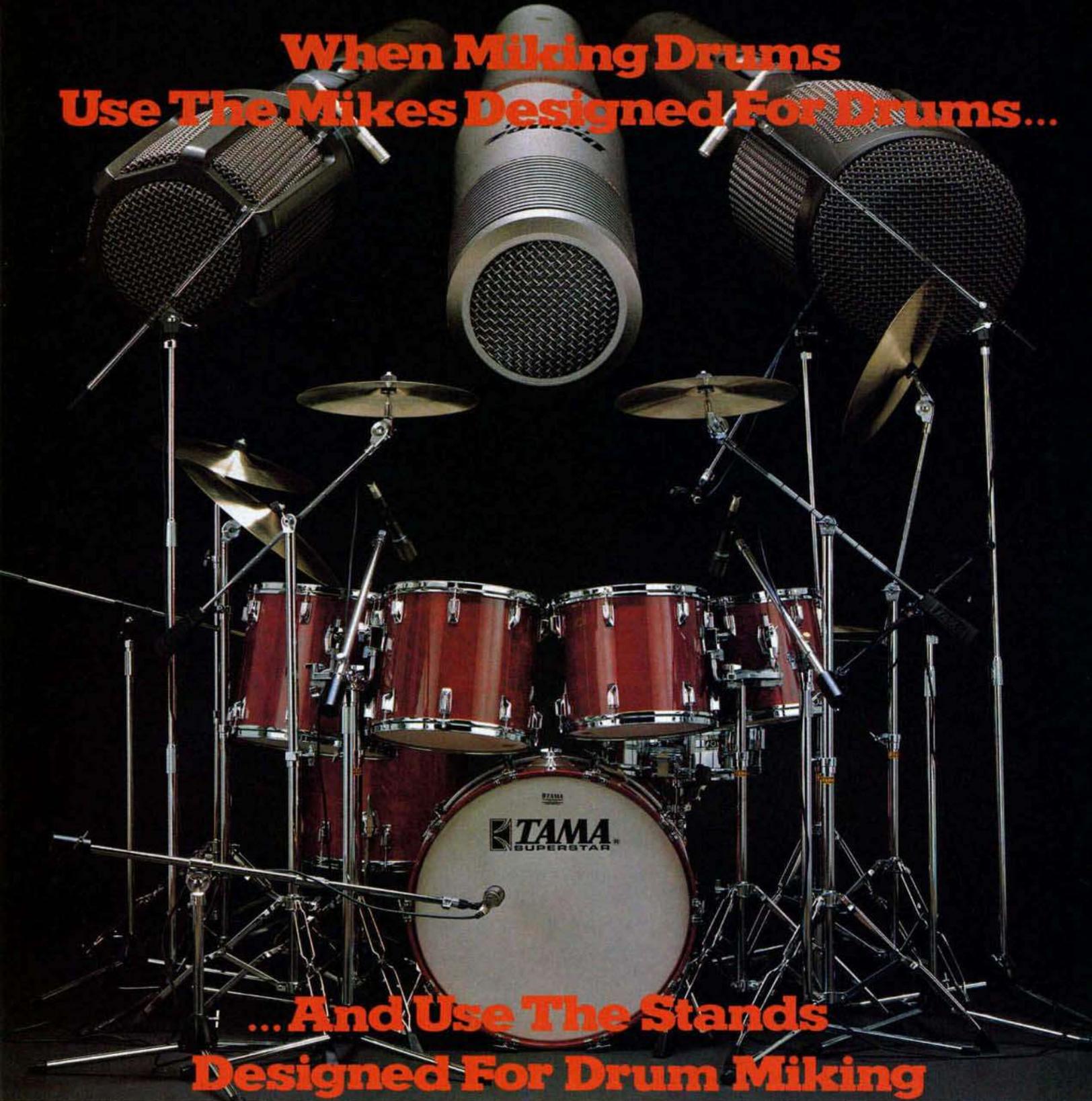
DRUM SOLO

Notice the way this solo is presented. It has a beginning, which may be called the "statement"; it has a middle, which may be called the "development"; and it has an ending which

complements the beginning statement. This is a very practical and musical form to utilize any time a solo (of some length) is called for.

Cym.
Sm. Tom
Sn. Drum
Lg. Tom
Bass Drum
Hi Hat

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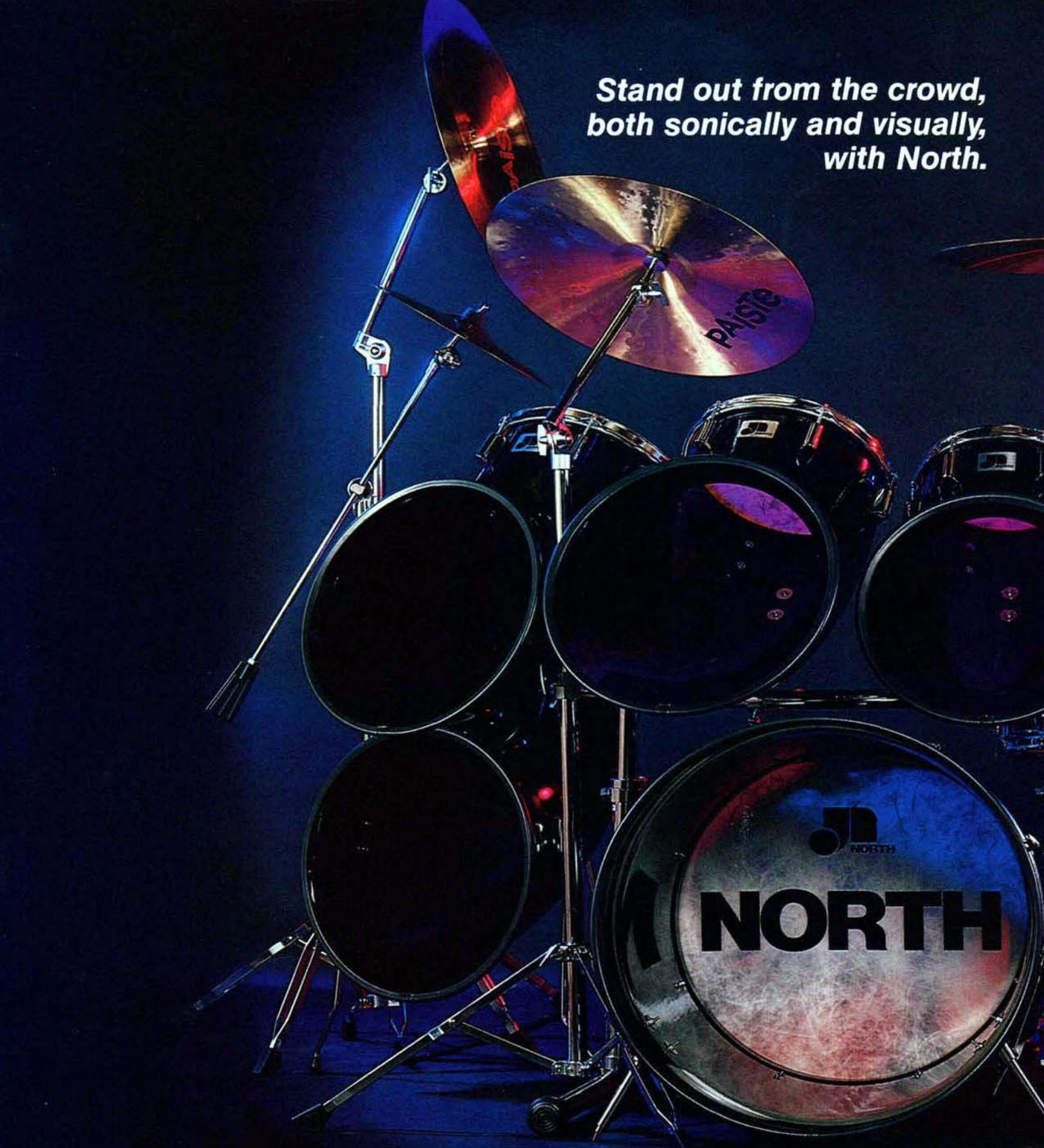


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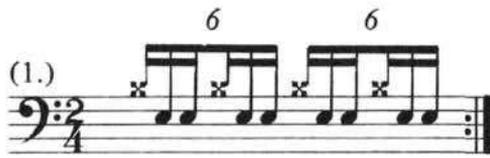
16th-Note Triplets: Variations

Rock drumming, in its most advanced forms, is a fascinating, complex and highly sophisticated part of contemporary percussion. The mastery of many of today's advanced rock rhythms requires both diligent study and dedicated practice.

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Ride Cym. Snare Bass D. H.H.w/Foot



Below are several rock beats utilizing 16th-note triplets. After mastering these, it would be advisable for each drummer to create his or her own patterns.



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DRUM SOLOIST

Billy Cobham “Blues March”



Photo by Arnold Jay Smith

Transcribed by Bobby Cleall

(H.H. with foot)



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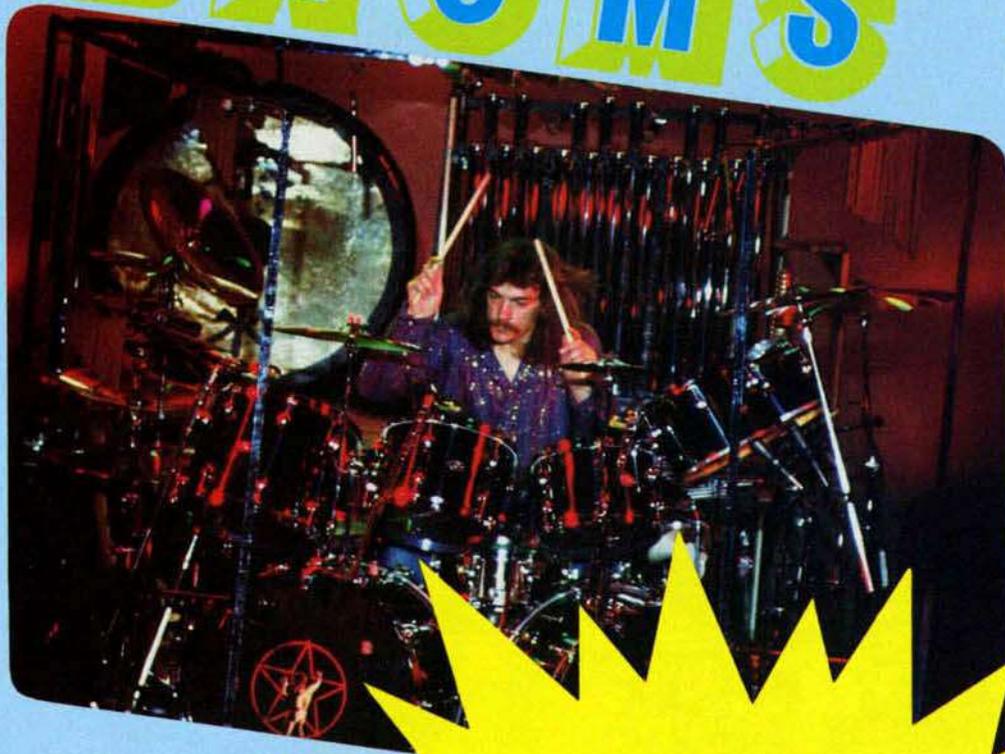
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Acuna continued from page 15

They never said a word. They got it from Miles, which is where Wayne and Joe came from of course. And when I left the band, I had that strong, quiet feeling, too.

MR: When did you start to really find your identity in Weather Report?

AA: Well, a lot of the tunes on *Black Market*, I'd have to say, were based on my playing with the group. For example, I used to take a hotel room next to Joe's, and play my Latin tapes. I had taped them from my stereo at home, using a cord mic', and you could hear my kids talking in the background. So that's what the babbling on *Black Market* was based on. Everything Joe listens to, he makes a picture of it.

And then, I started to play drums in the band. Every now and then, I'd practice, alone. One day, Joe came in and heard me. So we played together, more and more. And finally, rehearsing for *Black Market*, I played traps. Joe ordered me a hi-hat, snare, a bass drum, my congas on the side, my gong on the left, and so Chester and I were the two drummers. I used to ask Chester if I was in his way, because our styles are real different. I'm all over the set and he's solid, grooving. He said no. And then, when Al Johnson left, they were flying in bass players from all over the country to audition while we were finishing recording.

MR: Enter Jaco Pastorius.

AA: Exactly. I knew him from tapes Don Alias had, when they both played with Lou Rawls in Miami. I thought, "Wow, I've never heard a bass player like *this*." So I told Joe about him, and he called Jaco, and Jaco flew in, pony tail, no shirt, and with his Epic album, which he'd just finished.

MR: And then there was a new drummer?

AA: Well, just for the album, Wayne asked me who I wanted to play with, and I said Narada Michael Walden. We'd worked together on Al Johnson's record. He's very strong, and yet he can bend to another player. And he's got a very warm, gentle personality. But Chester was still going to do the tour.

Jaco and I hit it off right away. And he told Zawinul, "I'd rather play with Alex because he's *lighter*." So the very last rehearsal, they asked Chester not to do the tour. And, for a minute, I was doing drums and percussion. I knew the tunes, so it was easy. But the same week, I also auditioned percussionists. And we hired Manolo Badrena, an up-front, dynamic guy who liked to sing, and scream, with a lot of energy. And then we went out on tour again.

MR: What was it like, playing traps with the band?

AA: Right off, I had to copy a lot of

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Chester's playing, because that was the way for me to get to a *new* place. And then, he'd established a lot of obligate parts. But gradually, I developed my own style. It was more responsibility for me, being a drummer. As a percussionist, you get in and get out, anytime. As a drummer you have to keep the music together, and yet be fresh. And in Weather Report, I think, a drummer has to keep very open ears to Joe, Jaco, and Wayne. They play so much music on stage. And whoever makes the first move, you always have to follow. In fact, most of the band's music is created live; when they listen back to tapes, that's when they start writing tunes. In fact, every time we played one of our old songs, we'd play it differently—harmonically; rhythmically.

MR: So, what were the technical demands that you faced?

AA: Perfect time, of course, and they like to play on top of the beat. There's no pushing—it's light, floating. You *reach* and then stay there. *Jumping* music—a lot like Latin energy.

And then, on a tune like "Gibraltar," I had to play so *hard*. There's a long vamp; sometimes we'd play it for 15 or 20 minutes, and I'd be on top the whole time, all over the drums yet keeping the beat, answering Joe, going with Jaco's groove, backing up Wayne, all at the same time, on only a two-chord vamp. It was like a chess game. In fact, Zawinul used to tell me, "In this band, you don't play backbeat." I didn't know what he meant at first, but then I realized that he just didn't want the band to sound like everybody else.

Weather Report music is so many different *kinds* of music. Wayne, for example, showed me, on the drums, about post-Miles Davis, 1970s jazz. He'd take one stick and play real loud, and strong, with a lot of decision; just imitating Elvin and Tony, the way they play.

MR: What is it like to play with each of the forces in the band? Zawinul, for starters?

AA: From my experience, it was funny,

at first. I thought he didn't have good time. But then, I realized it was the opposite. He knows rhythms inside out. It's just that his approach of time is in his mind. And he'd play polyrhythms, inside, outside, *long* notes in these tempos, and instead of waiting for the next measure to apply the next note, he'd just drop it in somewhere else. So, you have to get out of your head to play with him, and just *feel* time, because you never know where the beat is going to fall. He's great, man.

MR: And Jaco?

AA: He used to help me keep things together. Since he also plays drums, he'd find the figure that I played, and he'd do it on the bass. We'd follow each other. And then he might follow Joe, harmonically. So, I'd do a lot with colors, on the cymbals, to respond. And with the snare and toms—kind of a legit approach.

MR: What kind of drummer is Jaco, by the way?

AA: If he studied a few years, he'd be at the same level on drums as he is on bass. He has good facility. His father is a drummer. He likes to play very strong, with good time, and musically, he's like Tony Williams or Jack DeJohnette.

MR: And Wayne Shorter—what did he bring out of you?

AA: For me, he's my favorite musician. He's the truest jazz player I've ever seen. Every time we played, even in rehearsals, he played different. He didn't plan it; that's just the way he is. I mean, he has no ruts or patterns he falls back on. Every time he plays, the music is totally new and fresh. We used to play a duet, live, on "Elegant People" or "Black Market." The band would give it to us, after 15 minutes or so. It was kind of a Latin thing: I'd play the tom-toms, cowbells and cymbals, and be *very* Latin for Wayne. Wayne would just follow—he's like a Cuban! And that's very rare, because the clave we had was only in our minds—not heard. We just *knew*. For him to know where I was—*whew!* I

continued on next page

Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs, cowbells, rubber feet, temple blocks, tambourines, drum keys, mallets, pop gun, snare drum stands, Rototoms, muffers, crotales, tuning forks, brushes, cases, ratchets, congas, music stands, metronomes, sistrum, almglocken, labors, maracas, stick totes, sirens. REALISTIC ROCK—Appice, PICKERING, COOKBOOK—Pickering, RUDIMENTAL SAZ—Morris, NYCHMIC ANALYSIS—Albright, PROGRESSIVE STUDIES—Gardner, FUN WITH TRIPLETS—Rothman, PORTRAITS IN MELODY—Cirone, TRANQUILITY—Houllie, SUITE FOR SOLO VIBRAPHONE—Lepak. Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs, cowbells, rubber feet, temple blocks, tambourines, drum keys, mallets, pop gun, snare drum stands, Rototoms, muffers, crotales, tuning forks, brushes, cases, ratchets, congas, music stands, metronomes, sistrum, almglocken, labors, maracas, stick totes, sirens. REALISTIC ROCK—Appice, PICKERING, COOKBOOK—Pickering, RUDIMENTAL SAZ—Morris, NYCHMIC ANALYSIS—Albright, PROGRESSIVE STUDIES—Gardner, FUN WITH TRIPLETS—Rothman, PORTRAITS IN MELODY—Cirone, TRANQUILITY—Houllie, SUITE FOR SOLO VIBRAPHONE—Lepak. Woodblocks, chimetrees, cuckoo call, drum sticks, timpani sticks, cymbals, leg rests, bongos, gongs,

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mean, in moments like that I lose my mind, my eyes roll back in my head, and go white. And what I can't believe is that Wayne's do, too! And we're both just spirit. And all the things I am—the little Peruvian boy who went to see his mother dance, the Elvin Jones fan, and timbalist—come out.

MR: You were probably touching the same primal source that Latin music touches.

AA: Exactly. You learn all kinds of things, and then you just let them go, and you're free. *That's* how you play in Weather Report.

MR: Okay, so, then you left the group after three years, right? Why?

AA: Right, in 1978. They wanted a different approach. Jaco and the engineer began to tune my drums; they wanted to know how many drums I was going to record with; they told me what beats to play. It had its good side, but it was different than when I came in the band. Then, there were some business things I didn't like. And, I'd been living in L.A. since 1977, and doing shows with Diana Ross and Thelma Houston, and I was really making more money doing that. I wanted to play different kinds of music. For example, studio work in L.A.

MR: When you did your first date, it must have been a shock, after being with a group like Weather Report.

AA: Oh, brother! It was like, for three years, you speak only Portuguese, and then, you have to start speaking English. I'd never been on any record dates except Weather Report's and Perez Prado's. But I had been playing with Larry Carlton, Greg Matheson and Abraham Laboriel at The Baked Potato. So they got me into the scene. But the first session I played, it was a disaster. With Weather Report, I changed the groove maybe every few measures. In the studio, I was just supposed to stay in the groove—but I couldn't. Or, I couldn't follow the click track. It was just impossible for me to adjust to *anything*. I think that with Weather Report, I had to get to an incredibly creative level. But I did it so fast, I bypassed *myself*, and that really screwed me up. Except, Abraham Laboriel knew my heart. And he knew that when he and I were together, we played fantastically. And he stuck with me. But I needed a big help to get myself together. And then, finally, talking to Abraham, I found out about the Lord.

MR: And backbeat, right?

AA: Right (laughs). Abe and [saxophonist] Ernie Watts got me into Lee Ritenour's group. Everyone in the band knew I could play, but it was the first time I even considered playing solid and steady behind a group. Lee got me all these Harvey Mason and Steve Gadd records

to listen to. And then, Friendship also grew out of Lee's group.

MR: What's the drummer's chair like in Friendship, and in Lee's group?

AA: I like the music. It's new for me, and I'm open to learning. For records, I use less drums, and tune differently—lower on the bass drum, kind of mid-range on the snare, for a pop sound. On the road, I still use a smaller kit, but I tune more the way I always have. And Lee never wants me to play too much, but just keep that nice groove. And he likes consistency, of course. That's why he's using the Linn, too.

MR: How do you feel about working with the drum machine?

AA: I'm not the greatest when it comes to learning about machines. Harvey Mason programs it for Lee.

MR: How would you feel if you were forced to use it?

AA: Well, I don't know about this particular machine. But I hear someone is working on another one—I don't know the name—that anticipates the feel and the touch of a drummer. It costs \$450,000 to build, so far, and only one engineer even knows how to work it. See, I'm not crazy about machines because I play so funny a style. It can't reproduce my sound. And meantime, I'm very secure about the music and tunes that I play, and I know I'm going to be playing until the Lord takes me. I play congas, timbales, drums, *and* percussion. Other drummers who just play grooves, maybe they need to worry.

MR: Fair enough. Now, there's also your own group. How do you pronounce it?

AA: Koinonia—*coin-o-nee-ah*. It's a Greek word that means fellowship and communication. But, there is no leader. We're all the leader; we're all equals; the same caliber of musicians, and friends, and brothers in the Lord.

MR: And the fact that you're all Christians will keep one of you from getting a lawyer and suing the others or getting egotistical.

AA: Exactly. We discuss everything as a group. In fact, we should do an album soon. Abraham is in Japan with Larry Carlton, and he's looking into a deal for us there.

MR: Okay, let's talk about equipment. What do you play?

