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Alex Van Halen

PHILLIP WILSON

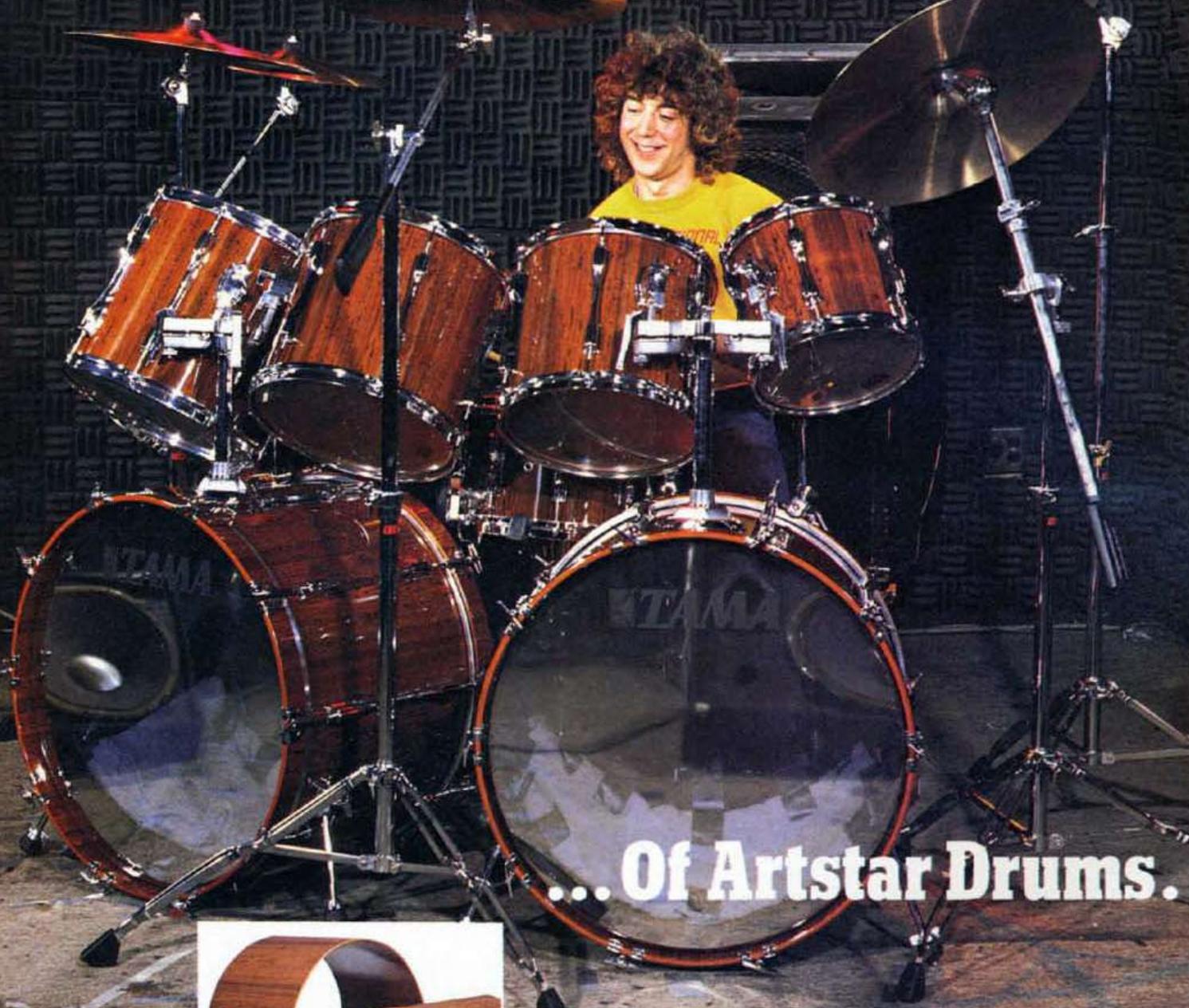
ZZ Top's

FRANK BEARD

Drums Around The World

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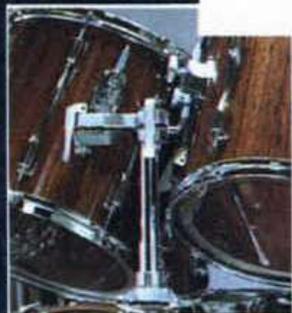
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Cover Photo by Rick Malkin

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ALEX VAN HALEN

Rock musicians are often accused of being more concerned with the rock 'n' roll lifestyle than with the music. That lifestyle is very much a part of Alex Van Halen's image, but underneath that image is a serious musician who has a lot to say about drums and drumming, and he says it here in this MD exclusive.
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Photo by Rick Malkin

PHILLIP WILSON

For a drummer to have played with such diverse groups as The Art Ensemble of Chicago and the Paul Butterfield Blues Band indicates that his musicianship is not limited in any way, and that is certainly true of Phillip Wilson, who has a knack for weaving seemingly contrasting influences together into one unique style.
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Photo by Jennifer Kotler

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FRANK BEARD

In this revealing interview, Frank Beard, the unpretentious, self-taught drummer for ZZ Top, discusses his career from his early emulations of '60s British rock bands, to his later involvement with a psychedelic group, and his present position as a member of the highly successful, Texas-based rock trio.
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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

A Positive Outlook

Every year, The American Music Conference (AMC) issues a report on musical instrument sales in the United States based on manufacturers' shipments. The sales figures, which track both domestic manufacture and imported equipment, have recently been released for 1982.