AA: I'm still putting together a body of equipment that really serves me—a set of everything I play, all together. When I go with Lee, I use the Yamaha 9DR recording-type drums, which I endorse. And I use Paiste and A. and K. Zildjian cymbals, all together. The hi-hats are 14"; the bottom is Paiste, the top is an A. Zildjian. I use a 16" for my left first cymbal and then an 18", both A's. Then, I use a 20" right, a K., and a China-type

continued on page 64

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that is Paiste. There's an 8 x 10 tom-tom attached to the bass drum, and on the stand I use 13" and 14" toms. The floor tom is 16" and on my left, by the hi-hat, I use an 18" tom-tom. The stands and pedals are Yamaha, too.

My congas are Slingerland and my timbales are LP. Oh, and besides the floor tom, there's also a 16" tom, and a *Rototom* with a pedal. It can sound like a tympani, or like timbales. And then, my cartage company has two other sets in addition to the Yamaha: a Slingerland and a Rogers. The Slingerland I use for Latin-type sessions—like I've been doing some records for Brazil, with the organist Walter Wanderley. Or, an Ella Fitzgerald date of Jobim tunes for Pablo, that Paulinho Da Costa produced. The set is small, so it works for a jazz date, whereas, the Yamaha's are for pop or rock. And then, I have a Rogers for club dates in L.A., because it's flexible. I can tune the snare real fast, for the room. It's pretty much like the set I have at home—in fact, it's the set I used to play with Weather Report.

MR: How about sticks?

AA: Yamaha made for me, and sent from Japan, the special Hickory *HISA,s*. They're a little bit thick, but light, and it's a good wood. So, they give me a balance between a jazz and a rock stick. They won't break so easily. And, they have wood tips.

MR: Have you always used wood tips?

AA: Always. I don't like the sound of a plastic tip on the cymbals.

MR: Why do you like the Yamaha set?

AA: It gives me the pure sound of the drums. And it's well-made, secure. They look beautiful. And the bass pedal—it's easy to use; you don't have to kick hard. But most of all, I like the sound. So, from going to Japan so much and loving what I was playing, I finally got a set. They're good for the studios.

MR: How much session work do you do?

AA: I don't do more than three dates a day, if that's what you mean. But I guess I'm in the first five calls for percussion or drums. Since 1978, I guess I've built up to three or four months a year on the road, and the rest, record or movie dates, pretty much everyday. I do a lot on drums with Lalo Schrifin (that's TV). And Dave Grusin, too. And a lot of guys just call me for Latin percussion.

MR: How much percussion do you bring to a date?

AA: I have three Anvil cases full, that go everywhere. I've got all the standard stuff.

MR: What kind of percussion do you get called for?

AA: The strong, New York Latin grooves, timbales, Puente-type stuff. Like Nicky Marrero would do on the East Coast.

MR: I get the feeling you do about an equal amount of work as a percussionist and as a drummer.

AA: Yes. I used to get confused, but not any more. In three years of doing sessions, I'm able to adjust a lot more quickly.

MR: How about on the road? Do you play very differently then?

AA: Stronger, louder. And I like to give people a show. I jump up, and dance, and really perform; get a cowbell, and go up front, and ask people to clap. Or when I do a drum solo, I like to be flashy.

MR: Let's talk about bass players for a minute. I get the feeling that Abraham Laboriel is your favorite.

AA: Yes. Obviously, I work with a lot of bass players. But on bass, Abraham is like Paulinho is on percussion—anything he plays is right on. He's happy, and rhythmic, and he bends harmonically to any guitarist or piano player. And, he knows every kind of music. When we play, he puts all his heart into it, even into a single note. So many others maybe put everything in only now and then.

But I like a lot of players. Stanley Clarke, who I did a movie date with. We'd never met, and we just matched. His time, his approach, and his musicality are so mature. And Jaco, of course. And a lot of others.

MR: How about drummers?

AA: Like I said before, drummers, to me, are whoever hits a drum. So I like the Papines Brothers from Cuba. I also like Bill Maxwell, in Koinonia. We've done Andrae Crouch, and The Archers, and a lot of Christian albums together. He's Andrae's musical director. He can play all kinds of music. I also like Larrie London. He did The Archers' date. He came out here to do it and became ill, so I took over for him. Perfect time, solid—the first time he approaches a tune, it sounds like he's been playing it forever. And he can keep his energy up for hours at a time.

MR: How would you characterize yourself as a drummer?

AA: I used to think of myself more in terms of my influences. Because in Peru, you had to look abroad. But now, I feel more like an American drummer. And I think that I can play more my own style—the way I play on *Heavy Weather* is 75% of it. Like, on the second side, there are four tunes. On the first one, I'm on traps, with a Latin beat, mixed with a little Elvin. The third one is a semi-classical thing, and I play some Peruvian beats with some legit snare, and some free Tony Williams bass drum and hi-hat. And the very last tune is Latin-jazz-rock-fusion.

MR: And the other 25% is your grooving—like with Lee Ritenour.

AA: That's it. That's me.



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Linear Coordination: Part II

In Part I (April '82 MD), I defined linear coordination and demonstrated its importance as a drumming concept through systematic pattern combinations applied to the entire drumset.

Linear coordination is a tasteful learning concept and the groundwork for dexterous coordination and good counter-rhythm playing. Continuing the pattern combinations intro-

duced in Part I, two sixteenth notes are now systematically eliminated from a grouping of four notes providing for uniformly displaced sound and thematic playing, that is, keeping the basic pattern in mind from drum to drum and cymbal to cymbal, while playing the patterns.

Notations:

Open Hi-hat
Hi-hat
Bell of Cym.
Crash Cym.
Cowbell Mouth

Sm. Tom
Sn. Dr.
Fl. Tom
Bass Dr.

Closed Hi-hat (Foot)
Splashed Hi-hat (Foot)

Review of Basic Pattern

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

Combinations: The following pattern combinations have been written with the preceding basic pattern in mind, yet provide for four-way coordination around the drums. Series A eliminates the last two sixteenth notes from each grouping, series B, the second and third sixteenth notes, series C, the first

and second, series D, the first and last. For each series I have written seven patterns so that the linear coordination will be played on each part of the drumset.

Method of Study: Play the patterns as written with metronome marking, M.M. ♩ = 60, then progress to 80.

1 2 3

A

B

C

D

Example 1: An extra note was added on the "and" of four, making a quadruplet (polyrhythm) in the third group for more interesting playing. M.M. J = 96

7

A

B

C

D

Example 2: The left hand rhythm is displaced around the drum set on the snare drum, small tom and floor tom-tom for a Latin-funk flavor. M.M. J = 110

C

D

The following rhythms are developed by practicing linear coordination in a reggae feel.

Funk-Reggae in a Half-time Feel: M.M. ♩ = 76

For more reggae emphasis convert half-time *Funk-Reggae* into a *Shuffle Half-time Feel:* M.M. J = 70

For some variation with linear coordination in a triple feel, take four bars of jazz time and go into four bars of *Afro-Cuban Rhythm:* M.M. J = 120

In columns 2, 4, and 7 be sure to play the open hi-hat, practicing a *sustained* control on the sizzle with the hand and foot. For column 3, the hi-hat can be played with your left foot on quarter notes, eighths and on the "and" of each beat, while

playing the hi-hat hand pattern on the ride cymbal. To facilitate playing in columns 5 and 6, play as indicated and then play the right hand hi-hat part on the ride cymbal, keeping the hi-hat on fours or eighths with the left foot. Some patterns may require more practice than others and may not be played in a musical context, but they are excellent for improved ease in your normal playing.

After you feel comfortable with the patterns, play them with the following suggestions:

Suggestion 1: Taken from A7. Added bass drum to be played with the open hi-hat.

Suggestion 2: Taken from D4. This will really make your left foot work. Play the hi-hat part with the leading hand on the bell of the cymbal (or other cymbal sources) while the splashing hi-hat is sustained by the left foot.

Play the right hand on the bell of cymbal (or other cymbal sources) at the same time splashing with the left foot on the hi-hat on the open note. The bass drum is added to reinforce the open hi-hat.

In conclusion, the drummer can work with linear coordination the same way composers build songs around their basic melody. Practice to build tasteful rhythms, odd times, and soloing ability. There are, literally, millions of combinations that can be developed with linear coordination. Quite a few have been discussed in the two parts of this article. However, it should be mentioned that there are two more combinations that can be developed by eliminating two notes for additional foot emphasis (Pattern E would eliminate the third and first notes, and Pattern F would eliminate the fourth and second notes) and there are four combinations when three notes are eliminated. If you would like more practice with linear foot independence, experiment with writing down the pattern combinations.

For any additional information regarding these patterns or the patterns written in the article please write to: Sal Sofia, 6 Avenue J, Brooklyn, New York 11230



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Eames continued from page 17

absorbed. I didn't set out to have more plies than anybody else, I was just after a certain thickness to see what it would sound like. Actually, I was worried that the drum would sound "tubby" because of all that wood. But since the bevelled edge is no thicker than it would be on a thinner shell, the head is still vibrating. The mass of the shell allows that vibration to project."

One of the first drummers to try out the new snare shell was Michael Dawe, and he liked it so much that he asked Joe to make an entire set for him with the thicker shells. Again, Macsweeney concentrated on thickness rather than number of plies. He found that a half-inch shell was better suited for bass and toms, and so the shells ended up being 12 ply. The set turned out fine, and from that came the momentum to come up with a price list and offer snare drum, bass drum and tom-tom shells in a variety of sizes. Joe added, "Since we cut the wood ourselves, in addition to the sizes listed, we can make any size in between."

The first step in making an Eames drum shell is the selection of the wood, based on the finish chosen by the customer. The wood is then cut to general size and checked over for any imperfections. From these pieces, the outside veneer, called the "face" of the shell, is chosen and marked. The wood is then steam bent in a secret process developed by Ralph Eames. After drying for 48 hours, the face of the shell is glued to the specific diameter. The rest of the plies are then laminated, working from the outside in. Each gluing step is allowed to dry for a full 24 hours, even though the glue, according to the manufacturer, is set up in 45 minutes. After the laminating process is complete, the shell is cut true on each end with a table saw.

The next step is the bevelling of the edge of the shell. The shell is mounted on the wheel where the edge is put on with a combination of enisling and sandpapering. This step is controlled entirely by eye and by touch, and the skill of the drum maker is very evident here. The shell is then sanded on the outside to remove any marks or glue which might have gotten on the shell during one of the previous steps. The shell is then removed from the wheel and sanded on the inside. If the shell is to be stained with one of twelve available finishes, it is done immediately after the sanding. The shell is then sealed, inside and out, with polyurethane. After drying for 24 hours, a second coat is applied, and after another 24 hours, the third coat. The customer has a choice of low luster or high gloss finish. Unfinished shells are also available for those who want to do the job themselves. If the customer desires it,



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Joe will also do the drilling, again, all done by hand. They don't use any presses because each job is different.

It is not easy to find people who have the interest or the skill to hand make a drum, so for this reason, the Eames operation consists of only two people: Joe Macsweeney and Jim Standish. Joe does all of the cutting and bending, and glues up the face of the shell. Jim laminates the plies into the face, and does the beveling and sanding. They both work on the finishing and drilling. Actually, there is a third person involved. Ralph Eames still maintains an active interest in the company and helps out with the business end.

A question often asked of MacSweeney concerns the use of birch rather than maple. He explained: "Birch is not as hard as maple and therefore the fibers are a little more flexible. That makes it good from a workman's standpoint as far as bending, sanding, etc. Maple is harder, but because of that, it is a little more brittle and more subject to cracking. A lot of the old Stone drums have cracks, just because of the hardness of the wood. Birch has proved to be quite durable, mainly because of its flexibility. It also has a more descriptive grain. Each piece has its own individual characteristics, whereas maple all tends to look the same.

After the good response to the 12 and 15-ply shells, a few players requested a lighter drum. Macsweeney complied by developing a 9-ply shell which was 3/8 inch thick. He was then able to offer a shell for less money but which was constructed with the same rigidity, and the same hand-craftsmanship.

One area the Eames Drum Company is not involved in is hardware, preferring to work hand in hand with local retailers. "By not selling those items that are available in retail outlets, we can work along with them," Macsweeney stated. "We have no quantity minimums, so any shop is welcome to check out our shells." This allows the customer the option of using whatever hardware he

feels is best for his own situation. The price of an Eames shell is much less than one might expect. According to MacSweeney, "We keep in mind that the customer does have to add hardware in order to make the drum complete. Also, we don't use high-budget marketing techniques. When you buy our shell, you're just paying for materials and labor. There's not a lot of overhead for advertising."

The Eames Drum Company does not maintain an inventory. As Joe MacSweeney explains, "We have fifty different sizes, plus we can cut in between any of the given depths. So it's impossible to anticipate what people will be ordering. This way, each instrument is made specifically for the person who orders it." In this age of mass production, it is refreshing to find drums not being made mechanically as though they were pieces of furniture, but being hand crafted as the fine musical instruments that they are. As Joe commented, "We're not just doing this as a business; we're also doing this for love of the instrument." 

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Morrell continued from page 21

MM: Well, basically I have one set that stays at one studio where I do a lot of work and one set which travels around with the cartage service to various studios.

TBW: I notice the Evans oil-filled heads on the old Slingerlands.

MM: Yeah, I used those for a while, then I tried the *Pinstripes*. I always seem to go back to the *Ambassadors*. They're a good head which can be tuned many different ways.

TBW: You get more stick on the *Ambassadors*. You really have to work on the *Pinstripes*.

MM: Yeah, and on the oil heads too. You really have to dig to get a sound. You don't get much response.

TBW: What snare drums do you use besides the blue *Vistalite* in the other room?

MM: That blue, clear drum—I was doing a miming gig on a rented set and for some reason that drum had a dynamite sound. I bought it and used it in the studios a couple of days later. I didn't like it and it's been sitting there ever since.

I have two snare drums for the studio. I use a Ludwig, the wide one, metal, and a Slingerland—wide but wood. The wood one gets a darker sound and the metal is brighter.

TBW: Do you crank them down or can you leave them tuned up and rely on the depth?

MM: They're down. Pretty sloppy too. But sometimes I'll tighten them up. It depends on the material. If I'm playing live I'll tighten them up a bit more.

TBW: Do you get away with rimshots on back beats?

MM: No, right in the center. Most of my snare drums have a big welt right in the center and I leave it there because it's a good place to aim-right in the pocket all the time.

TBW: What do you look for in a cymbal?

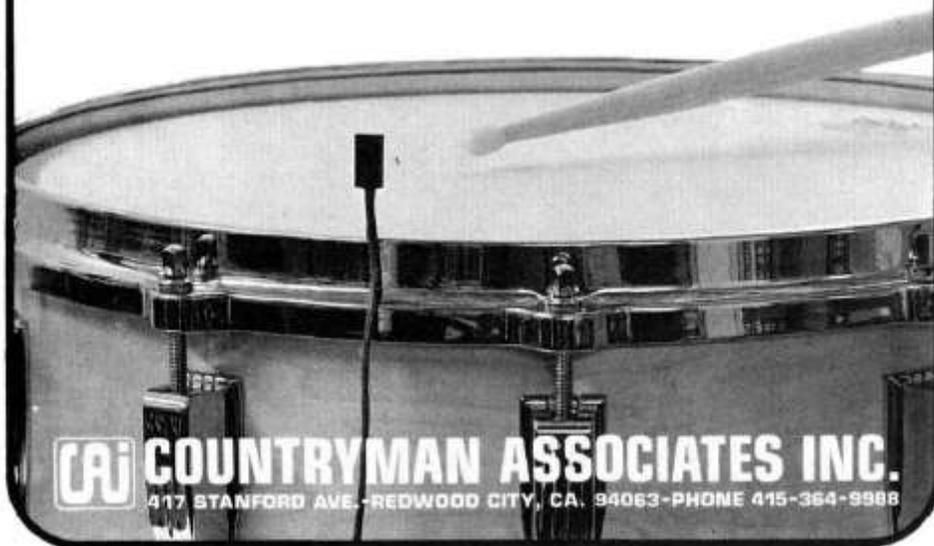
MM: I love the Paistes. They're a super cymbal. My collection of cymbals includes just about everything, crash to Chinese-type cymbals. I've got a pair of 13" hi-hats with a band cymbal on top which I use in the studio and live. I've got a couple of good ride cymbals, a *Dark* ping, sizzles—you know, it depends on the gig. For the studio I like bright-sounding cymbals.

TBW: Thinner, perhaps?

MM: Well, for crash cymbals, but for ride I like heavier for definition. There's nothing like a good, old Zildjian cymbal if you can find one. I think drummers should have a variety of cymbals to suit the situation. I mean, there are some guys that use the same cymbals for every situation, and that's fine because it suits their playing. When I do a small group thing, I might use a flat ride, whereas in a big band I'd use a heavy ride cymbal and

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TBW: Ever tried K's?

MM: Yeah, I've got K's. One is a really nice 18" crash with sizzles. But I don't know, I was so sick and tired of hearing drummers with the K-sound—Tony Williams all over again. Everybody was just going after that sound, so I went the other way. Paiste did a lot of research. They've got a super variety of sounds.

TBW: And in mallet instruments what do you look for? This is a nice Musser vibraphone behind us.

MM: Yes, for me that's pretty much it. I've always wanted one of those and I got it last year. Deagan xylophones are great, and I have an older set of Deagan orchestral bells which are nice, but for vibes it's Musser. I have a Pro-Musser at the warehouse, a portable one. This one I use for my own enjoyment and for jazz gigs on vibes. I love vibes.

TBW: You've got great facility on vibes. Did that come since you moved to Canada?

MM: Well, I played in college, but I didn't play jazz vibes. Since I've been in Canada, not being on the road and being able to come home, I've been able to work on them. So the last four or five years I've been getting that together.

TBW: You've always played matched

grip, as I remember it.

MM: No, I played mostly traditional, but since I've been doing studio work I've played matched. Just to get the sound I think it is easier and a lot more *even* to hit the center of the drum using the butt end of the stick using matched grip. Especially when you have an array of toms—it's easier reaching, and you don't get the power with traditional. I don't care what guys say. I mean, Gadd plays traditional but he plays a contained little set. If you play a big studio set with five or six toms, I can't see how you can get a sound with traditional, and it's awkward with the left hand reaching. And of course, playing congas, vibes and tymms—I thought I would stay with one approach. But when I do a military date or something that requires finesse or delicate rolls, I'll switch to traditional because I can't get the sensitivity with matched grip.

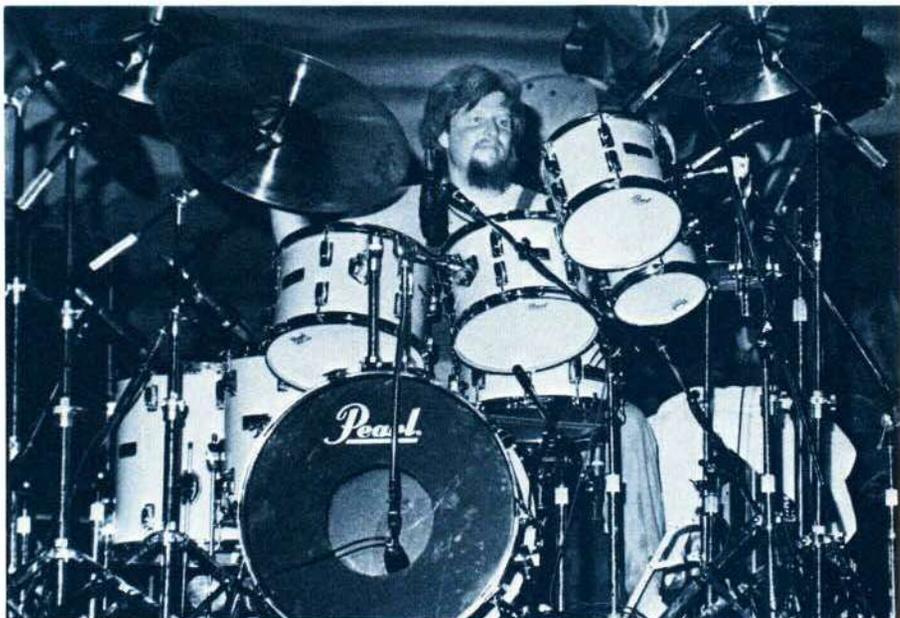
TBW: For military—that's interesting, because I always felt that matched grip lends itself more to that straight-eight military playing, and I can't get that triplet feel like I can with traditional.

MM: Yeah, for a jazz gig I do the same, and if I'm doing a brush gig I'll play them traditional. But if I want power with the left hand I'll play matched. I was used to both playing Latin. The thing is to get

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both together so if one fails, the other is there. With traditional I found that some of the tom fills would be weaker: you would hear the right hand louder. Also, with matched grip it's easier to crash with the left hand. With the rock thing you don't necessarily want that extra sensitivity—you want sort of a robot thing around the toms. And it makes it in that kind of music.

TBW: That's nice you can say that; you've really adapted, or changed, so completely.

MM: Well, I'll tell you something. One of the things about being born and raised in New York City is that competition for survival is really keen. You get it together to survive. You either go for it, or say, "Okay, I'll take a pass on it," or just go and play some free jazz somewhere.

TBW: Have you found great differences between New York and Toronto in the quality of young musicians?

MM: It's getting more competitive in Toronto now. It's been like that in New York for years. The guys in New York have to outplay Gadd. It's really tough but it makes good players. It keeps the level very high. Now the standard in Toronto is getting higher and that's good. Before, where there was maybe one drummer in town who'd get the gigs, there now are maybe ten guys who can do it. So the best one gets the gig.

TBW: Do you see good things coming out of the colleges such as Humber?

MM: Yeah. Nowadays there aren't too many places where you can go to get experience. At Humber they have big band ensembles, rhythm section ensembles—actually playing with a group, rather than just an individual in a little studio with his teacher playing on a drum pad. You can only go so far that way. When I grew up I used to play in show bands in the Catskill Mountains and I learned how to read. The more I did it the better I became. And I've used all that show technique in the last five years since I've been into studio work, TV shows, and show drumming.

TBW: Is the reading difficult in your work, in general?

MM: No, you use your ears too, and that's where the creativity comes in. You have to interpret a part. There are certain writers who write every single note out for a drummer; it's like Jim Chapin, Exercise 22. I have so much trouble doing that because I'll always hear something of my own because I have so many years of using my ears and reading a skeleton chart. In fact, I don't get hired by guys that write that way. I get used by leaders who are more sketchy. I don't care for the other kind of writing.

Certain writers just do a sketchy chart and then get the right musicians for the right feel and it sounds great. The other

writer must go through more trouble just to get what the first one gets by using the right guys. The track will sound more relaxed.

TBW: Were you nervous for your first studio gig in Toronto?

MM: Oh yeah. When I first came to town I hadn't done a jingle. So my first date was with a click track, which I'd never played to before, and I didn't really have the right drum sound. I went in there and did the best I could. It turned out okay, but I think word got around that I didn't have my studio thing together. I was a good jazz player and I sounded good at Bourbon Street, but in the studio I was weak. So I had to accept this. Just because you have done one thing that people might consider great doesn't mean you can go somewhere else and be great there too. I had to start at the ground level and try and get that together.

TBW: By woodshedding?

MM: By listening carefully; talking to guys. By learning how to get the right sound. I had to deal with this. I might have done two sessions in a year and a half. Then I had an opportunity once—a really important situation. Just by process of elimination certain guys were out of town; certain guys were sick, who would have gotten first call. Terry Clarke was sick in this particular case and I was the only one who was left. And luckily, one of the production people up from Texas knew of me from Bill Evans and said, "Get Marty." By then I had done some more research and had a little more understanding of the situation. I went in with the attitude that "I'll do the best I can," and I wasn't nervous anymore. Maybe I just wasn't cut out for the studios, you know. Terry (Clarke) was beautiful. I went to his place and asked where I could get a big set of rock drums, and he said just to take his drums. They were tuned perfect, just ready to go. And I played right out. I didn't care, man; I just did my best. And they dug me, and we wound up working the rest of the week and I made two thousand dollars. We did about fifty tracks. And then they overdubbed the brass and strings and everybody from town was in because it was a really big session. From doing that I started getting more and more dates and more experience. I did do, and still do, a lot of theatre work. I did *Chorus Line* for ten weeks, which is a super drum book, and *They're Playing Our Song*. It's good employment; it can get a little boring, but there's a certain amount of discipline involved in getting it just so. I did *Dancin'* last year which is a super show with all kinds of percussion and percussion ensembles. That was fun, but even that got boring after three or four weeks, eight shows a week. That's another area of the business. It's a shame

continued on next page

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that the theatre scene here isn't as abundant as it is in New York City where there are, say, fifteen or twenty theatres going all the time with big orchestras. That supplies a lot of work. That's another area where percussion came in handy. And also, you get a nice pay check: basic scale is around four and a half, and if you have some doubles, usually it's up fifty percent. So that's over \$675, and you get that on percussion. It's no sacrilege to go play music and make some money. Professionalism is not taken away; if anything, it's enhanced since you have to be more of a professional to go and play these gigs properly. These are areas of the business that are available to anybody. You just have to work toward it, be available for it, and don't write any of it off.

TBW: I interviewed Jack DeJohnette a few years ago and he pointed-out that jazz isn't really appreciated in the States. How do you feel about that?

MM: You hear so many records that are antagonistic. And artists wonder why they are not selling. It's because they alienate the audience! You go into clubs and guys are playing this stuff called "art" and wondering why people are talking and not listening, and they're saying, you know, "The audience isn't hip." Meanwhile, the audience is paying their salary. You don't treat people like that, man; not that you should play mundane shit. Rut a lot of this self-involved

music is depressing and there's enough depression in the world today without listening to it on the stand.

I've seen Bill Evans turn the most common layman right around, just by playing. And I've seen him quiet an audience just by playing three notes. It's the spirit he projects.

TBW: He wasn't always right *inside* either.

MM: Yeah, Bill got outside but with a lot of basic structure always present. I want to hear something beautiful, interesting, or something fun. You rarely see guys up there just having fun. Often they're there just copping an attitude. There's such a range of emotions that can be expressed in music. Why just the dark ones?

I think at this stage in my life I've come to understand what I really do appreciate. I know how I feel. With stability, now I can form opinions and not have to worry about what others think. When I was coming up in the business there were certain things, types of music, that I didn't understand or like, but I didn't want to say I didn't because people would say I wasn't very hip. You want to belong, you know. It's funny, when I go back and think about what led me to play jazz—it was more of a peer-recognition thing, because I was a commercial player before. I began to feel "I belong" in jazz.

TBW: But you *did* belong, though, and that's maybe part of the difference. A lot

of people, drum students anyway, choose to play jazz out of a sort of snobbery which purports some form of be-bop to be the only acceptable alternative for drummers.

MM: Yeah, exactly. Great music is an expression of a social situation. It kills me to see young musicians playing older music when they could be doing something original and with depth.

TBW: You still hear "Straight, No Chaser."

MM: Yeah. You hear the same tunes. Although, I play with some groups which play the older tunes and they go right outside. But trying to play in the old styles—it seems that's going backwards.

TBW: Are you worried that with masses of young players choosing to play very simple music, the standard of musicianship will suffer?

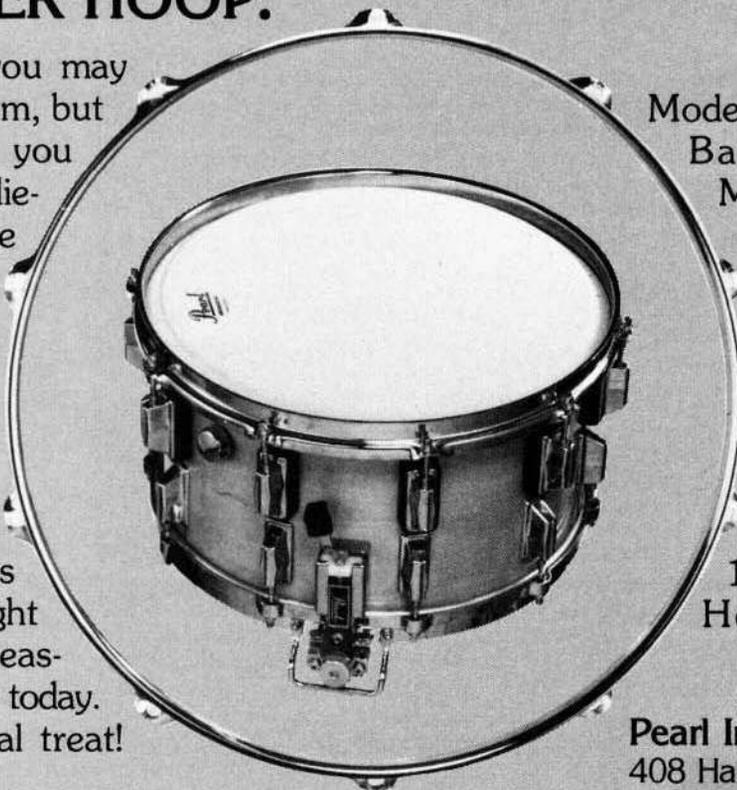
MM: No, I don't think it is suffering. I think it is growing. People were saying that rock music was the creation of mediocrity in music. I don't really believe that. It has taken us to a really nice place.

TBW: And I guess when you were growing up there was plenty of sub-standard stuff being played, just as in any era.

MM: Sure. For instance, Steve Gadd originally was kind of a be-bop player. He heard rock and roll and took it to another level, even though what he heard may have been mediocre. But the stuff he plays—he's as much of an inno-

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vator, or more so, than Tony Williams or Philly Joe. For studio drumming he's an all-time innovator. He's beautiful. But I don't know whether I'd dig his life style—getting up in the morning, going out and playing all day, catch some sleep, and the same thing the next day, forever. Some people, that's their karma. But those people are few and far between: like Miles, Coltrane, Philly Joe. I put Steve Gadd up there with those people. That's his karma. But for the next person down, you have to really know where you're at in relation to that peak. You have to strike a balance and go with that. I think you have to admit to yourself, "Well, I'm not Miles Davis, or Coltrane, or Steve Gadd. I'm so-and-so," and get it together at your level. I've never considered that I was innovative to the level of Bill Evans or Steve Gadd. I'm a well-studied, varied musician and it's great that I can earn a living playing music. What a treat that is! Sure beats the hell out of going to the office. I've done some composing and made a fair bit of bread with some of my tunes recorded. That's another area you can tap into. It's fun, it's creative and you can produce and orchestrate. Your chances of doing that and of having a hit are greater than playing the lottery. Rely on yourself. Nowadays is a great time. Open your ears and look around, and not

only in music. Music is a great part of my life but my life does not revolve around it. There are other things that I really enjoy in my spare time—the farm, the family—things that are meaningful and make me feel good. And when I go to music I feel better about what I'm doing and the dark moods stay away. I had enough of that on the road living the life of the jazz musician.



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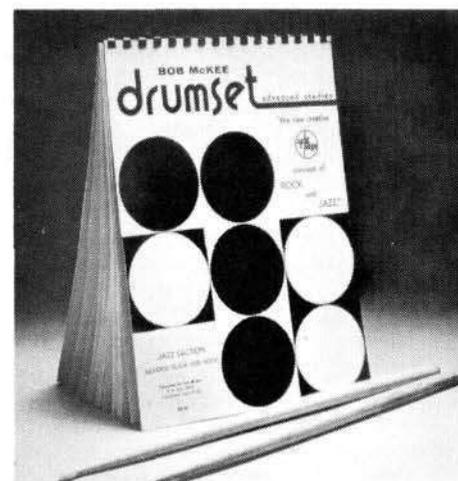
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Pearl Extender

Over a century ago, Dresden tympani appeared with an extended-head principle that produced more volume and resonance. Pearl has now applied that concept to a drum kit.

The new *Extender* Series utilizes the extended-collar design on the toms and snare drum. The batter head is one inch larger than the shell diameter, and slopes down to an oversized rim.

The components in the kit tested are: 14 x 22 bass drum, 8 x 12/13 tom-tom, 9 x 13/14 tom-tom, 15 x 15/16 floor tom, 8 x 14/15 snare drum, and 900 Series hardware. All the drums have 8-ply maple shells, and are built in the USA.

The bass drum is conventional, having 20 lugs with T-style rods, cast claws and maple hoops. The wooden hoops come standard with wood-finished bass drums only. Unfortunately, some makes of drum pedals do not fit on the hoop comfortably; their linkage strap rubs against the batter head. Pearl should consider widening the batter hoop a little bit. A felt strip damper is installed behind the batter head. Each bass drum spur plate is notched in two places: to lock the spurs flush to the drum for packing; and for set-up, to lock them at a slight forward angle. The spur tube contains an inner leg which telescopes for height. At the end of each leg is a rubber tip which can be threaded up to expose a steel spike tip. The spurs hold the bass drum in place very well with no forward "skating."

This drum has two ventholes—one at the top and one at the bottom. Fitted with coated *Ambassador* heads, the drum had nice resonance and ample volume. Single-headed, it produced good punch for that "modern" sound. For rock playing though, a *Pinstripe* or an Evans *Hydraulic* might make for a more contained sound.

Pearl's 7/7 *Vari-Set* tom-tom holder is mounted on the bass drum. A large chromed block is mounted towards the front of the shell. The receiver holes in the base block are split in half with a half-section indirect clamp—drum-key operated on one side, a T-bolt on the other. The tom-tom arms are tubular steel with cast circular boss joints. Angle adjustment on the arms is similar to Pearl's cymbal tilter concept: no ratchet teeth, but an inner "drum" locked by a single square-head screw atop each arm. Each tom-tom arm passes through its own hole in the base block, and has a memory lock ring for securing height, as well as a memory ring on the other end for locking drum distance/lateral angle. Almost every conceivable angle can be selected with the *Vari-Set* holder, and *nothing* will move once the locks are in place.

Two 903 cymbal stands are included with this kit. They have sturdy tripod bases and two adjustable height stages. Like the *Vari-Set* holder, the tiers are secured by indirect clamping, but without the memory locks. The tillers oper-

ate on the rotating "drum" principle. Any angle is obtainable in a 175° radius. Atop the tilter is a "cymbal stabilizer." This replaces all of the usual washers and sleeves. The base piece is nylon, disc-shaped with a molded-in sleeve. A nylon donut fits tight on top of the sleeve to keep the cymbal from moving about excessively. All 900 Series stands will take Pearl's AX-3 adaptors, allowing one to add on cymbal booms, tom-tom arms, etc.

The 900 hi-hat has a sandblasted two-piece footboard and double parallel springs. Action is a double-pull system with spring tension conveniently adjusted at the top of each external spring tube. Linkage is done with a fat piece of nylon. The stand has a single tripod base, fitted with a *Vari-Set* memory lock on the height tube. Pearl incorporates a unique spur system on the 900. Connected to each leg is a rotating tip; one end with rubber, the other with a metal point. A drum-key-operated screw holds the tip assembly, and, when loosened, allows the tip to be changed from rubber to spike. The 900 remains very stable. It has a quiet, easy action and different tensions are available with a minimum of turns.

A special snare stand is made to accommodate the 8" drum. The 906D has a single-braced tripod base, swivel wing-bolt angle adjustment, and a threaded tightening nut. To set the deep snare drum at a comfortable playing level, the

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basket has been adapted in reverse. The main connector is at the top of the basket, rather than the bottom. It works on the same principle as all other stands with this type of clamping. The 906D has the split *Vari-Set* tier clamp, but no memory lock. It holds the drum secure, and is ideal for deep snare drums.

Pearl's 910 pedal has been re-introduced into their line. It is available as an option with kits, or can be bought separately. The 910 has a sandblasted two-piece footboard with an adjustable/removable toe stop (as does the hi-hat). The footboard may be positioned in any of three lengths away from the framework via rod arms locating into holes at the base. Underneath the heel is a piece of ribbed rubber to help combat skidding. Linkage is a flexible strap with two pieces of soft leather with a nylon layer in between. Encased at the top right of the frame is a compression spring, extending upward. A knurled knob atop the casing adjusts tension, and an adjustment scale is cut into the casing for use as a reference point. The pedal has two knurled knob spring spurs at its base, and clamps to the drum hoop using a one-touch cam clamp lever. When the stick-shift-type lever is pulled towards the player, the clamp plate falls to the hoop, locking the pedal down. To compensate for different hoop thicknesses, the clamp plate has a knob screw that lowers a cast block to "fatten" the plate. The 910 comes with a felt beater, set in height by a T-screw. One minor problem

is that this screw gets in the way of the strap a little bit, making it uncomfortable to tighten. The Pearl 910 is strong and positive, and has a quite efficient action to it. Its clamping system is one of the best and is easy to use.

The 12" *Extender* tom-tom has 12 lugs, a 12" bottom head, and a 13" batter head and hoop. The 13" drum has 12 lugs, a 13" bottom head, and a 14" batter head. The 15" floor tom has 16 lugs, a 15" bottom, and a 16" batter. All the drums have internal mufflers and two ventholes—one near the center of the shell, the other at the bottom of the opposite side. These help quicken the outflow of air. Because of the enlarged hoop size, the top tension casings on each drum are a bit lower than usual. They are built up underneath on hard black plastic spacers to allow rod entrance at a straight angle. The mounted toms are fitted with *BT-1 Vari-Set* receivers. Again, these operate on indirect clamping, and the tom-tom arm protrudes the shell. The floor tom has three legs, knurled at their top halves, and set in place by a T-bolt and bracket.

The toms were all fitted with Remo transparent *Ambassadors*, top and bottom. Pearl's claim that the new *Extenders* have increased resonance, pitch clarity and volume is true. The design allows for a low pitch with a tighter head tension than normal. With both heads tensioned the same, resonance is at its fullest. By changing the tension of the bottom head, the resonance can be dampened. Due to the extended hoop.

external clip-on mufflers will not work. Perhaps Pearl will devise a muffler for the advocates of external dampening.

The 8 x 14 snare drum has 20 separate lugs, an internal muffler, and two ventholes, both located at the bottom. The batter side was fitted with a 15" coated *Ambassador*, while the bottom has a standard 14" head. This drum came with Pearl's S-015 center-throw strainer. I would like to see it with the new *X-1* parallel strainer, since the *X-1* gives more even response. The drum sounded full, with perhaps a bit too much ring. Pearl's internal mufflers just don't seem to work well. On this drum, the muffler was tightened all the way and seemed to bind up, without muffling the drum. The *Extender* concept works on the snare, but maybe not as well as on the tom-toms.

The kit was finished in Pearl's new Natural Maple wood, a genuine veneer. All the drums look great and there are no finish defects anywhere. Pearl offers a total of 16 finishes: four woods, and twelve plastic coverings. All logo badges now include serial numbers.

Extender toms are currently available in nine sizes, including "power tom" sizes, all double or single-headed.

The drums list separately at \$1352; the hardware at \$545, making the entire kit retail at \$1897, or less with 800 Series hardware and the 810S pedal. If it's volume, depth, clarity, and good construction you're after, you owe it to yourself to seriously check out the *Extenders*.



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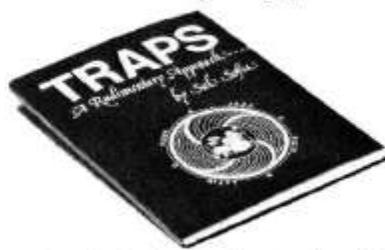


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they've left it open for suggestions or arrangement ideas. Barry's probably the one most apt to come off with something like that. He's got songs that are done. There's a song that was left off this album that was basically his called "This Ride's On Me." It was a great song! Anybody that heard it unfinished was looking for that song on the second album.

SF: Who decides what songs are going to be on the albums?

DH: Well, the last word is probably between Gary, Allen and Barry. The only reason *that* particular song probably didn't get on is because it was undecided. I hope we'll jump back on it for the third album.

SF: Is it hard for the band to make records?

DH: Well, I think it's only as hard as it's made to be. I just like to get down to business and most everybody in the band does. Without pointing fingers, last time, making the second album, I felt it wasn't taken seriously enough. It was at *first*, but then the remaining four months of nonsense really put a hurting on things financially and morally.

SF: Does your drumset differ in the studio and in concert?

DH: Yeah. I'm tempted to use the same setup live because it's more comfortable. It's modified down some in the studio. I use one less floor tom and one less front tom. That's about the only difference. Like when I had double bass drums, it felt crowded. One time I did a club gig with my four-piece set. I realized how much more open and free I felt, so that was the end of the double bass routine.

SF: I noticed in concert you're using *Pinstripe* heads on the toms and a white batter head on your snare.

DH: I've been going with a new snare I got from Slingerland. It's a wood shell with chrome wrap on it; twelve lugs. It's the first snare drum that I've ever used a *Pinstripe* head on for a long run. It's a big ol' eight-inch drum. It sounds real good. I actually prefer a seven-inch drum with ten lugs instead of twelve. To me, a ten-lug drum is easier to tune and there's less sensitivity to it.

I was always one to use the Remo *Ambassador* white heads on the toms because they have a more resonant tone. I think we ended up with some *Pinstripes* on them in the studio for this last record because we got a nice sound out of them.

SF: Do you muffle your drums in the studio?

DH: Very little. I like a little bit of tone. That's why I use both heads. I always have two heads on my drums. I like a slightly live drum sound with a note. It's got to have a definite note to it; a slight resonance.

SF: How much control do you have over

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Hess continued from page 25

of hard to put it in words. I think Melanie tried to be dependant on herself only when she was a solo act. She really played the role of producer with the band in getting her material worked out, which was fine with me.

SF: So Melanie would give you direction as to what she wanted to hear from the drums?

DH: Yeah, She'd come from the producer's angle as well as the singer's.

SF: What's the general songwriting/arranging procedure with the Rossington Collins Band?

DH: It varies quite a bit. We've been off a week since our last tour. We'll probably sit around for another month, and then me and Leon will get out there and start plugging away. Just the two of us rehearsing. That's usually how we'll get into it. We just seem to be extremely dedicated to keeping the enthusiasm and momentum going. Then maybe myself, Leon, Barry and Billy will wind up at the studio, and when there's an idea hit on, everybody will give the creator of the idea the floor. We'll hit on that idea as long as we can get somewhere with it. Leon is a treasure at the end of a rainbow for a drummer. He's real solid and we listen to each other extensively. We just hit on this communication level that our combined feel was one major hurdle that

we went around. It came natural.

Every once in a while we'll have an idea or a riff. "Fancy Ideas" from the second album is one of Leon's, mine, and Barry's. Me and Leon on our own, just warming up, hit on the basic concept and hook line. The rest of the song was written around that. I think Barry's intro is really appropriate. The idea had been there anyway and he was just waiting for something to attach it to. *Not forced* on, but I think it was real fitting. Barry wrote lyrics for it and sang it. Dale wanted to sing it. I like what Barry did, but it seemed more fitting for Dale, and the song might've gotten more attention if she was singing it. A lot of people thought it was a real snappy track.

SF: Barry didn't sing at all on the first album.

DH: Well, he shared vocals on "Don't Misunderstand," but he really got some lead vocal slots on the second album because of unpreparedness in trying to get the album finished. I think it's a strong album through and through, but there was not really one outstanding top-40 single on it, which really put a hurting on it, unfortunately. It seems you need one or two, these days.

SF: How often is it that a band member comes in with a complete song with music and lyrics?

DH: Not real often. Probably because

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what your drums are going to sound like on record?

DH: Well, that's a sore spot with me. I have a lot of control over the sound of my drums when the basic tracks are being recorded. On this second album it sounds like they took a lot of horsepower out of the drums with the mix.

SF: Didn't you have a chance to hear a test pressing?