A close-up look at the percussion statistics tells us that total sales for drumsets, marching band equipment, mallet instruments and cymbals were down from 1981's record-breaking 82.9 million dollars, to 78.5, a decrease of 5%. AMC attributes the slight decrease to the ongoing impact of the recession on traditional percussion instrument consumers, and the continual tightening of school budgets across the nation. The graph below shows sales volume over the past five years and reflects imported as well as domestically manufactured percussion equipment.



Obviously, even a slight decrease in volume is mildly disappointing, however, I think we might agree that our industry is certainly holding its own, particularly when we compare it to the keyboard and fretted instrument categories who experienced decreases of 23%.

Further investigation of AMC's figures shows that imported drums were off considerably from 1981's all-time high of 12.5 million dollars, to 9.6, with most of the equipment coming in from Taiwan. In the area of exports, however, the percussion industry bucked the trend followed by every other major musical instrument category with sales volume of 12.5 million dollars, an *increase* of 5%. Interestingly, all other musical instruments reported declines in exports ranging from 5%, to as high as 56%.

Along with the above information, AMC also tells us that there are 2,748,000 drummers in the United States (94% male, 6% female; median age 19), placing percussion instruments fifth on the list of the nation's most popular instrumental categories.

And what about the next generation of drummers coming up? Is competition from radio, TV, sports and video games preventing young people from actively studying music? Absolutely not, according to a special survey conducted for the AMC this year. Surprisingly, over a third of the nation's 13- to 19-year-olds are actively involved in the study of a musical instrument, and of that third, 13% are studying drums and/or percussion, again, placing drumming fifth in popularity among today's American teenage musicians.

All things considered, the overall percussion industry's vital signs appear healthy, despite the anticipated decrease, and one can find no reason to doubt the continuation of a healthy environment over the long haul, and as the economy improves. For those who doubt, take a gander at MD's coverage of percussion activity at the NAMM '83 Expo in the *Just Drums* department of this issue, and judge for yourself.

RS

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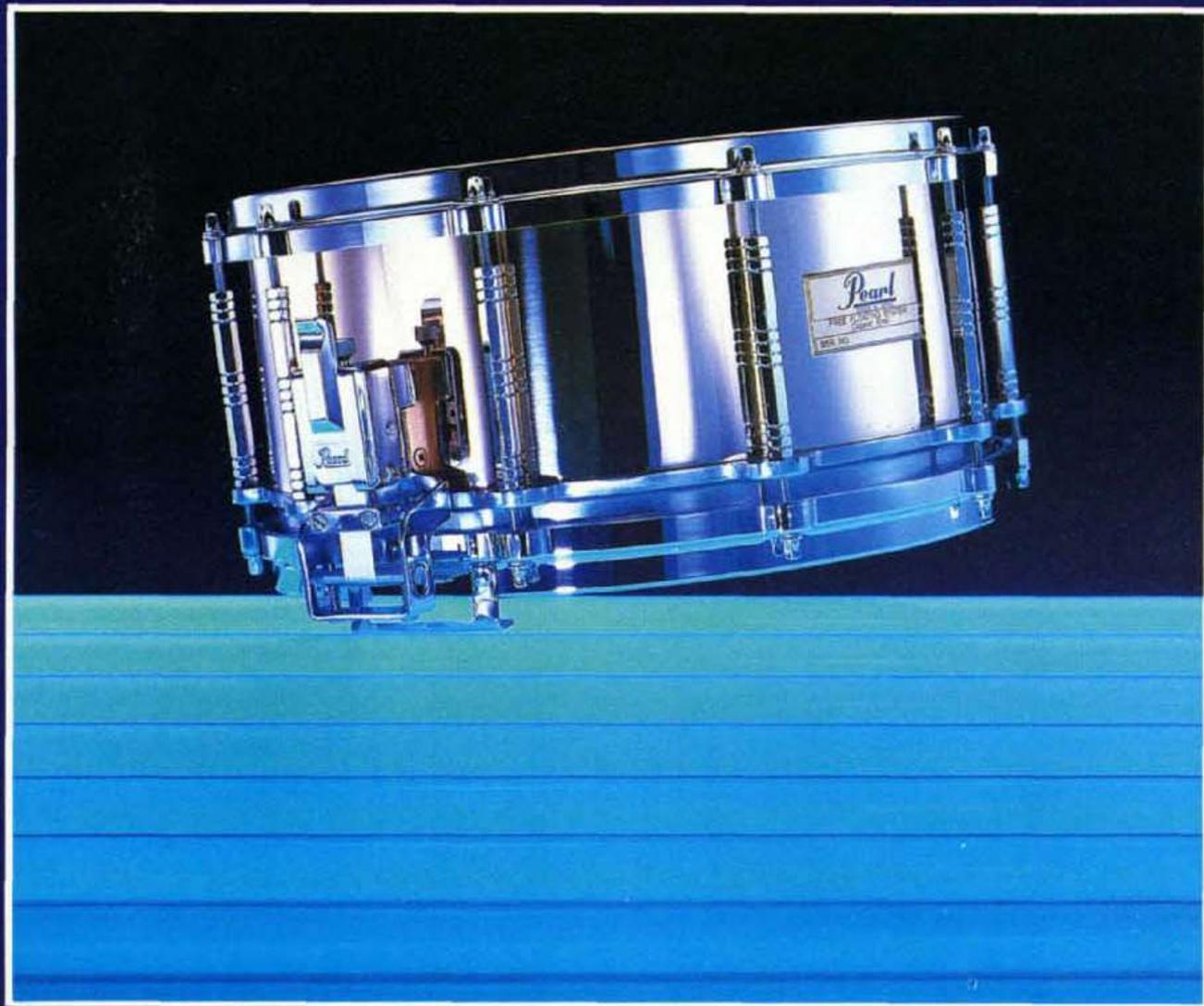
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READER'S PLATFORM