DH: I did, but . . . we changed horses in the middle of the stream. The engineer that was on basic tracks, about half-way through, got up and went! We had to get another engineer to finish up. I was just ready to throw my arms up and say, "Let's get the damned thing finished and out!" rather than go down there and pick on them. I wasn't there for the final mix. But, while the tracks were being put down, we spent a lot of time getting drum sounds. On the record it's like just half the meat they had. I had as good a drum sound as you could probably get in the beginning. The kick drum was just tremendous and moving. I didn't like the meat of the whole sound. The album was pressed like two or three db's less than the norm. If you had your stereo on volume four and put an album on after ours, it would sound like you just turned up the volume three digits.

There's no question that the kick and the snare are playing a drastic part in humping the whole sound. The kick lost a lot of meat. It's got a lot of depth but the wrong kind. It doesn't have any top either—the slap that I like!

I came in on the first album mix right around "Get Away" and I was there for "Don't Misunderstand Me." To me, they sound the most solid. The kick sounds a little livelier than on the rest of the album. It was snappy sounding.

SF: Are you aware of what kind of mic's are used to record your drums?

DH: I am. I used different mic's on the toms this time. I can't remember the model we used for the first album, but they were real teeny AKG mic's. Real small, black and gold, about the size of a *Chap Stik*. We used a couple of those on the high toms this time and I think we used some kind of Sennheisers and they sounded better. Each drum was so defined, it was great. It probably would've helped if I'd had been down there for the mixing. The only communication I had with the engineer was that I gave him a ring a couple of times, long distance. I gave him some suggestions and ideas about what I wanted, which went in one ear and right out the other apparently. But, it's history and it's there from now on. They ain't heard me quit griping about this album yet. They walk away when they see me coming!

SF: I read that The Rolling Stones asked the Rossington Collins Band to open for them and either Gary or Allen said, "No

way. We own Florida. Let the Stones open for us."

DH: That was just the Good Ol' Southern boy obnoxiousness, I guess. I'm sure in certain ways they meant it and then in another way they didn't. I remember Gary telling me about it. It was one of our more festive moments. He said, "You hear we're doing some Stoney gigs?" I said, "Yeah, that's great. We really need it." The money was just real poor, but so what? In the end, there's no question that we would've benefitted. People that would maybe not ordinarily have seen us live—we might have grabbed some fans onto our wagon. No question about it. Seeing us live and hearing our album are two different things, as it is with any group, especially when we're *better* or more exciting live. That was such an ignorant move and ridiculous—and I told them that.

SF: Who's the last word in the band?

DH: I guess Gary and Allen. I would kind of support Allen in regards to the Stones shows, in that it might've been classier for *not* doing it and not jumbling on the opportunity just like anybody else would. That's one way to look at it. But, knowing what I know now, and getting over the ethics of it, on paper it would have really come in handy.

SF: You were saying that you were impressed by Debussy's music because it evoked sounds like air and weather. Do you try to create similar sounds on the drumset?

DH: No, I've never really been conscious of that. I think in a lot of my fills I'll cater to what would be a missing music fill. A drum lick might replace a keyboard lick. I'll never have the attitude that I couldn't get better. I know there's a bunch of drummers out there that could probably spin me dizzy, and I feel that I've plenty of room to grow.

SF: So, you're thinking melodically when you're playing drums and fills?

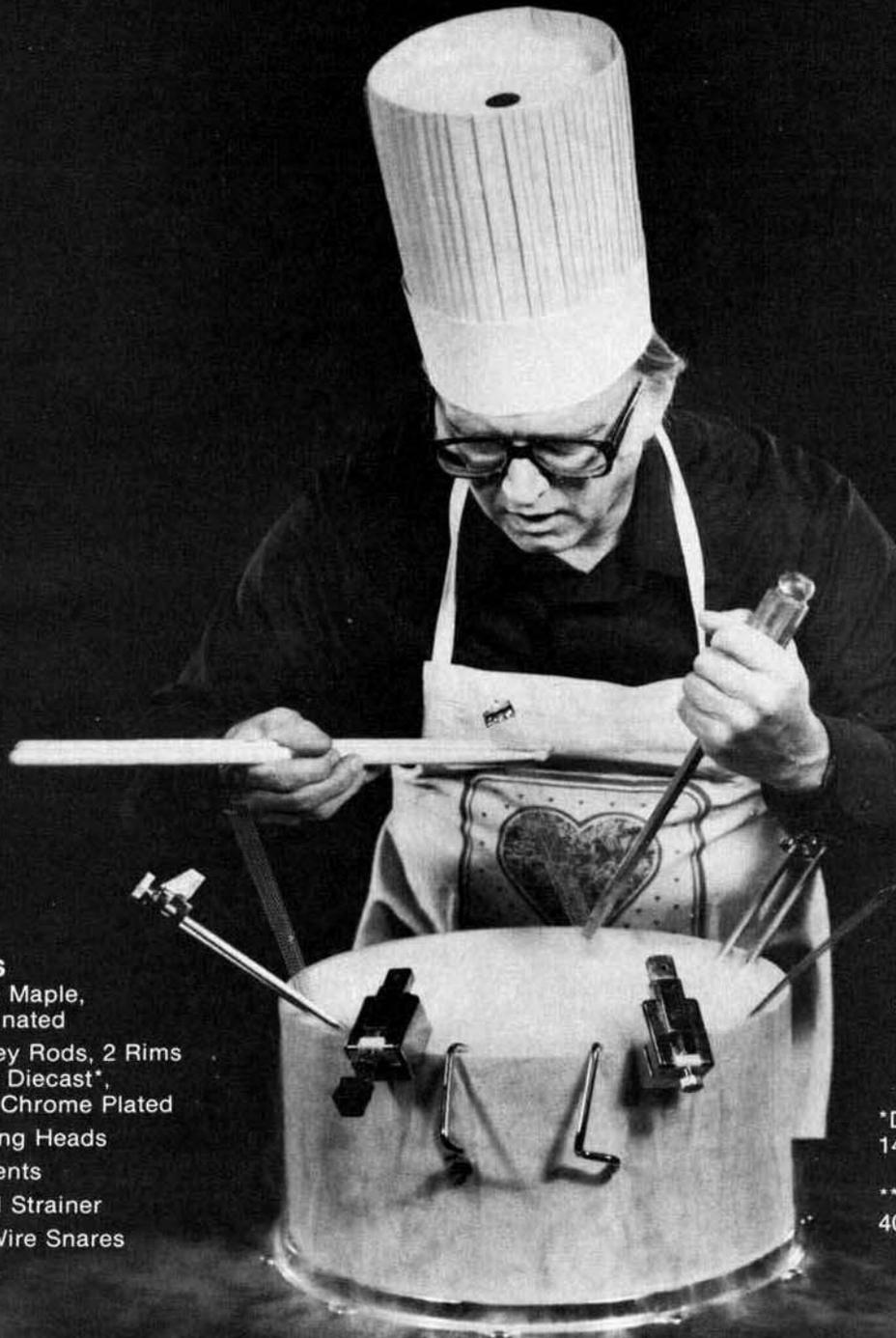
DH: Yeah. I guess unintentionally. It might be subconsciously coming out. Then there are times when I'll play with a banging effect—just strictly drums. Most of my best work is usually spontaneous.

SF: Do you practice?

DH: Not much. I know I should but a lot of the things I'll work out new will be right at a soundcheck before a show. I might hear something in my head right at that moment and try to capture it. I've captured a little extra chops for one bass drum sound. People think there's two kicks going only for a split second and there ain't. Like in the beginning of "Don't Stop Me." There's as much footwork going on as there is hand work. It's all single stroke, but it's doublekick stuff and it's a combination of hand patterns, that I transferred over. The kick's doing

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normally what I would do with my right hand. I broke it down so that the hands are doing less and the foot's making up for it.

SF: Do you have a drumset at home?

DH: My old Gretsch set is sitting right here, less a couple of pieces of hardware. It just seems like I'm so damn swamped in trivial daily chores that I can't get out there and get some pieces. I'm missing the footpedal and I think the snare's funky on it. That's a poor excuse—but it's set up. I just need to get down and crack them.

SF: Are you using Paiste cymbals'?

DH: Just the hi-hats. The rest of them are A. Zildjian *Brilliant*s. I've got one ride and four crash. My ride is a 21" medium weight. They're real pingy sounding. They don't swell up and roar while you're doing a ride. I like a lot of close-to-the-bell playing anyway. So it's really pingy like a San Francisco trolley car! The crashes are 15", 16" and two 17". I like that explosive, real quick bash that quiets right down. That's what smaller

cymbals are good for. I've got a 15" pair of *Sound-Edge* hi-hats but I'm probably going to have to use something else. They're too top-endy for me. I like a fatter sounding hi-hat.

SF: What do you look for in choosing cymbals'?

DH: I think the only time you're going to hear any contrast between cymbals is in the studio, because live it isn't going to make much difference. Under all the volume and miking you might hear a little pitch difference, but a cymbal's a cymbal when you're running live, outside of a Pang cymbal or something special. There's no way I could be convinced otherwise. I just mainly go for small sizes that have maybe a two-step difference in pitch. Nothing fancy.

SF: Why are you playing Slingerland drums?

DH: When I sold drums at the music store, I always thought Slingerland toms sounded good. Real resonant and easy to tune. I think they were ready to jump on a half-endorsement deal. I pretty much made my drums like I wanted them. The company was real cooperative. There's nothing special to look at on them other than the yellow color; nothing that really looks any different from what's in a Slingerland catalog. I've got a longer kick drum and the power toms are longer. I've got a 16 x 24 kick drum which sounds great. The toms are equal in depth. My 12" and 13" are both ten inches

deep. The 14" and 15" are twelve inches deep. The floor toms are standard size and the cutaway toms are catalog items, except that I got them in chrome. My only dissatisfaction is that I'm having some hardware problems.

SF: You're using Aquarian Cymbal-Springs aren't you?

DH: Yeah. When you hit the cymbals they come back and get in place quick enough so that you can get it again. The whole concept is real clever. I like the way they protect the cymbals.

SF: You were married at seventeen, had your first child at eighteen. Now you're still married with two children. How did you hold your marriage together?

DH: It was rough for a long time. I wasn't out of town on the road a lot, but I was playing a lot at night back then. I'll have to give my wife more of the credit for keeping it together than myself. She comes from a Lebanese family, and they've got a big family here. They're real close, and her parents live about five miles from us and they're crazy about the kids. They're just real warm people and my wife has real close family ties. I think that backbone is what got her through it.

SF: So, your wife's not a musician?

DH: No. She listens to a lot of stuff and she has a good ear. She knows what she likes. She definitely needs music around. She's extremely level-headed.

SF: It sounds like your wife might have a

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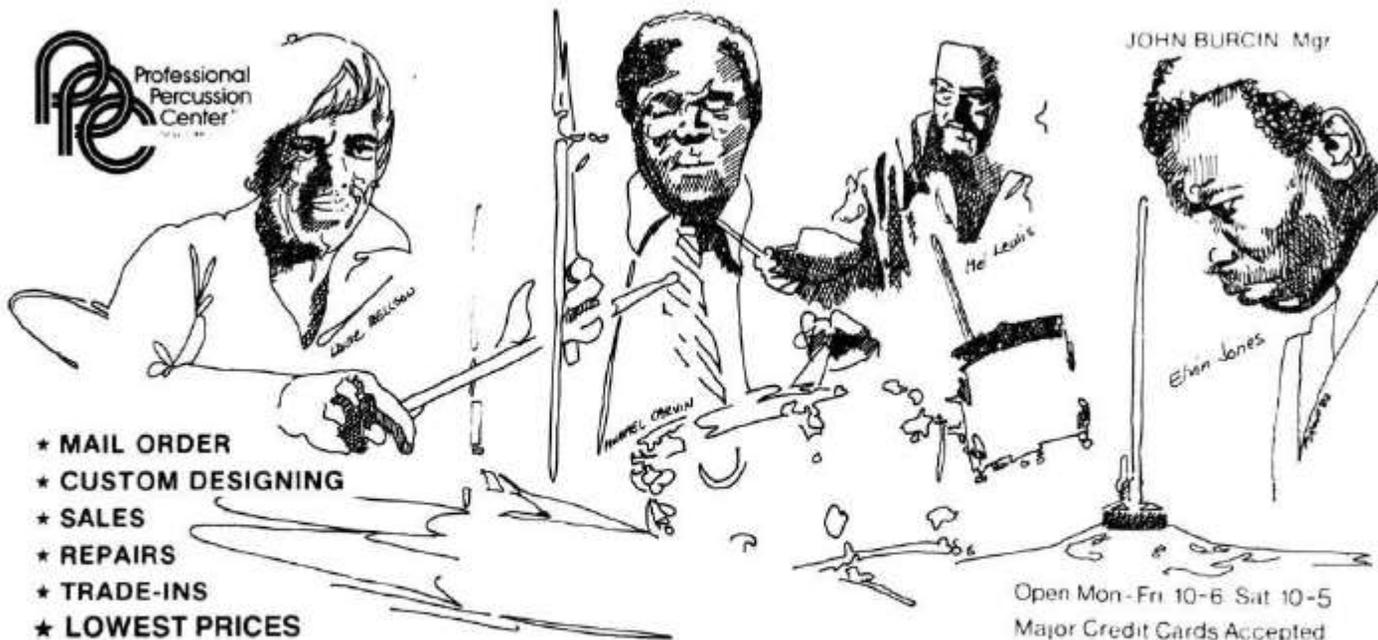
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DH: Yeah, that's true. I wouldn't trade my home life for anything.

SF: When I was playing bars it used to get to me that I was very serious about my instrument and yet I was playing to a crowd of drunks. It seems that at many concerts the audience becomes an extension of that bar scene. How do you feel when you're onstage and you see some young kid who just spent fifteen dollars on a ticket and can't even stand up?

DH: I know what you mean. You've hit it on the head. I just kind of wonder what in the world has driven the kids to that. You always hear the innuendos about rock music mesmerizing and programming these kids to be out of control—which has to be true to some degree, I guess. They come there and they act just downright crazy and may not realize they've missed a good show. Once, we played at the Garden State Arts Center, and people were getting nuts like somebody was really going to get hurt bad up at the front. People were getting mashed and had to shimmy over the barricade just to stay alive! Then some guy got crazy and jumped onstage and wanted to fight Craig, our road guy. It looked hairy and everybody in the band could tell, and felt kind of delirious. I wondered, "Well, what if something really bad happened?" I think of the Stones at Alta-

mont where that guy got stabbed to death. I think, "God, how would that feel?" I wondered if Mick Jagger ever thinks of that. Does he consider that the guy might be alive today had they not played there?

SF: When a crowd does get out of hand—or even before that happens—I wonder why guys in the band don't have more of a control over the audience to keep that from happening?

DH: Usually Allen will go up to the mic' and try to control them and it does come together. We'll have a battle sometimes with the security. They will get the people all bent out of shape sometimes by making them sit down, drag them out because they stepped on their foot in the aisle—dumb things like that. We've actually stopped in the middle of songs to tell the security to leave them alone. I'm not saying the crowd doesn't need to be controlled, but they're not doing anything really outrageous at that point but they will if they keep getting picked on. Like if a fight breaks out the band will say, "Hey! You want to fight? Come up here!" But, it does concern me and I'm thankful nobody's ever got hurt at our concerts.

SF: Tell me about your New Year's Eve date with The Charlie Daniels Band.

DH: Well, my whole family was there. That band just delivered! They got up

there and just chewed gum—it was that much effort. Not saying they didn't put it out—they're just tight! I love that big-band sound. They have backup girls and the horns just pumping! I was stomping a hole in the floor I loved it so much. At midnight, we went out and shook hands with the band and Charlie went up to the mic' and they broke into "Sweet Home, Alabama." As the twelve o'clock countdown was going on, the crew was slapping amps around and adding amps and bringing guitars out and putting them on our guys and I was fit to be tied. I was thinking, "I gotta play. I can't stand this." Charlie has two drummers and I went up to one of them and said, "Get off!" He jumped right off smiling and handing me sticks. So our whole band was up there with them. It got picture-taken to death and the crowd just went ape.

SF: What are you looking forward to for yourself and the band?

DH: Keeping my sanity and ambition. As variable as things run, I keep a real short outlook on things. We're back and we've got to start working up some new material for the studio. That's the next major confrontation. Hopefully, we'll come out with pop music, folks, that you're going to love! We're preparing this week to do a benefit for the Heart Fund. We cherish our fans and we'll be back.



by Eliot Zigmund

Drummer's Form

Form in music is like the frame of a house or the skeleton of a body. It is very important because it provides the players in a band with a common road map for a particular tune that they are playing. It is each player's responsibility to know the form of the tune being played, and drummers should be no exception to this rule. There are two ways to approach learning forms and both are valuable tools for the young drummer. The first way is to learn the form by ear. If the tune you're dealing with is a standard, get a record of it and listen to it over and over. Try to learn the melody (so you can sing it correctly to yourself), the sound of the chord changes (so you can hear your way through the improvised solos), and the structure (length of each chorus, phrases within each chorus). The second way is to sit down at the piano and, to the best of your ability, play the melody and chord changes of the tune. Both ways are valuable and doing one helps you do the other. If you've never done this before you'll be amazed at how knowing the structure of a tune can make your playing more musical and complementary to what's going on around it.

The form of a tune repeats many times in a jazz performance, each repetition being a chorus. Typically, each player will take several choruses on a tune. It is the rhythm section's job to rhythmically and harmonically lay the form out, chorus after chorus, as a foundation for the soloist to build his lines on. Again, the drummer should be no exception to this and should play a strong role in delineating the form of the tune to both support and guide the soloist.

There are many different types of forms which you will encounter in your career as a jazz drummer but space does not allow me to talk about them all. So, I would like to focus in on one of the most basic and widely used forms in jazz and use it as a guide to dealing with form in general. The form is the 32-bar song form, AABA, where each A and B are eight-bar phrases.



The three A's are similar melodically and harmonically and the B in the middle (called the bridge) is different; a contrast. There are countless tunes in the jazz repertoire with this type of form and if you go back and examine the tunes you've been listening to on records and playing with groups, I'm sure you'll come across this form.

As drummers, what do we look for in this form? As I said before, try and get a recording of the tune and/or a sheet on it (out of a fake book or from one of the other players). To the best of your ability, try to learn the melody and chord changes of the tune. During the improvised solos of the tune your goal should be to know where you are at all times in the form. This is not to say that you should know the exact chord change that is being played, or the bass note at a particular point (though it wouldn't hurt if you do), but that you should know which of the four eight-bar phrases you're in, where you are in that phrase, etc.

Listen to the melody of the tune and determine if there are any spots where you should be kicking the band or somehow supporting the rhythm of the melody. Listen to the rhythm section textures. Some examples of this are:

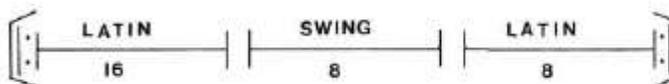
- A) Straight ahead four/four throughout.
- B) Two or "broken" feel on the A sections contrasted with

four/four swing on the bridge.

- C) Latin feel on the A sections, four/four on the bridge. Or the other way around, four/four on the A sections and Latin on the bridge.
- D) Change of time signature within the form—three/four on the A sections and four/four on the bridge, or the other way around.

The possibilities with this type of thing are limited only by the imagination of the composer/arranger of the tune. Bear in mind when analyzing textures that there may be a certain format for the head (opening and closing choruses) that does or does not hold for the blowing choruses. For example, a tune may go from a Latin feel to a swing on the bridge, and in the head the solo choruses remain in four/four all the way through. The alternative to this is that the pattern set up on the head remains throughout the improvising.

When you are first learning a tune, allow the form to sink in by playing simply and keeping your ears wide open. If you have a chart or drum part to the tune make some markings that will help to remind you of the form. If you don't have a part and feel you need one, make yourself a skeleton of the form similar to the following example:



If you get a chance to solo on the tune, whether it be trading fours, eights, sixteens, choruses, or an extended solo, try to keep in mind where you are in the form. If you can do it by ear, so much the better. If you can't, use plain old mathematics to keep track until your ear is developed enough to hear the phrasing. Extended drum solos on the form can be difficult at first and it sometimes helps to have the other rhythm players lightly accompany you, throwing in a chord or bass note at crucial spots in the form to help you find your way. Always try to think in musical phrases, the simpler the better at first, and don't get hung up in technical virtuosity. Eventually you will develop a kind of inner harmonic sense that will guide you through the forms and you will find that you have developed the ability to hear and memorize new forms after only one or two playings.

Jazz Tunes and Standards With AABA Form

- "I've Got Rhythm"—Gershwin
 - "Oleo"—Sonny Rollins
 - "It Don't Mean a Thing"—Duke Ellington
 - "Jordu"—Duke Jordan
 - "Well, You Needn't"—Thelonius Monk
 - "Misty"—Errol Garner
 - "Nardis"—Miles Davis
 - "Satin Doll"—Duke Ellington
 - "So What"—Miles Davis
 - "Lazy Bird"—John Coltrane
 - "Have You Met Miss Jones?"—Rodgers and Hart
- Gershwin's "I've Got Rhythm" is probably one of the most played tunes in the jazz repertoire because the chord changes and form of the tune have been used as the basis for dozens of jazz compositions. The changes and form are usually referred to as "Rhythm Changes" and the second tune on the list, Sonny Rollins' "Oleo" is an example of a tune based on "Rhythm Changes."

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How To Get "That" Drum Sound

Fred Miller has been a recording engineer and producer since 1970 and has over 400 LP's to his credit. His time is divided between recording dates in New York, Los Angeles and London, and he's recently been honored with nominations for both Grammy and Emmy Awards. The following article was reprinted from Mr. Miller's book, Studio Recording For Musicians courtesy of Consolidated Music Publishers, N.Y.

"That" drum sound is a particular combination of sounds that I'd heard on records for years before I was able to achieve it. It began for me on Carly Simon's *No Secrets* album, and continued with Paul Simon's *Still Crazy* ... Janis Ian's records, and on into Barry Manilow's and many others. It involved a combination of tuning, echo, and drum size. After seven years as a professional recording engineer I was finally able to achieve what I'd been hearing all that time. After reading about it, you may think it's not "the" sound you were looking for, or you may get it in a different way, but this is what works for me: The snare drum should be a big one if you want a big sound. The snares should be of moderate tension and the top head tuned a little on the loose side, but not sloppy loose. The bass drum should have only the batter head on it, and should be stuffed with a heavy-density pillow or small blanket, weighted down with the bottom of a mike stand or a good-sized brick. The degree to which the padding is pushed up against the front head will play a big part in determining the sound of the drum, as will the position of the microphone. What I look for in a bass drum is a sharp attack with a good bottom (low-frequency response) and absolutely minimum decay time. In other words, the sound of the drum should die away almost immediately. The final word on bass drum recording, if your music relies heavily on that drum, is to try using a wooden beater for extra tight

attacks.

The tom-toms are the key component to my ideal drum sound. They should be made to produce a sound that glisses from one pitch to another, similar to the sound of the Syndrum, but not so high or electronic sounding. This sound can be achieved by starting out with *hydraulic* heads, the kind made from two layers of plastic with oil between them. They seem to sound best in the studio situation. Leave the bottom head on the drum to get the best tone, and most important, tune the heads perfectly. Tuning drum heads means more than just turning screws at random until the sound is close to what you thought you wanted. By placing one finger in the center of the head with a little pressure and tapping lightly with a drumstick at a point on the head near each tuning screw, you can hear the differences in pitch between the screws. Tune them all to the same pitch. Then if the drum sounds too high or too low, tune the whole drum up or down by turning the screws the same amount all around the drum. Recheck by placing a finger in the middle and tapping each point again. You should have a tom-tom that sounds full, in tune, and "groans" a little bit when you hit it. Three or four of these, tuned to relative pitches, will produce a fill or pass that's satisfying. I've always thought that a lot of recordings included a tom-tom sound that was like larger or smaller garbage cans, and that sound has ruined a lot of records for me. I hope this solution is of some help.

Rounding out the kit is the hi-hat and cymbals. I've found that thinner hi-hat cymbals work better, especially in disco, because they sound light and have an inherently better high-frequency component. The air noise created by the suction of the two hi-hat cymbals can be avoided in two ways: 1) drill a couple of holes in the bottom cymbal to let the air escape, or 2) bend out (warp) the edge of the bottom cymbal. Air noise can be a

problem when the hi-hat is close-miked with a condenser mike, as it commonly is. As to the overhead cymbals, each drummer usually has a preferred set, and with very few exceptions that works out just fine. Most good cymbals will record quite well. Where possible, try to avoid the Chinese-type cymbal with the little flat cup in the middle and sizzle cymbals with metal rods attached to them.

There are many approaches to microphone technique for the drums. Most commonly, everything in the kit gets its own mike, except for the overhead cymbals, which are usually covered with a stereo pair of mikes. These overhead mikes pick up and localize the cymbals in the stereo spectrum and add a distant perspective to the overall drum sound that can be useful. Other techniques include miking the snare drum from under and over the drum, mixing the sounds to get the desired effect, using one mike to cover both snare drum and hi-hat, and using one mike for each pair of tom-toms.

Which mikes are used is strictly a matter of preference. Each engineer has developed a selection through his or her own experience. My personal preferences run to Sennheiser *MD 421's* for the toms, Electro-Voice *RE-20* for snare and bass drum, and *AKG 452* condensers for hi-hat and overheads. I've used other mikes that were equally suitable, including the Neumann *U-87* and *U-67* for tom-toms, the Shure *SM-57* for snare drum, and the Electro-Voice 666 for bass drum (no longer on the market); but I subscribe to the theory that there are almost no "bad" mikes . . . just bad technique. I generally place my mikes in cardioid pattern and as close to the drum as possible without touching. This allows for some separation between the drums. Sometimes the bass roll-off switch is employed to compensate for the proximity effect of using cardioid patterns at such close range.

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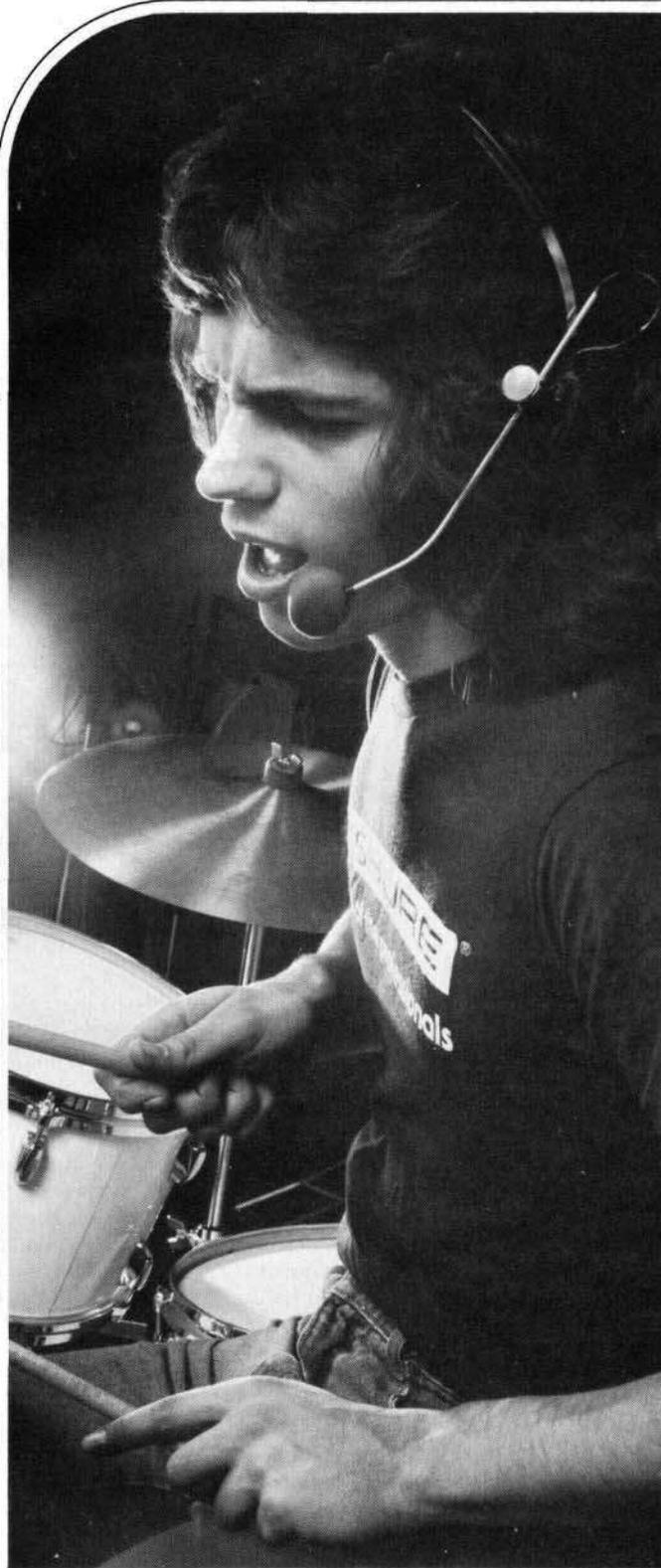
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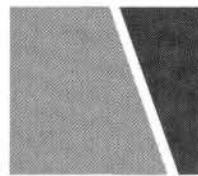
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Manager continued from page 27

have worked with this manager before. Ask the advice of other managers. The good managers have a lot of respect for each other and will not hesitate to offer recommendations.

It is not always necessary to have a manager who is already established. For an up-and-coming artist, often it is productive to have an up-and-coming manager. This way, you can grow together. (A famous example: Brian Epstein had never managed anyone before he took on the Beatles.) In the early stages of a career, an artist will not necessarily need one of the top managers. You might be more successful with a new manager who is trying just as hard to establish a career as you are.

In situations where the manager is not already established, it is sometimes possible to have a cancellation clause in the contract. Dave Snowden explained: "A cancellation clause would not exist throughout the entire contract—it would only exist during a certain time, say the first 60, 90, or 120 days, something like that. It is sort of a period of getting to know each other. Nobody wants a cancellation clause if it can be worked out. It is somewhat unusual, but it can be done. It is usually done with people who have no track record whatsoever. He could be the greatest manager who ever walked down the road, but he has not had an opportunity to prove himself." The manager agrees to do certain things within a certain time period. If he can do what he says he can do—fine. If not, the cancellation clause gives the artist the right to get out of the contract. It should be noted again that this is *not* a normal clause to be found in every contract. But if necessary, it can be used.

When dealing with groups, there will usually be one agreement covering the entire group, and it will be signed collectively *and* individually by each member. Bill Aucoin explained the reason for this: "Sometimes the group will fall apart, while one member will go on to achieve success. In other cases, the group will stay together but one member will leave to pursue a solo career, such as when Peter [Criss] left Kiss."

Beware of a manager who tries to get you to sign the contract FAST. There should be absolutely no high-pressure. Bill Aucoin gave this example: "You should take enough time to know if the artist and the personal manager belong together. I have sometimes worked with an artist over a year before we've signed any papers. We needed time to know if our creative processes were going to work together." Dave Snowden agreed: "I will usually have five to ten meetings - with an artist before we sign. The artist should understand *everything* in the contract before signing it. This is your life.

The manager is just as interested in the artist understanding the contract, because he doesn't want the artist coming back six months later saying, 'I thought so and so.' The manager doesn't need that."

Sometimes it is the artist, rather than the manager, who will be in too much of a hurry to sign something. Paul T. Riddle spoke of this situation: "I think it's so easy for young musicians to get impatient and excited, because they want it so bad. They are worried about throwing away an opportunity. They must remember, though, that if it's legit, the opportunity is going to be there. If the manager is legit, he is not going to be trying to take you to the cleaners; he is going to be interested in your music and your career. So if somebody's trying to push you and trying to hurry you, they're probably not worth worrying about in the first place. The main thing for anybody to remember is *please* have somebody there who knows exactly what is going on—somebody who you can trust and can help you with legal matters."

As Snowden said, "This is your life." You have spent years learning to play your instrument and developing your talent. Do not be overeager to sign with the first manager that offers a contract. Your relationship with your manager is as important to your professional life as your marriage is to your personal life. Be sure you know what you're getting into. 

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RUDIMENTAL SYMPOSIUM

Scottish Pipe Band Rudiments

by Andy White

Basically the rudiments used in Pipe Band drumming are the same as the American 26, with a few very interesting variations.

LONG ROLL

All rolls are played closed or buzzed, although recently the open roll is being employed more.

FIVE STROKE ROLL

This roll, apart from its regular form, is used in a unique way. Played hand to hand, the exercise is known as "The Fives" and is the basis of a simple "Strathspey" beating.

Note: The method of writing above and below one line for the snare drum is now widely used. Right hand above the line, left hand below, as in the Swiss style.

The finished effect of this exercise sounds like a continuous roll, with clean accents coming on each of the four beats in the bar.

FLAM

Flams are played *very* closed, in fact, as close as possible without losing the flam sound.

FLAMPARADIDDLE

This version uses a reverse paradiddle which makes for greater speed of execution. This is obvious from the metronome marking. It would not be possible to get the same effect with a regular paradiddle.

Another flam movement uses the same sticking, but the feel is that of a triplet, with the first beat of each eighth-note triplet doubled.

DRAG OR RUFF

Drags are also played *very* closed. There is no double-stroke sound, more of a buzz. In fact, really a "jabbed" effect.

DRAG PARADIDDLE

Here, the shortness of the buzz will be apparent. The following exercises are the same as in the flam section.

SINGLE DRAG

The single drag is used to build up another continuous roll effect, giving the impression of an accented shuffle rhythm. Played hand to hand.

It is started slowly with the drags played open, eventually closed, with the drags buzzed as in "The Fives."

DOUBLE DRAG

Employing the double drag, the same roll effect is produced in 6/8 time.

The sound is of a continuous roll with an accented 6/8 rhythm predominant.

Another way of producing the single drag effect is the use of a *Four-Stroke Roll* played within a triplet rhythm.

A
♩ = 92

Hand Movements Open Roll

Closed Roll As Written

B
♩ = 92

Hand Movements Open Roll

Closed Roll As Written

Notice in Exercise B, the change in notation. This sound is known as the Scottish *cut note*.

The ability to play five-stroke rolls long and short is another part of this technique.

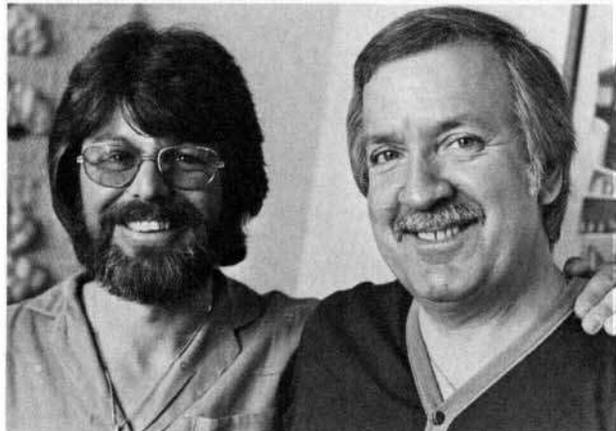
In the first example, all rolls are the same length and are used to give a syncopated sound.

♩ = 92

Now, by changing the rhythm to a shuffle or dotted feel, it is necessary to play some five-stroke rolls long, and some short. This has a more swinging sound.

♩ = 92

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Many exercises used would not fit in to the category of one of the 26.

For instance:

♩ = 138

The aim, again, is to produce a sound like a continuous roll with a triplet rhythm predominant. This is a very difficult movement.

Finally, an exercise using unusual hand movements to produce a flam accent on the third beat of an eighth-note triplet, finishing with a hand to hand double flam.

♩ = 138

Two excellent sources of information regarding Pipe Band drumming are volumes I and II of the Tutor and Textbook of the Scottish Pipe Band Association, 45, Washington Street, Glasgow, G3, Scotland.

For further studies of accented rolls, see *Roll Control* by the author of this article. It is published by Belwin Mills Music Ltd., 250 Purley Way, Croydon, CR9 4QD, England.



Latin Rock Patterns

In this article I'll deal with a technique popularized by Steve Gadd, that incorporates Latin rhythms with contemporary drumset patterns.

First, we'll look at the cowbell rhythm used most often by Steve, in comparison to the more frequently played cowbell rhythm.

Gadd cowbell rhythm. (Played with right hand.)

Most common rhythm.

Ex. 1

Ex. 2

In many of Steve Gadd's cowbell patterns this basic rhythm is used, but often it's disguised by the placement of his left hand

and accents. The following patterns are combination parts of these cowbell rhythms and other Latin rhythms.

Ex. 3

Ex. 4

Ex. 5 (half time feel)

Notice in the following pattern the same basic rhythm found in Ex. 3.

Next, let's look at the samba pattern most often used by Gadd.

Ex. 7

Ex. 6

The following samba patterns are also very effective.

Ex. 8

Ex. 9

Ex. 10

I hope you find these patterns interesting and useful.
 MD readers can contact Rick Latham for more information
 on his book *Advanced Funk Studies* by writing P.O. Box 12452,
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Colombo continued from page 31

naturally to me. I just played with music, with people and that was it. That was the fun of it—sitting in a room, smacking away. I mean, I knew, by first names, every police officer in the 34th Precinct in New York City, because they were at my door every day. I was just playing with records and having fun. But advice time, ladies and gentlemen: You cannot play with records too much because then you end up slowing down when you play with a band. Your time gets real raggedy because if you're playing with a record, you're not playing with a metronome. You're playing with a human being who has his own set of emotions and he's approaching that particular music his way and when you start to let him lead your time around, when it's your turn to play with someone, there's no one doing that for you. It's your job to keep that pulse.

Drumming got very interesting. The idea of less is more started happening. Again, the immature can't buy that. The best studio drummers were the guys with the least technique; the guys who had the great feel, evenness in playing, that had a bass drum that wasn't limp, and there was an evenness with all the limbs flailing away at the same intensity. They had a good sound. Every drummer who hits the drum gets a different sound and these elements became essential to successful drumming, where, when I began playing, you got the feeling that you were actually

being paid per beat. Now it's very different.

RF: I want to discuss the changes you've seen in a lot of aspects. You've been talking about a group who got together out of a love for music. I'm wondering how much of that you see today.

BC: It happens all the time, but it doesn't happen in L.A. or New York. It happens in Montana and Missouri where people don't have the option of getting a hundred different bands together and deciding which group is going to be the star group. They're playing with a bunch of friends because of logistics; they're close, the parents are friendly, they all kind of get into the same music and decide to be participants in this music by playing instruments. It's important, when you're playing, not to condescend. When you're playing music beneath your talents or desire, you are not transmitting the energy level that is created by the honesty of performance. You need to be scratching at your potential. By scratching, I don't mean mildly dabbling with it, I mean clawing to reach the top of your potential. If you break down the components of a really successful band, often you'll say, "Well, this guy isn't *that* good and this song isn't *that* good, they don't sing *that* well, they don't look *that* good, why is everyone going crazy?"

RF: Chemistry.

BC: Exactly. It's that intangible that is, in fact, not intangible. It's the honesty,

it's a level of intensity and it's the magic that these three, four or ten people together, are able to make. That's really the key.

RF: Knowing what you know today, would you say the qualities you saw in musicians, or specifically, drummers, have changed? Those things you held in esteem or admired?

BC: They've changed a great deal, but the basic elements are exactly the same. You see, it's changed for me, I guess more than for most people, because I was into a different kind of music and there's just a whole new set of rules as far as playing it. But for me, when I would hear a Philly Joe Jones, I would hear *music* being played on the drums. When I would hear some of the rockers, I would hear pounding on the drums; reckless abandon. I wouldn't hear the same music. Today, people are enjoying the musical drummers again, the Steve Gadd, the Jeff Porcaros, the drummers who have the ability to play music and enhance the feel at the same time. The feel and the musicality meant nothing in the '60s. It was chops and the way you looked when you played and nothing to do with those other things. It was an entirely different set of values. I once had someone say to me in the '60s, "Man, you've got to hear this drummer." "Why?" "His hair is down to his back." I looked at him and it was, "Oh my God! It's come to that!"

RF: Now you're in a position of putting

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players behind an act.

BC: Sometimes, and hiring drummers to record. It's making marriages. I'll find the right producer or the right drummer when it's called for. It's a very small part of my job, but it is part of my job and it's something I can be helpful with. Again, it's the matching of colors. Everyone has his own little magic and you just have to be lucky enough to find the right combination and there are always things you don't expect.

RF: In 1976 you stopped playing with BS&T. Were you independently producing at that time?

BC: Actually, by around that time, I had a production agreement with CBS Records where I was recording. I built a studio in my house in New York and that definitely made it more fun to record and be on the recording end. This was during the later stages of my being with BS&T, but I was still actively playing with the band.

RF: Were you working exclusively with BS&T?

BC: For the most part. I had little time to do anything else. In '75 I entered into a production agreement with an artist by the name of Jaco Pastorius, who I was lucky enough to have heard in Florida. Because of the good graces of Steve Popovitch at Epic Records at that time, I was able to go into the studio with Jaco

and produce a record. I knew that it was simply an attempt at trying to introduce a fabulous instrumentalist to the scene and not to get your big hit record, which I didn't think would come out of that. But it would be a lifelong seller, instead of a flash in the pan.

RF: When did you actually move to L.A. and within the corporate structure?

BC: August, 1977. I was asked by some people at CBS Records if I'd be interested in running the A&R department at Epic in Los Angeles. It took about six months to get into the idea, but infiltrating had its benefits. I could still help. I'm a crusader. I was a crusader from the beginning and I always wanted to see a higher brand of music get to the people. I felt I had contributed through my sneaky little ways until that point and I was really wondering how I could continue. Doing an album with Jaco was certainly in line with that way of thinking, but I wanted to do more. At first I was a little skeptical of doing a "day gig," but it turned out to be wonderful. Not so much at Epic Records, but at Capitol, and I'm extraordinarily happy.

RF: Why?

BC: Well, this is going to sound like a ridiculous advertisement for Capitol Records, but understand that I would not really be here unless I felt this way. The artist is viewed as an artist. He's not the

slob that must be dealt with or "that pain in the ass." He's the artist and the people who work at this record company never step beyond those bounds in trying to be the stars themselves, egotistically needing to be more important than the artist. They don't work like that here. It's a much healthier environment and that, to me, is the essence of it. You have to know what you do and respect it and form a respect for what you are doing and who you are working with. That's very important.

RF: Can you specifically describe the duties within your position?

BC: My responsibilities, because of my background, are rather extensive. As I previously mentioned, I could very easily help organize some musicians to play behind a singer. I also could very easily sign the singer, I could also find the producer for that singer or all the songs that singer is going to sing. Or I could be working a tremendous amount of time with acts that have already been here for many years to kind of help them mature and roll with the changes.

RF: Have you found that your playing background has helped you with your functions, and with the respect of the artist?

BC: With the respect of the artist, undoubtedly. With my functions, as much

continued on next page

as I would like to believe that only a musician can have the ability to find other talent, I don't believe that for one minute. I think the greatest A&R person in the world is a 15 year-old girl who has to take her disposable income to buy a record. That's called passionate buying. We don't do that anymore. We're spoiled. We get a lot of these records for nothing.

RF: How long were you at Epic?

BC: About a year and a half.

RF: And you've been at Capitol how long?

BC: Almost three years. My immediate plans are to stay here. As you can surmise, I am happy here, enjoy the people I'm working with and the acts at this label. I'll tell you, there's a noticeable difference in personality between the acts of today and the acts of yesterday. That archetypical stereotype, dumb artist being ripped off wasn't so far from the truth. There was a lot of that going on. They weren't what you would call business-minded individuals.

RF: But wasn't that because the business was so new at the time and the age of the artists at that time was younger?

BC: But I think the level of intelligence has changed.

RF: You don't think it has to do with the maturation of the industry and the age of its participants?

BC: Well yeah, but Bill Haley and the Comets weren't teenagers either. The

point I'm trying to make is that the intellectual level of the artist today, I believe, is much greater. I also believe that makes it more of a pleasure for record companies, agents and management to deal with them. It's easier to deal with them. Artists aren't the bungling idiots you have to direct and it's more fun. Artists have more fun too.

RF: Do you find that the record companies aren't taking as many chances with new talent these days?

BC: Definitely. They are not taking as many chances. They can't.

RF: They're not allowing for any Beatles, if there could be such a thing, or another Blood, Sweat & Tears?

BC: They're allowing for all those things and they're taking chances, but you would not believe the crap we have to listen to. Music has almost grinded to a halt. People are imitating each other and they're imitating the wrong things—slop. We need a healthy shot in the arm. We have to come up with something, take our chances and gamble. It's almost a gamble today. It isn't a matter of \$15,000 or \$20,000 and even if we screw up, we'll sell about 15,000 or 20,000 albums and we'll still recoup. Now, you're looking at \$100,000 to make a record and another \$30,000 to put the thing out correctly and if you get lucky, maybe on a first album, you sell 15,000. It's real scary. Unless you get lucky, you end up selling between 8,000 and 15,000 and the difficul-

ties of breaking a new act today are unbelievable. The consumer knows when he buys a Bob Seger album that there's going to be very little chance for disappointment and he's just going to add to a collection of albums he's very much in love with. Why should he go buy John Smith and the Smiths? Because he heard one single he liked, a \$9.00 investment? No thanks. Maybe two singles, then he'll buy the record. Maybe three, then he will buy the record if he liked all three singles. But then you know what happens? The band comes to town and he's just bought the album. He won't go see them and spend another \$8.00 or \$15.00 unless he's bought several albums from that band and he's convinced that the band is worthy of attention.

RF: So you're saying the basic difficulty today lies in the financial aspect.

BC: No, the difficulty lies in a combination of elements, and we can't consider the smallest of which being inflation, because that is a big part of it too. But we're dealing with higher costs to make records and consequently higher prices, and artist royalties are much higher, so it costs more to buy a record. Also, less interesting marketing approaches. People have kind of run dry in the sales technique, less interesting artists overall, as far as being revolutionary, and the consumer with a disposable income that is limiting itself to his choices in the

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entertainment field which has now expanded to include video games. There are more things to buy, which, as far as I'm concerned, are just as interesting as records. Unless we learn to market these records in a way that is as unique as the artists we are trying to present, this thing is going to lay around a while, suffering.

RF: You're saying not as revolutionary...

BC: By revolutionary, I'm saying evolutionary.

RF: Change, which is what I want to ask you. You mentioned the "slop" you have to listen to. I'm going to ask you to be an authority here. . .

BC: I can't be an authority. I can't tell you why kids are not progressing. . .

RF: Are they simply trying too hard to confine themselves to a market?

BC: I think music took a big step backwards. I think everyone started to get excited about a certain type, I don't know what you want to call it, punk, or whatever, but I think that it took a giant step backwards, and kids, rather than aspiring to be great talents on their instruments, all decided to be punk rock stars, where the fashion was as important as the music and the absurdity of performance was more important than the essential music. I think it took a big step back because record companies all figured this was next and they ran and stumbled over each other to sign some real rotten music and they're stuck with those bands for a while. It's no surprise that the records that sell three or four million are great records. The consumers are just not buying the junk as much.

RF: Have you seen many changes in drum equipment through the years?

BC: Really, very little. Minute. There are a few things that I marvel at as being time savers; little gadgets. I'm not talking about synthesizers, I'm talking about the actual drum. I think they've made some nice changes, but I would say it would be as easy to recognize a drum set of 1981 as it would be from 1951.

RF: What about the changes you've seen insofar as recording techniques of drums? For instance, they didn't muffle much in the '60s.

BC: Now that's a whole different thing. Not the drums they're making, but what is being done to them, physically, to create a sound that is more palatable for contemporary music. It's a whole different approach.

RF: Did you muffle your drums at all back then?

BC: Yeah, I did, a long time ago. I didn't have a ringing sound at all. Strangely enough, there still is that ringing drum sound for certain kinds of rock and roll, and there is that nice, tight muffled sound for other types of music. But don't let anything limit you. You should be playing drums that are tuned in a way

that naturally came from what you heard, from within you, that feel the best to you, so they are relatable. There isn't a drummer out there that will deny the fact that there have been certain drum sets he's sat down at which just sounded so good and felt so good that he could play better. My feeling is *that* is what you should be going for: the most relatable sound for what's natural to you. Don't worry about recording techniques yet because no matter how good your drums are going to sound, you walk in with an aggressive producer, he asks you to go to lunch and he's tuning your drums anyway.

RF: Have you done that?

BC: I've assisted, yeah, I guess, but only when I'm asked to.

RF: By the artist or the engineer?

BC: By the artist as well. But understand that the reason these sounds have changed is simply because some guy had a hit. Let's imagine all drum sounds were yellow and someone had a hit purely by accident because there was a tiny bit of red on his. So someone heard that and it became off-yellow and someone else heard that and thought he should do that, but of course, added more and it became a little more orange, and all of a sudden, he had a hit and everyone went after orange until it ended up being dark purple and into the blues. That's how it progressed; it wasn't something that could have been predicted.

RF: Do you have some drums set up at your house?

BC: I have about 13 drum sets all over the place. I recently packed my set away to make room for other things. But I've always had drums set up where I would go in there and marvel at how great I am for about five minutes and then what a disaster I am in the first second after the five minutes are up because I'm exhausted. But it's fun for the first few minutes because I haven't stopped growing musically, so I come up with some things that are far more musical than I had been. On occasion, if I'm lucky, or unlucky enough, as the case may be, to hear something I've played on on the radio, I usually just shake my head and think, "God, was I lame."

RF: I've been listening to *B, S&T Greatest Hits* for the past several days, and it still conjures up the same rush.

BC: Because we played with abandon and we played with tremendous enjoyment and that's why you feel that way. We really did enjoy what we were doing. I was in ecstasy, it was so much fun.

RF: But that spark exists so rarely today. For those who grew up in the '60's, it's hard to find comparable excitement in the music since.

BC: I think people are too subtle today. Everyone is trying to be too subtle.

continued on next page

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RF: But you said the artistry was so primitive and there's a higher intelligence today. Maybe the primitive, cave-man approach accounts for that spark.

BC: That's the answer, for sure. It was more fun and less thinking.

RF: Less education and less studio techniques.

BC: That has actually happened. You'll find that many of the records that are out today could have been recorded with immaculate audio and weren't, on purpose, to achieve that almost raggedy, demo sound which kids find themselves able to relate to.

RF: What do you listen for when you receive a tape?

BC: Songs. The quality of the tape, to me, is insignificant. Arranging, or how much went into making that tape, is insignificant. I think it's a waste of money. I like to think that I don't need all those things to hear talent. I need to find conceptually, something interesting: songs that have the basic essential elements that, to me, make for successful careers; good melodies and lyrics and a performance which is impeccably honest, and that's kinda it. It either strikes you or it doesn't. The way I can describe it best is if you're driving in a car and you're having a conversation with someone and the radio is on real soft and all of

a sudden you go, "What the hell is this?" It's that little thing that jumps out at you. Really, I don't need it to be prepared to a radio level. Just let me hear the changes and what it is you're trying to do. Admittedly, it would be rather difficult today if there were a new Bob Dylan to have that much success with it. I mean, if there were a drummer as great as whoever you want to imagine and he came in with a big band jazz group and said, "See, I'm the best, this is the best band," it would be very difficult for us to do anything with it because the markets have dwindled in certain areas. So it is part of my responsibility to show advances in music and help it get on the right track again, and also, if I can, try to help recoup some of the losses that are taken by companies that do go out on the limb for new artists that don't usually come through for them. It's just a matter of quality. I think if you wait for things to change and imitate it, you're a sucker and you're ordinary and you're like most record companies. But if you take the bull by the horns and decide that is your responsibility to the consumer if he's going to pay \$8.98 and you have a good marketing campaign all set, you're probably going to fool a lot of people into buying the record, then make that record good. It should be valid, artistically.

RF: What kind of advice can you give to that drummer who is playing with his friends, getting a rush, but wants to do more?

BC: Here's the advice I'll give, not only to that drummer, but to any musician. The idea of playing an instrument is to participate in something that gives you tremendous enjoyment. To expand that original motivation is simply to share your joy and enthusiasm with other people and that's it. That's really what you're doing and trying to do. Every time you add auxiliary objectives that are further and further away from the core of what made you do what you're doing, you lose your center and you lose your direction. The reason for someone to play an instrument may ultimately be to make money, but that's a lot of steps away. You've got to go one step at a time and you've got to know what your motive is and never lose sight of that original motive. Even if you change direction, know why you're doing that. Once you lose why you're doing what you're doing, don't bother, because you won't make that money and won't do these other things that you're expecting will happen. It won't happen. It can only happen because you've accomplished those early stages successfully.

RF: Let's talk realities for a second and the realities of your position. A record that comes out, you've got an artist and you have to put players behind him. . .

BC: I very rarely have to do that, inci-

dentally.

RF: My question is, we have a Jeff Porcaro and a Steve Gadd. How does a John Smith get in there? He's every bit as good as Porcaro.

BC: It's a funny world. A Jeff Porcaro and a Steve Gadd are the first guys to compliment other drummers and genuinely adore other players more than themselves. If someone's intention, for example, is to be a studio drummer in New York or Hollywood and he lives in Montana, he's going to be filled with enough frustration from the inception of his drumming career on, to probably be a pretty rotten drummer by the time he would be in a situation where he would be a competitor in that world. That's what I've been trying to say. Play an instrument because you want to and want to enjoy it and the next step is because you want to share the enjoyment with people. Don't worry about being a star yet.

RF: What about making a living?

BC: Don't worry about making a living yet.

RF: Let's stop talking 15 years old and talk about 29.

BC: Once you've reached the age of 29 and you've been playing for 15 years, you already have a real good indication if you're going to make money or not because you have been, hopefully, playing with people. You have been heard by people, hopefully, and a determination will have been pretty much made if you should get on a plane and go out to California or New York or not. If, in fact, you feel that confident that you have the ability, then take the shot. Come out, but before you get on the plane, you figure out where you have to be and who you have to play with to be heard by the proper people to get this type of introduction into the business. There is no set formula, there is no way to do it. Usually people are brought in because of word of mouth. A lot of musicians will hear somebody and say, "God, this guy is something else. He's got to come out here and work." And when he does, everyone will help him because he's that good. It behooves the contractors and bandleaders to hire the best people they can. So you just have to be there and sit in and play with people, and hopefully, you're good enough to get that kind of recognition. Steve Gadd and Jeff Porcaro didn't say at age 15, "I'm going to do this when I grow up and be a top studio guy." They didn't even know what the hell it was. There's simply no set formula.

Due to a printer's error, the photo of Danny Gottlieb in our April issue was not credited. The photographer was Kristin Reed. Our apologies to Ms. Reed.



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Q. Could you tell me if Tama has plans to make power toms?

M.W.

Casa Grande, Arizona

A. Tama is now offering X-tras in cherry-wine color. The tom-tom sizes (double-headed) are: 9 x 8, 9 x 10, 11 x 12, 12 x 13, 13 x 14 and 14 x 15. Bass drum sizes are: 16 x 22 and 16 x 24.

Q. I've recently purchased a drumset, and I'm a thirty-two year old beginner. What publication can I buy that will show me some short-cuts on getting my wrists, body, mind, and speed up?

D.T.

Jackson, Mississippi

A. There are no short-cuts for developing wrists, body, mind and speed. It's hard work and practice. I'd recommend getting with a teacher who could direct you, and perhaps save you from wasting time on areas of drumming that might not be relevant to you right now. The key characteristic to develop is "taste" and "originality." Again, these qualities come from learning your craft and from interaction with other musicians in many different situations.

Q. Many drum companies offer modular tom-tom holders with a metal tube inside the drum. Does this in any way alter the sound or production of overtones of the drum?

T.H.

Norfolk, Virginia

A. It depends on who you ask. A good rule of thumb seems to be that the less amount of hardware you attach to a drum shell, the better off you are. Obviously, if the drum companies felt their modular systems were going to seriously hamper the sound of their drums—they wouldn't manufacture them. On the other hand, there are many competent drummers who swear by the "less hardware" theory. If you're considering purchasing a modular tom-tom set-up, I'd suggest playing different ones and buying the one that sounds best to you.

Q. Is it possible to convert a single-headed tom into a double-headed tom with good results?

B.B.

Carlisle, Pennsylvania

A. Yes. It's also possible to convert a single-headed tom with bad results. If you don't have the expertise and/or the equipment, I'd suggest leaving the job to a qualified individual—perhaps at a nearby drum shop. You need to mount tension casings onto the shell, and they must be spaced properly. Next, you need screws, a rim and a drumhead and you're ready to roll.

Q. What is the purpose of mounting a cymbal upside down?

G.M.

Detroit, Michigan

A. Most cymbals mounted upside down are either Pang cymbals or Swish cymbals. The taper on these cymbals is either flat (Pang) or curved up (Swish) as opposed to most cymbals which taper down. By mounting these cymbals upside down, a drummer can either crash or ride the cymbal without getting hung up in the odd taper. Catching the edge of one of those cymbals on

the upswing could easily destroy a drumstick.

Also, the sound is slightly different. I'm sure some drummers mount their cymbals upside down because they think it looks good.

Q. I'm thinking about teaching but I haven't had much experience. What does a person teach a beginning student? What if you're not very proficient on rudiments?

T.P.

Bridgeport, Washington

A. You sound as if you're relatively new to drums and drumming. In order to be an effective teacher you have to have knowledge to pass along to students. Teaching is a responsibility. I've seen young players with some horrible habits due to some rotten teachers. Even if your heart is in the right place—you cannot teach what you do not know. Seek knowledge for yourself. Once you've acquired that, then you can think about passing it on to others.

Q. I have a 1961 Ludwig chrome snare. After two nights of playing, at least three consecutive lugs loosen up. What causes this and what can I do about it?

T.G.

Webster, Texas

A. If your challenge is with the lugs (screws) on your drum, I'd suggest thoroughly cleaning them and the inside of the tension casings. Sonor had a system for preventing that problem that you might be able to use on the Ludwig drum. Thread a nut onto the screw itself. After you've tuned the drum, tighten the nut down onto the tension casing. The nut will prevent the lug (screw) from backing out of the tension casing.

If the challenge is with the tension casings coming loose, check and see if they are fastened to the shell by screws or bolts. If they're screws, replace them with bolts. You can better tighten a bolt and it should hold the tension casing more securely.

Q. I would like some information about Tony Oxley. He performed on John McLaughlin's *Extrapolation* LP. Does he have any other album credits?

P.K.

Cliffside Park, NJ

A. According to Leonard Feather's *Encyclopedia of Jazz* in the Seventies, Tony has several of his own LP's: *Baptised Traveler*; *Four Compositions for Sextet* (CBS); *Inchnos* (RCA); Tony Oxley, 71-4; with Howard Riley, *Synopsis* (Incus). He also worked with George Gruntz on the music for the film *Steppenwolf*. There's a brand new release on View Records featuring Alan Skidmore, Tony Oxley and AH Haurand playing Coltrane songs and original material.

Q. When I tune my double toms I always have trouble with the second tom, no matter what intervals I use.

W.L.

Clarendoa, Vermont

A. Basically, the problem is that you need to tune the first tom to a fairly high pitch. Without a second tom, the interval difference between the small tom and floor tom is naturally wide. But, the addition of a second tom might mean that you've got to tune that first tom higher than you're used to. The size of the drums is also an important factor, but if you think of the

three drums (first tom, second tom, floor tom) as high, medium, and low in pitch—then you should be okay.

Q. Why do all drummers play with their left hand on the snare drum while their right hand is on the cymbal or hi-hat? I am a left-handed drummer and I find it easier to play with the opposite hands. Is this okay or should I switch back to the normal way? C.M.

Orleans, MA

A. Not all drummers do play with their left hand on the snare drum and the right hand on cymbals or hi-hat. Billy Cobham and Lenny White are two fine drummers that play in the "opposite" fashion. Owen Hale, house drummer at Muscle Shoals Studios, plays "opposite." So, if you're comfortable playing that way—do it!

Q. In my professional work I am often required to play extremely quiet. For this purpose I used to use a Premier S pencil-slim model. Premier has stopped producing this model. Are there any American companies who produce lightweight sticks of this type?

S.G.

E. Sussex, England

A. The stick you're referring to was the S8A model. The lightest stick offered by Premier is the E model 545 Lancewood. We were unable to come up with a "pencil" model, per se. If any company manufactures them, we welcome their corresponding with us, and we'll let our readers know.



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Ask A Pro continued from page 6

JIM KELTNER



Q. I currently use both top and bottom heads on my set. What heads would you suggest for maximum volume and projection?

Bob Bovienco
Bridgeport, Connecticut

A. It depends on what kind of sound you want. The Pinstripe head can be found in various thicknesses. They're not made that way, but some are thinner than others. I try to pick out the thinnest ones. Tap them with your finger. The ones with a tone that flap a little bit are the thinner heads. The thicker ones seem to die quicker and are too mellow and dull. The thin ones have the strength of the Pinstripe, but they sing out more and they do have a lot of power.

You can try a Pinstripe of equal thickness on the bottom, or you can try a coated Diplomat. For me, the 13" tom always sounds pretty good with that combination, but I can't seem to get that happening with the 12" tom. The 12" might actually be good with Pinstripes on top and bottom.

The shell really has a lot to do with it. There's a difference between wood shells and fiberglass shells, and head combinations work differently on different shells. Coated Ambassadors sound real good—top and bottom—on fiberglass. On my Yamaha wood shells I can't get anything happening with Ambassadors on the toms.

For a 12" tom in the studio I love a clear Ambassador on top and a coated Diplomat on the bottom, tuned kind of high. That gives a nice punch. Some

guys use coated Emperors on top. In picking out the Emperor coated heads you should try to pick the thinner ones also. I hesitate to go into tuning specifics because a drummer has to use his own ear to decide what he wants. There's no way around it. Tuning is so individualized. I go by the way I feel at the time, by the way the head looks, and by the sound in my mind.

But, specifically I would say use Pinstripes or Emperor coated. Diplomat heads have a great carrying power for sound. The only problem with them is that they go right away. A lot of drummers doing sessions that require heavy playing, who want a good, clean, big sound, but a real open sound with nice tone, will use a coated Diplomat on the top. Then, after the song's over and the head's been beat to death they put a new head on! That's dedication to sound.

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Q. I'm a college grad with a BA in music. I spent three years on the road with rock and show bands playing the motel/hotel chains. I quit because nothing was happening with the group. I swore off doing another top-40 gig, but to get into something else has been tough. I'm studying with Joe Cusatis and I pick up occasional club dates. I involved myself with the N. Y. Recording Musicians Workshop; a series of lecture/demonstrations with top producers, musicians and promoters. I recorded demos with members of the workshop in various studios around New York City. I really want to learn everything I can about the business, but I wouldn't go on the road again unless the money was good and the time was right. Any advice?

C A
RIDGEFIELD, CONNECTICUT

A. It sounds to me like you should be teaching. I don't know how many guys have your kind of credentials in music. Being a drummer generally means being a showoff—it's fun to be in front of an audience. That's probably why you started playing drums in the first place. That's what I did! Once we get the talent to go along with being a showoff it gets more serious. I was lucky and connected with the right people. I have very little formal training. I've said jokingly that the only thing that kept me from a college education was a high school education! I was one of those punks that quit too early, and it was stupid of me.

Any gig is a good gig. There should be some satisfaction. If there isn't—you shouldn't be playing. You never know what a gig is leading to. Right around the corner there is another band, or a recording session. If you've been playing top 40, eventually you're going to be on a gig where they need that. By the same token, you should be playing other stuff. You should be playing Italian music, Tarantellas, Italian weddings, Jewish weddings, Polish weddings and playing the Polka.

You have to do what your heart absolutely forces you to do, and the thing that's going to make you happy.

I think in the long run, teaching would be the thing. You have students that admire you, that appreciate what you're doing, and you might be bringing up some fantastic drummers. Just for the heartfelt good to see that you're helping someone who perhaps is handicapped

mentally or physically. There are so many different aspects to that. Perhaps you're quitting too soon. You're very fortunate because you can live at home. Fortunately, you're not laying in the dead of winter in a little town where the agent promised you work and there is no work.

If you can do those hotel gigs or motel gigs, do them. Appreciate them. They will lead to something: better bands, better gigs.

I know it's easy for me to sit on the back of my boat in California, after almost 40 years in the business, and say "try these things" or "do these things." I know that I was very fortunate. I think you should count your blessings. Your situation will improve if you hang in there long enough.

Q. I would like to know more specifically what I should be working on to get into the studio? Are there any books on studio work, miking, tuning, etc.? Is it necessary to go to college? I've been studying privately for the past year and plan to continue.

J.R.
NORTH LINDENHURST, N. Y.

A. A person gets into the studio just like a person gets into anything else. It is a matter of practice. You can't practice enough. There is no such thing as over-practicing.

College is one of the most important things that you can do for your life. God forbid, if you lost a hand, a finger, an arm, or a leg and you couldn't play drums—you would have the credentials, the diploma, just the experience of having been to college and experiencing other college people. There's a certain mutual admiration, mutual respect if you've been to college. It doesn't mean you can't make your million dollars by not going to college. The world is full of multi-millionaires who never set foot in college. That's not the point. The point is the world is also full of multi-millionaires who *have* set foot into college. It's very important for you to continue your schooling.

Start going around studios, meeting people. See what studios are all about. Find out if you could watch a session or two. See what the musicians are doing. Get into where you can watch actual sessions going on. I don't think it's that difficult. I know if you were ever in

California, I'd be happy to take you to one or two. There have to be some drummers in New York or maybe around your town who would be nice enough to invite you. It's very important for you to actually see a session, see what's going on, and in that way learn an awful lot. That's how you meet people. Eventually they'll want you to do demos. Eventually you will be doing what we've all done, doing demos under scale, for just a few bucks just to get your foot in the door, just to play, just to hear yourself back. If you have any recording equipment, even just a mic' or two, start listening to yourself. Tape yourself. Listen to other records and compare your stuff with the other records.

Most colleges have their own studio. That could be a great advantage to you. You get in there, meet other musicians, and people interested in studios. It won't hurt. You'll get in there and before you know it you'll be doing some of that studio stuff yourself. Eventually, you'll be getting one of these letters saying, "How do I get in the studio?"

Q. When writing up a resume, what should be included?

G.M.
EVANS VILLE, INDIANA

A. Generally, resumes are submitted to contractors; the guys that hire musicians especially for the studio. Of course, your resume could be for anything. Absolutely include education and experiences. You might also include a little outline about yourself: what you've been doing for years, what you enjoy, your personal background, some of your hobbies, and outlooks. You've got to let people know that you're responsible and reliable; that you're a non-drinker, that you won't come to work late, that you want to take care of that business like it was your own. You want to feel a part of a family. That's just using a little incentive, a little creativity showing them that you're not just saying you want the job to make some bucks. You want to be part of that family. That's what I think is important. All the accolades in the world are not going to work. Telling people all of the wonderful jobs you've had—people say, "Well, if you've worked *that* many jobs how come you're not working now?" You don't have to tell people how great you are. You have to tell people where

continued on page 108

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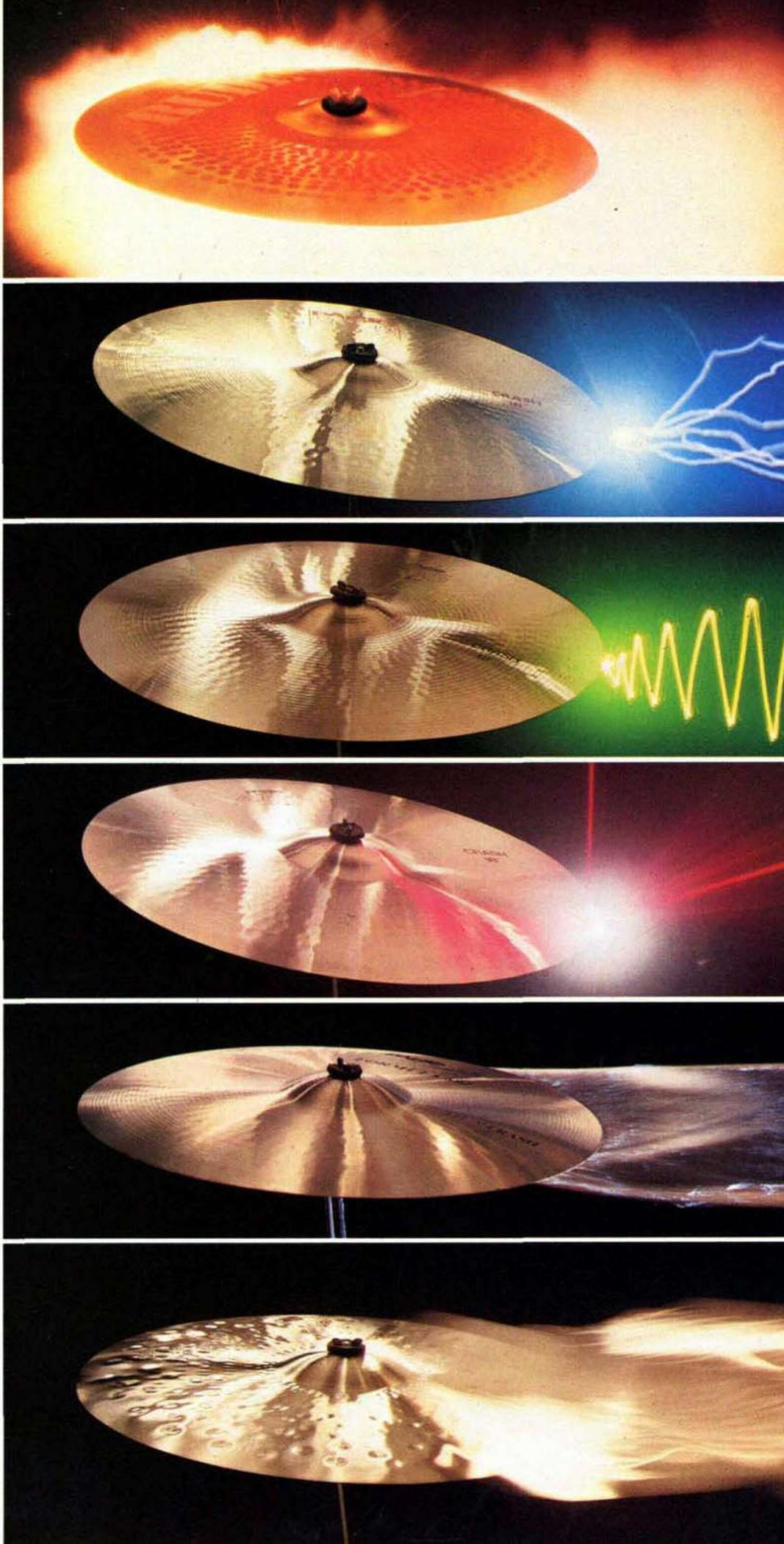
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you're at, that you've had the experience, you've played those kind of jobs and you want to be part of their organization for whatever reason.

I think "enthusiasm" is a very important word, too. Instead of a piece of paper that says, "I've done this and I'm capable of this," show a little enthusiasm. Show some happiness. Show the positive sides of where you've been and what you've been doing and how much you enjoy it. I think that'll be very important.

Q. I'm twenty years old and have been playing for nine years. For the past three years I've been with a wedding band. The other members are twenty-five to thirty. One's married and has a child. They don't want to do music full-time because they have full-time day jobs. They say there's more money doing weddings. I'm considering enlisting in the Army band to save the money to buy a good drumset, microphones, and cases. What advice can you give?

D.G.
LIBRARY, PENNSYLVANIA

A. What a perfect age to go into the service—if you want—and get some terrific band experience, if they guarantee you that you can get into the band. Half the guys I work with in the studios were in the military service, playing in military bands, and got a lot of their training there.

The guys that you are working with—it sounds to me like they are responsible people. They have responsibilities to their wives and children. As far as their wedding work—I think it's great. They have to make that money to take care of their families which is really their first responsibility.

There are studios in the service. There's Armed Forces radio, television, and it's a perfect opportunity to get some terrific experience playing with bands. Playing with a little group at a wedding is a lot different than playing with a big orchestra. It's something that you have to experience. Not everyone gets that experience. They have a good savings schedule in the service. You will have some pretty good money, you will be able to get a good set, microphones and the good cases. It sounds like you've got your head on straight and that's very important. I think the service will do you a lot of good if you go in with a good attitude. Don't go into the Army with the attitude of hating being given orders. Military is one of those things where if you can take orders from your sergeants, you will be able to take orders from great band leaders someday—or even give orders as a band leader. That's very important.

Q. I'm the typical English pro drummer

who came up through the "Beat Boom" of the early Sixties. I'm self-taught and working a large holiday center every summer, and running my own pop combo in the winter. My father lives in Los Angeles. I'm getting married at the end of this summer and my wife and I would love to join my father in L.A. and start to find some club/studio work. Would I run into a big hassle with the Musician's Union? I have virtually no money for such hassles due to the very bad financial climate over here.

T.W.
SOMERSET, ENGLAND

A. I often receive letters from drummers who want to come to L.A. I'm not sure about the work permit laws with you coming from England. That's something you have to find out from immigration. Each time I've been to England or played other countries throughout Europe, there's always been a work permit that was gotten through the business management people.

It sounds to me like you would work. It takes time. You have to meet people. You have to hang around and let it be known that you are available. People have to get to know you. Let's face it, it takes some bucks. You can't just go sit on your duff and not pay your bills. If you're going to come, be sure to come with something you can fall back on.

Work is very scarce now in the U.S. Not everyone is working the way they used to, the economy being the way it is. There would maybe be thirty or forty sessions a day going on—maybe nowadays there are only three or four—if that many!

Q. I've listened to you on The Carpenters's Close To You album. You really touched my innermost feelings with your playing; a very important experience on my drumming journey. I would very much like to send you a cassette of my feelings in thanks. I feel you're the kind of man that likes to share feelings. When God helps me cry because of your inspiration and other musicians' inspiration—that's life all in one big musical stage, to me. I finally felt the courage to express myself to you. I know God's given me the talent to play for a reason, and that I don't have the ability to express myself correctly on paper . . . but, I hear you!

C.E.
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

A. It's a pleasure to hear from people who are so truly honest in their caring and their feelings, and their sharings with others. I appreciate what you've been sharing with me. It's really a big man who can say that he can sit and listen to music and cry. That's fantastic. It shows that you really are full of feeling. I also think that you'll always be a happy person because I think that your touching

others with your expressions of love and self-joy—I think that's very important. I get the feeling that you're very poetic and very prolific. I think that's very important. So, it's not strange at all. As far as your tape—by all means—I'd love to hear your tape. I think you should absolutely send it along just like you sent the letter to MD, and they'll be sure to forward it to me. I'll look forward to hearing it.

Q. Regarding the "Staying In Tune" column (Aug./Sept. '81): Karen Carpenter's a great drummer? Mr. Blaine, what then would you call a drummer of Max Roach's calibre? As far as I'm concerned, there are no great female drummers around today. There would be if all the women out there would stop complaining and start practicing.

R.G.
SUSQUEHANNA,
PENNSYLVANIA

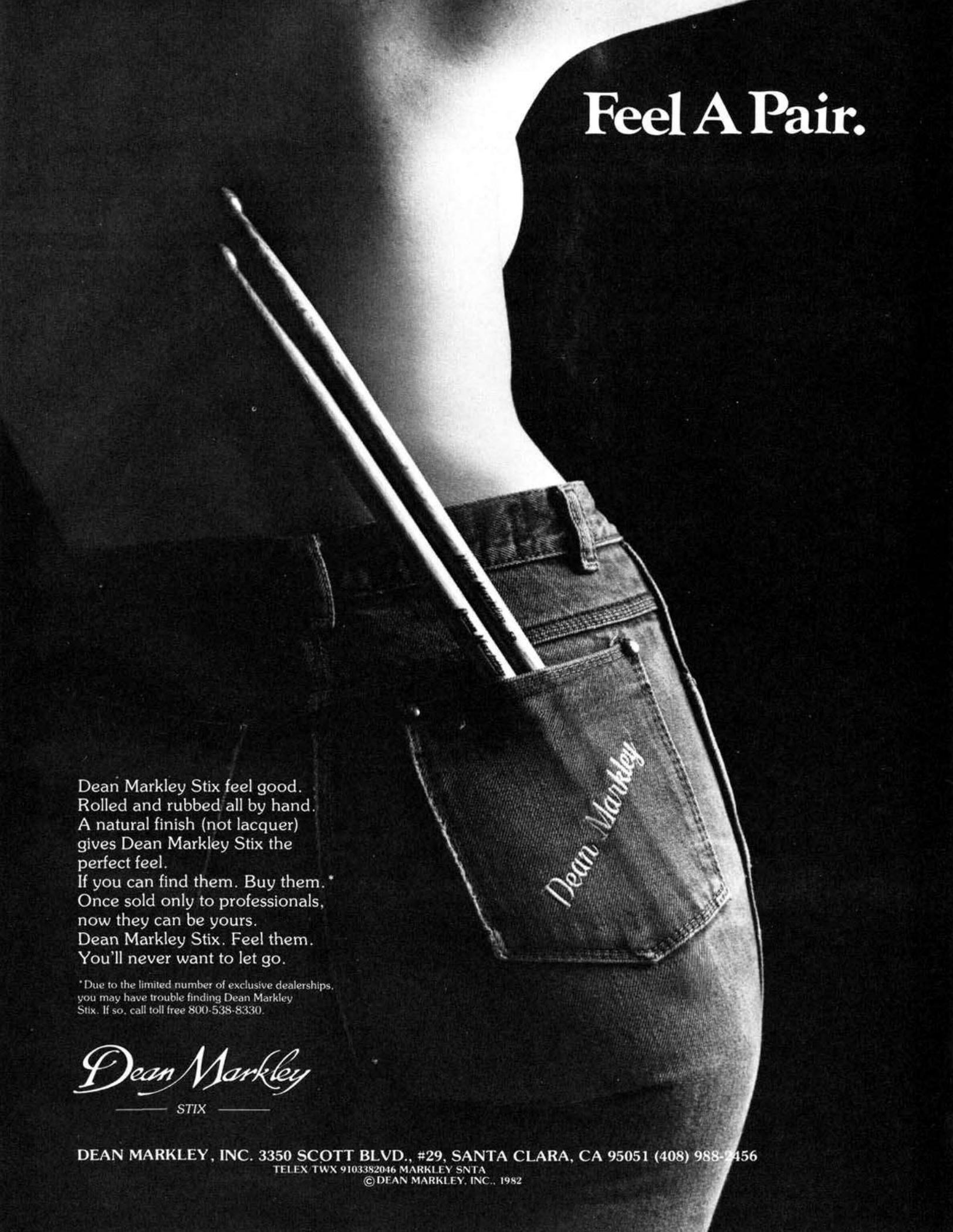
A. I must say "yes," Karen Carpenter is a great drummer. She's great because she's had the guts to get up in front of the audience and do what she does. She's had the guts to sit and practice. She's had the guts to do a lot of things that a lot of guys I know won't do. They think they're too good. You say if all the women out there would stop complaining and start practicing—it's not only the women! It's also the guys. I've traveled all over the world and I've listened to the gripes, the screams, the hollering.

When you talk about Max Roach's calibre—are you kidding? He's the top of the pile, man! Max Roach is his own thing. Karen Carpenter is *her* own thing. And you are your own thing. You've got to try to understand that. Everyone has their own thing. You will never please all of the people all of the time. There are a lot of people that really love my drumming and a lot of people that think I am absolutely the worst! That's why I think you will find in life that there is no one who is the absolute greatest or ultimate. You will never find a best. There are so many greats! Karen Carpenter is great. Max Roach is great. I think you're great. You have to start looking at it that way.

Q. I'm a great fan of yours and John Lennon. In your MD interview you said you recorded with him. What song or album was that?

D.G.
UNION, NJ

A. I was a great fan of John's, of course. We did the West Coast rock and roll album that Phil Spector produced, and I don't know that it was ever released. I was a great fan of his music, and I was totally shocked about his death. I can only say that through his music he does live on, and he will live forever. When we're all gone, they will still be playing his music. Keep in mind that we all must go on and continue.



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WILLIAM HOOKER—... *Is Eternal Life*. Reality Unit Concepts RUC-444. William Hooker: drums, percussion, vocal. David Murray: tenor sax. Les Goodson: tenor sax. Hasaan Dawkins: alto sax, flute, percussion. Mark Miller: bass. *Drum Form I Soy: Material Seven I Passages (Anthill) I Pieces I & II Above and Beyond*.

Mr. Hooker is pursuing free-form drumming that incorporates elements from spirituals to the avant-garde. This is a concept album meant to be listened to in one sitting.

ED BLACKWELL w/ Old and New Dreams—*Playing*. ECM-1-1205. Don Cherry: trumpet, piano. Dewey Redman: tenor sax, musette. Charlie Haden: bass. Ed Blackwell: drums. *Happy House I Mopii I New Dream I Rushour I Broken Shadows I Playing*.

This is a live recording of one of the most inventive bands around today. For those who've never heard Blackwell, this is a good place to start. For those who have heard Blackwell, there's no excuse for not owning this record.

LORD SHEPHERD—*Evidence For Real*. Verline Records—032556. Amboniseye Lord Shepherd: drums. Essiet Essiet, Derek Williams, Romeo Williams: bass. Rene Van Helsing, Takshshi Hirao, Mike Wilson, Garth Henderson: keyboards. Lord Shepherd: piano. John Bugner, Carlos Ortiz: guitar. Norman Love, Reginald Alexander: saxophones. Andy Clever; trumpets. Nika Rejto: flute. Ron Washington: lead singer. Ruby Sander, Pat Ayers, Kirn P. Davis, Peter Canada, Lord Shepherd: background vocals. Abdur Rahim Lateef, Chuck Washingtons, Lord Shepherd: percussion.

R&B based music with some solid, no nonsense drumming from Lord Shepherd.

DAVID FRIEDMAN—*Of The Wind's Eye*. Enja 3089. David Friedman: marimba, vibraphone, percussion. Jane Ira Bloom: soprano saxophone. Harvie Swartz: bass. Daniel Humair: drums. *Mr. Close I Fonque I For Now I A Swiss Celebration / Four In One / A Unicorn In Captivity, Part II*.

Good musicians playing good music! Friedman has a fine melodic sense, and this is enhanced by his sensitivity to the wide range of colors available from his mallet and percussion instruments.

Bloom, Swartz and Humair are equally gifted, and the four musicians truly function as a group.

JACK DeJOHNETTE w/ Terje Rypdal and Miroslav Vitous—*To Be Continued*. ECM-1-1192. Rypdal: electric guitars, flute. Vitous: acoustic and electric bass, piano. DeJohnette: drums, voice. *Maya I Mountain In The Clouds I Morning Lake I To Be Continued I This Morning I Topplue, Votter & Skjerf I Uncomposed Appendix*.

An interesting trio date with three of today's most inventive musicians. DeJohnette, as always, shows how to combine good chops with good taste.

KIP HANRAHAN—*Coup de Tete*. American Clave—1007. Kip Hanrahan: percussion, voice, quinto, string synthesizer. Daniel Ponce: iya, congas, chekere. Jerry Gonzalez: congas, itotole, quinto, chekere. Nicky Marrero: bongos okonkolo. Anton Fier: trap drums. Chico Freeman: tenor sax, clarinet. Bill Laswell: electric bass. Arto Lindsay: electric guitar. Byard Lancaster: tenor sax, flute, wooden flute. George Cartwright: alto sax, flute, piccolo. Ignacio Berroa: trap drums. Jamaaladeen Tacuma: electric bass. George Naha: electric guitar. Carlos Ward: alto sax. Lisa Herman: voice. Carla Bley: piano, voice. Orlando DiGirolamo: accordion. Billy Bang: violin. John Clark: french horn. Angel Perez: congas. Gene Golden: chekere, congas. John Stobblefield: tenor sax. Bern Nix: electric guitar. Dom Um Romao: surdo grande, agogo. Fred Firth: electric guitar. Carlos Mestre: congas. Michael Manlier: trumpet. Cecil McBee: bass. Teo Macero: tenor sax. David Liebman: soprano sax. Victor Lewis: trap drums. *Whatever I Want I At The Moment of The Serve I This Night Comes Out of Both of Us I India Song / A Lover Divides Time (To Hear How It Sounds) I No One Gets To Transcend Anything (No One Except Oil Company Executives) I Shadow To Shadow I Sketch from Two Cubas / Heart On My Sleeve*.

I don't understand all of this record—but it is some of the best original music in either pop or jazz I've heard in a long time.

JERRY GONZALEZ—*Ya Yo Me Cure'*. American Clave—1001. Jerry Gonzalez: quinto, cascara, trumpet, flugelhorn, bombo, coro. Frankie Rodriguez: lead

vocals, quinto, bata, chekere. Hilton Ruiz: piano, coro. Andy Gonzalez: bass, coro. Carlos Mestre: chekere, tumbador, coro. Gene Golden: bata, tresgolpe, chekere, coro. Edgardo Miranda: quartro, electric guitar. Vincente George: guiro, percussion. Steve Torre: trombone, conch shells, percussion. Mario Rivera: tenor sax, coro. Papo Vasquez: trombone, coro. Nicky Marrero: timbales, chekere, guataca. Don Alias: trap drums. Milton Cardona: vocal harmony. *Aqueybana Zemi I Nefertitti I Ya Yo Me Cure' I The Lucy Theme I Evidence I Baba Fieden Orisha I Caravan*.

This is a serious record of Caribbean-based music. Gonzalez says: "This is a collection of realized dreams ... of music that I could only feel being a Nuyoriqueno, living in New York." Excellent percussion.

TERRI LYNE CARRINGTON—*TLC and Friends*. CEI Records CSRV 2705. Terri Lyne Carrington: drums. Kenny Barron: piano. Buster Williams: bass. George Coleman, Sonny Carrington: tenor saxophones. *What Is This Thing Called Love? I La Bonita I Seven Steps To Heaven I St. Thomas I Just The Way You Are I Sonny Moon For Two*.

It isn't really important to mention that Terri Lyne is sixteen years old. What is important is that she swings like crazy on this LP! This album is going to make some heads turn.

MAX ROACH w/ Sonny Clark/George Duvivier. Bainbridge BT 1044. Max Roach: drums. Sonny Clark: piano. George Duvivier: bass. *Minor Meeting / Nica I Sonny's Crip I Blues Mambo I Blues Blue I Junka I My Conception I Sonia*.

This album was originally released on Time Records as Sonny Clark's date. It features some excellent brushwork by Max, and an excellent study of trio playing and accompaniment by a master drummer.

MAX ROACH—*Max Roach*. Bainbridge BT 1042. Max Roach: drums. Ray Draper: tuba. George Coleman: tenor sax. Booker Little: trumpet. Arthur Davis: bass. *Tuba De Nod I Milano I Variations On The Scene I Pies of Quincy I Old Folks I Sadiga I Gandolfo's Bounce*.

Another Time Records reissue. This particular band was one of Max's most creative. Booker Little was a genius and

continued on page 114

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Impressions From the NAMM Winter Market

by Dave Levine

The drum industry is presently in a period of rapid and substantial change. Drum companies are having to make hard choices and take large risks in guessing where the drum market will be six months from now. Those who are complacent are lost in the shuffle. On the other hand, reputations and long-term sales are built over years—not months. Companies who resort to expediency will lose their share of the market. The Anaheim show offered some solutions and a few of them may take some getting used to.

There have always been two related, but different, areas of drum sales: the top-of-the-line equipment, and the low-end, student models. For as long as any of us can recall, the top end was the larger area of sales. But because of skyrocketing labor and material costs (and the general economic climate), top-end drum sales have been lagging. Today, the drum market is the low end, and drum companies are searching for ways to capture their share of it.

The great success of the CB700 line showed a way to elevate the low end in terms of value, quality and sales. According to an industry source, CB700 is now one of the top three drum companies. CB700 and LP's *Cosmic Percussion* offer quality at a low price (about \$700 for a 5-piece set) and complete catalogs of drums, hardware, accessories, and even mallet instruments.

This success has not gone unnoticed by the major manufacturers. Over a dozen booths were exhibiting economy-level drum kits. Slingerland (*Spirit*), Gretsch (*Nighthawk*), Tama (*Swingstar* and *Royalstar*) and Premier

(*Club*) all offer such sets. Still, some serious questions need to be answered.

How do the new student model drums differ from professional drums? Less expensive materials and processes are used. The drums are not finished as well and will go out of round more easily. Also, the hardware isn't as versatile or as heavy duty.

What about the quality of sound? In reality, the sound is little affected. Versatility and durability are what is sacrificed.

What effect will the low end have on the high end? First, the manufacturers, because of competition, will have to find ways to make less expensive, quality instruments. Some companies have already incorporated less costly Japanese hardware with American-made shells in an effort to reduce costs. Finishing costs can be cut by painting the interior and covering the exterior surfaces of the drums instead of enhancing the natural wood finish.

Unfortunately, lower labor and material costs from overseas will create an even further eastern shift in the center of the industry. Additionally, use of "crossover" hardware will limit the choices available and similarities between different manufacturer's products will appear.

A new market for low-end cymbals and accessories will occur. But the money and energy that once was put into developing top-of-the-line products will have to be diverted to do so. The great percussion instrument advances of the last 25 years may not be so great in the future.

Will these trends result in the greater number of drumming participants the industry expects?

How many guitar players start off on a *Les Paul* or

Telecaster? How many clarinet or violin students have the opportunity to practice on a top quality, professional instrument? Not many. But how many drummers started on a Ludwig or Rogers snare drum? Until now, most. Drummers have been fortunate over the years in being able to learn on professional instruments. They can no longer afford to do that.

More importantly, have student model guitars or wind instruments changed the quality of sound or level of musicianship we expect from professional players? No. Have they dampened the enthusiasm of youngsters to learn music? No. Have they made participation in music more accessible to more people? Yes. The same logic should apply to drumming.

Then, just when the market is getting used to the under \$1000 drum set, along comes Remo with their *PTS* (Pre-Tuned System) 5-piece drum set for under \$400. This was one of the most discussed products of the entire show. Remo discovered a way to shrink a mylar drum head so it becomes tensioned and remains that way. This eliminates the need for lugs, tension screws, counterhoops, and thick drum shells to support such hardware.

What Remo described as "a major evolutionary step" has almost unlimited implications. "More kids will be able to participate in drumming," said Remo Belli at a press conference. "Some who get in on this level will go on to a higher level."

Remo is presently involved in three areas of *PTS* drum development: toy, educational, and amateur percussion. Tambourines, hand drums, bongos, ethnic drums, snare drums, and drum sets with replaceable and non-replaceable heads, are available.

Although there were not many new products introduced in the professional category, two continuing trends should be mentioned. The marching percussion area, which has been responsible for many of the technological advances of the recent past, continues to be strong and innovative. Premier's marching xylophone, Ludwig's slotted shell snare drum, and Pearl's entry into the drum corps market are examples from this year's show.

The major activity in professional sets is in shell sizes. The trend towards deeper snare drums, tom-toms, and bass drums continues, along with new interest in extended collars. Gretsch and Tama unveiled their deep-shell tom-toms; Premier introduced undersized drums; Pearl showed full-size drums with oversized heads and hardware.

This year's NAMM Winter Market was an education in economics. It was also a lesson in history and a view of the future. The changes in the drum industry are reflections of economic and musical realities. Perhaps they are overdue. In the future, drum students, like their classmates, will start on a student drum or drumset and then, hopefully, move up. Most, if not all the drum manufacturers are beginning to realize this, and deal with it.

But rapid change doesn't necessarily mean rapid advancement. There will always be a need for artist-quality instruments made from the finest materials and workmanship. The art of drum making must not be lost in the rush to satisfy the growing low-end market. Without a doubt, the name of the game in today's drum industry is "survival." At what level do we wish to survive? That's one question that we will have to answer together.

Photo by Paul Jonanson



Photo by Paul Jonanson



DRUMS

PREMIER: The complete line of Premier tuned, marching, concert and drumset percussion is once again available in the United States. MTI (Music Technology, Inc.) will be handling U.S. sales. Premier's new products include *Soundwave* drums, which have new tension casings and undersized shells, two-ply drum heads, square-head tension rods on all drums except parade models, and a new synthetic-bar xylophone on a lightweight, marching frame.

LUDWIG: die-cast hoops are available in all sizes (6-18"), new slotted (split) shell 12 x 14 field drum, and 8 x 14 snare drums; hammered bronze, brass and stainless steel snare drums. **SONOR:** new parallel-action snare strainer (on *Artist* series only) and, for different size drums, two different sizes of internal and external drum mufflers. **TAMA:** in addition to their new catalog, Tama introduced their *X-Tras* deep-shell toms and bass drums (*Super Star* line only). Tama has also changed the angle of the legs

on their floor stands so the feet make greater floor contact. Also producing a high stand with stroke height adjustment. **SLINGERLAND:** Spence Aloisio has been named acting president of Slingerland, who displayed their new *Magnum* hardware with color-coded cymbal stands and an expanding line of percussion accessory instruments including bongos, maracas, and tambourines. **ROGERS:** *Heritage 5-* and *7-* piece drum sets featuring smaller diameter, deeper shell toms and bass drums, *Memri-*

loc timbales, and solid brass *Lug Locks* that allow the tension rod to be adjusted without loosening the lock (standard on *Dynasonic* models). **PEARL:** *Extender* tom-toms and snare drums with full-size shells and oversize heads and hardware, available in standard and deep-shell sizes. Pearl has also jumped into the marching percussion field with a new strainer on their 5-ply field drum, *Sonic Cut* and *Thunderhead* timp-toms, and specially designed, high-strength hardware. **YAMAHA:** Jim Coffin has joined as percussion development director. Yamaha will be introducing their famed *R Series* drums to the U.S. sometime this spring. These drums have been available only in Japan until now. The *R Series* features all-birch shells, high-tension lugs and a highly finished interior.



Five-piece pre-tuned drumset, featuring new "membranic" drum heads that need no tensioning or tuning, has been introduced by Remo, Inc. Designed for the amateur drum performer, the set has a suggested list price of \$390.00, including pedal and stands, and comes in white finish with separate decorating kit of decals. Three- and four-piece drumsets also available from \$275.00.



MALLET PERCUSSION

ROSS: Economy-priced line of bells, chimes and *Pro-Ion* synthetic-bar marimbas and xylophones. **MUSSER:** Electronic *Amplibass* Kelon Bass Marimba, 1 3/4 octaves in range.

STICKS

REGAL-TIP: *Quantum* drum sticks with a heavier, thicker neck, and a rounded tip in four models; the *Calabar* stick/brush. **HI-SKILL:** Newly improved synthetic drum sticks. **PRO-MARK:** New, 22,000 square-foot plant in Houston is in full operation turning out eight wood and six nylon-tip models of the hicko-

ry, Made in Texas, U.S.A. sticks. **AQUARIAN:** *X-10's* with new black finish and two graphite models.

CYMBALS

PAISTE: Paiste America has recently opened a warehouse and testing facility on the West Coast. Company is also expanding the 505 (economy) line to include crashes,



splashes and china-type cymbals. **ZILDJIAN:** A. Zildjian introduced their new *China Boy* cymbals which feature an authentic Chinese sound, higher flare around the edge, and a squared-off bell. Robert

Zildjian has left the company and will be forming his own cymbal manufacturing and sales company in Canada. Look for cymbal prices to remain stable for the next year.

continued on page 116

Photo by Paul Jonanson

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Platform continued from page 4

I learned a lot from your article on Philly Joe Jones. In regards to what Philly said about rock drummers putting too much movement into their playing: I am mostly a rock drummer, but I love jazz and I play it whenever I can. From playing both styles, I feel that rock drumming needs that movement and physical energy, but jazz comes from a spiritual-type energy, more from within, not needing so much physical movement. It seems a lot of rock drummers are put down by jazz drummers for this extra movement.

I respect Philly Joe for giving some rock drummers credit. It's a sad thing that a lot of rock drumming is noise. That noise tarnishes the art. I am 18 and I feel it's within me to somehow capture the spirit in the music that forerunners like Philly Joe produced and relate it to today's music. I feel a lot of today's music lacks the heart and love that was put into music of the past, and I believe it's not the music's fault totally. Maybe the players have grown cold.

**JOHN CONVERTINO
STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA**



On Track continued from page 110

Ray Draper played some amazing, inventive tuba. This record is worth owning if only for the hard to find cymbal solo, "Pies Of Quincy." This was dedicated to the Zildjian Company when they were located in Quincy, Massachusetts.

BARBARA BORDEN & CAROLYN BRANDY w/ Alive!—*Cull It Jazz*. Redwood Records RR 8484. Barbara Borden: drums. Carolyn Brandy: congas, small percussion. Rhiannon: vocals. Janet Small: acoustic piano. Fender Rhodes, supporting vocals. Susanne Vincenza: acoustic bass, supporting vo-

als. *Willing I Call It Jazz I Show Me The Way I Step By Step I Wild Women Don't Get The Bines I Greeting Song I Loving Song I Golden River-Golden Dream I Too Bad I Heaven Is In Your Mind*.

Alive! is a group of musicians who have been working hard to perfect their music. This record is a live recording of some fine music. The strength is in the unit, which is not to slight the individuals—they are experienced, mature musicians who know how to listen and how to create a band sound.

LENNY WHITE w/ Twennynine—*Just Like Dreamin'*. Elektra 5E-551. Lenny White: drums, percussion. Barry Johnson: bass, lead vocals. Eddie Martinez: guitar, vocals. Skip Anderson: keyboards, vocals. Steve Williams: guitar, vocals. Carla Vaughn: vocals. Joycelyn Smith: vocals. Denzil A. Miller: keyboards. Paulinho Da Costa: percussion. *Rhythm I Twennynine (The Rap) I Movin' On I Don't Look Back I Just Like Dreamin' I Need You I All Over Again I Find A Love I All I Want*.

Strictly for dancers.

COLLIER & DEAN—*Whistling Midgets*. Inner City IC 1126. Tom Collier: marimba, vibraphone, orchestra bells. Dan Dean: bass, 360 systems, Oberheim bass synthesizer, fretless bass. Don Grusin: Fender Rhodes, acoustic piano. Alex Acuna: drums, percussion, congas. Gary Herbig: soprano sax, tenor sax, alto & baritone sax. Norman Durkee: synthesizers, organ. Ted Brancato: Fender Rhodes, acoustic piano. Moyes Lucas: drums. John Morton: guitar. Ernie Watts: OBX Saxophone synthesizers, tenor sax. *San Juan I Sunrise I Old Friends & Relatives I Fog Tight I Whistling Midgets I Cara, Like A Rose I A Song For M I Hagan's Hoedown I Cowboys and Christians*.

A well-produced album by accomplished musicians. Tight arrangements, well rehearsed.

MEL LEWIS—*Mellifluous*: Gatemouth 1006. Mel Lewis: drums. Dick Oatts: alto & soprano saxes, alto flute. Jim McNeely: piano. John Mosca: trombone. Marc Johnson: bass. *Blue Note I Giving Way I Audrey I I'm Old Fashioned I Warm Valley I John's Abbey*.

Mel Lewis is the epitome of swinging jazz drummers. This is a brand-new album comprised of members of the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra, and it is tight, cooking, fantastic music. Highly recommended.



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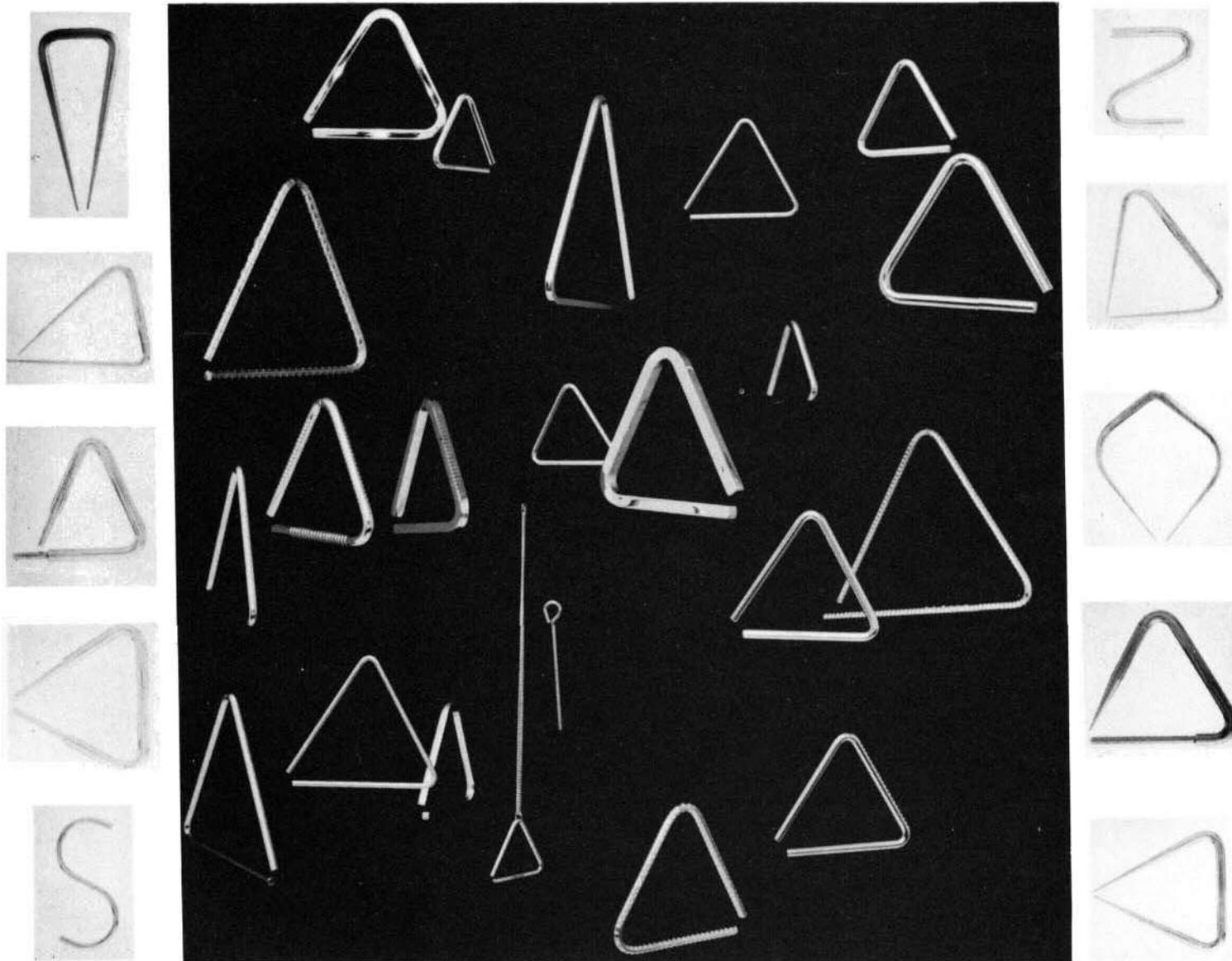


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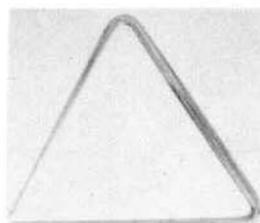
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ACCESSORIES

The *Mark Tree* is fast becoming a standard percussion accessory instrument. No less than nine different booths were exhibiting different versions of the wind chime instrument: Slingerland, CB700, Carroll Sound, Planet Percussion, Spectrasound, Dan-Mar, Latin Percussion, Nail Road, and Camber. Brass and aluminum tubing and rod is being used on instruments, with from 24 to 144 chimes. Quite a selection and price range available. **LATIN PERCUSSION:** LP is expanding their *Cosmic Percussion* line and is also importing gongs and cymbals directly from mainland China. **SPECTRASOUND:** new, value-priced leather and padded-vinyl stick and cymbal bags; the *Trap Rak* accessory rack. **DAN MAR:** new hoop-mounted bass drum muffler and temple block holder.

ELECTRONICS

Randy May (inventor of the *Vari-Pitch*) has developed an internal drum miking system that is being offered on Slingerland drums. The *Lectro-Acoustic* set-up features sophisticated microphones and mounting apparatus with 180-degree rotation adjustment capability, internally mounted on the drum shell.

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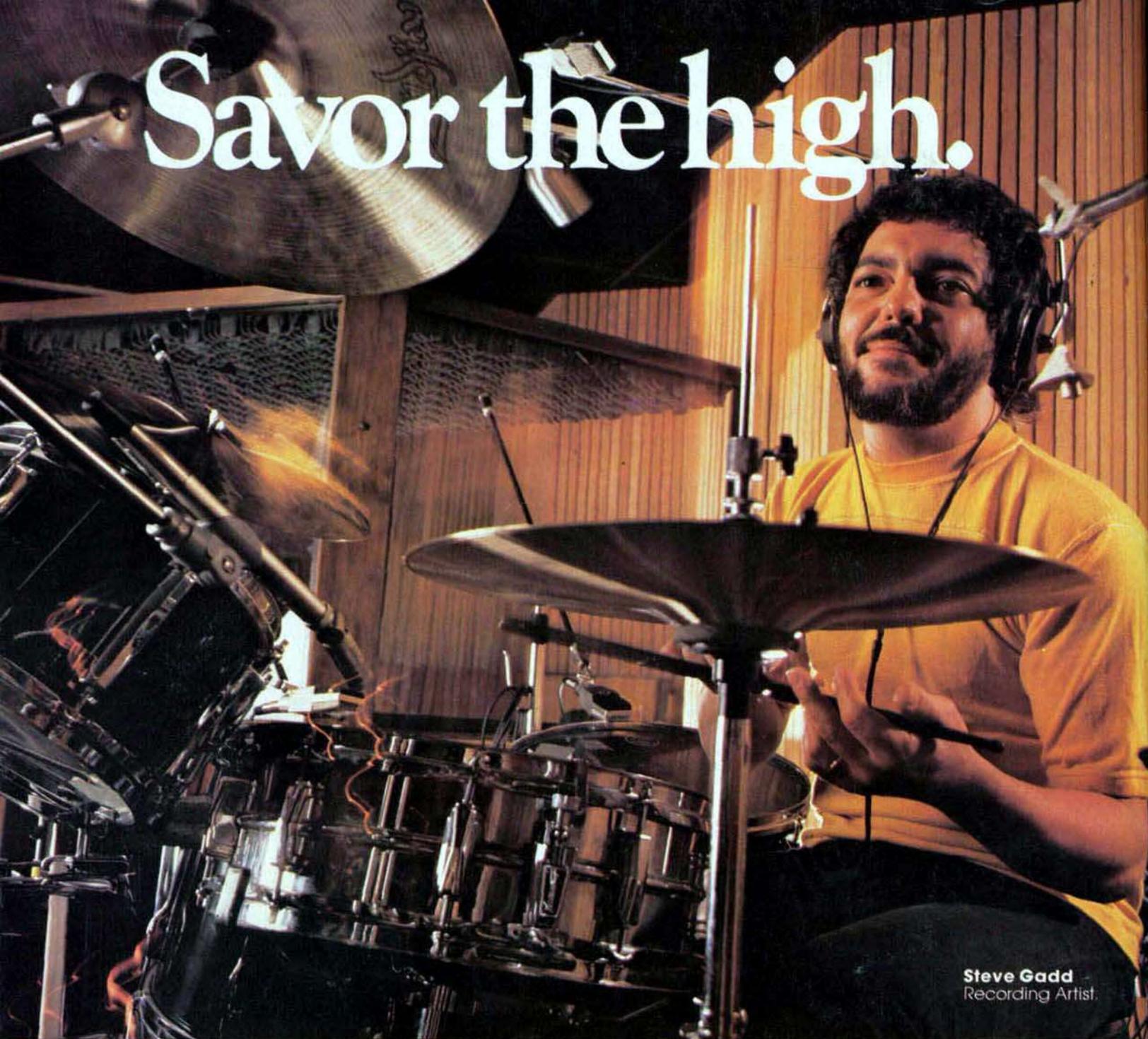
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Steve Gadd
Recording Artist

Enclosed in a booth you hear the tracks in your cans. The band's pulling in the right direction. So far you've been laying down the basic tracks, and now it's time for a little sweetening. You strengthen the groove and you bring in those quick chippy highs off your cymbals and start to savor the sound.

Your Zildjian Quick Beat Hi-Hats with a flat 4-holed bottom cymbal spin out a short tight compact sound. Incredibly controlled and still just plain incredible. And your Zildjian Thin Crash comes on with quick bright high-end accents that keep it all nice and tasty.

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