SAM SPEAKS

I refer to a line Louie Bellson used in *Ask A Pro* in the July '83 issue. Louie and many other pros have said the same thing, that rudiments are scales. Rudiments are not scales. I think Louie was trying to say that they are to drums what scales are to melody players. Scales tell the melodic player the key signature he's playing in. The rudiments do not. They have done more to disrupt the drummer than any one factor in all of drumming. I think they should be outlawed as an important study of the drummer. It's one area that has held the new, older players, and educators from becoming musical players at the outset of their studies.

The rudiments do not tell us what key the band is playing in. They tell us nothing, except they tie the drummer down to drum slavery of hours upon hours of practice of an outdated tool that really holds us back from thinking musically, just as I and many other drummers were held back in 1936, when I first started playing this instrument. The true professional drummer who had gone through the 26 standard rudimental strokes, wished he never had. They were designed way back about 1812 for the military player, and in 1983 we still hold onto them as important as scales to the melody player.

We forget that there wasn't any drumset in 1812. There wasn't any drumset up until the 1900s. If the rudiments were so important, most of our top drum corps players would be the best drumset players, and yet most of these people can't even keep time, even though they have rudimental chops.

If we drummers think of rudiments as scales, we're in pretty bad shape. With all due respect to my dearest and close friend, Louie Bellson - I can't see how we can say rudiments are scales. I never heard a melody from a rudiment, but I hear melodies from scales.

Sam Ulano
Radio City Station, NY

READERS POLL

The Readers Poll is the biggest waste of time, money, ink, paper and postage stamps of the MD readers. I'm sure people are tired of seeing Steve Gadd, Neil Peart, David Garibaldi, Buddy Rich and Vic Firth win every year. Stewart Copeland and Terry Bozzio are not *new* anymore.

The reason the same drummers win every year is because they're not as limited as others. Most Top-40, pop and country drummers aren't in bands like Rush and King Crimson, who allow constant fills, double bass, electronics and avant-garde

experimentation. When you play commercial music for a living, you play what the producers want. You don't constantly solo like Peart. How do we know what a drummer can do if he's in a basic commercial band?

Why not add categories like new wave, pop, electronic pop, funk and black music, reggae, etc? The drummers who win are super musicians but they aren't as limited as others.

People who vote need to add variety to their musical entertainment. Don't just go by a name. Go by performance, and take into consideration if you've seen them live. The world is sick of biased attitudes. Let's not put them in MD.

David C. Johnson
Nashville, TN

SNARE VARIATIONS

I found Rick Van Horn's "Achieving Variety" (July MD) quite interesting and informative. I'd like to pass on a method I've been using for achieving different snare sounds during the course of a job. I use two 5 1/2" snares - a Ludwig chrome with a coated *Ambassador* head and a '60s-model wood snare with a coated *Emperor*. Both drums have *Supraphonic* snare throwoffs, and I use a Rogers rim-clip external muffler with a piece of folded cloth on each drum. I tune the chrome snare tight, and use at most a small amount of muffling. I tune the wood snare to a medium tension and sometimes use a bit more muffling on it. The drums both rest on the snare stand without tightening the basket up. I've found that I can slip one drum off the stand and the other on in a matter of seconds. The throwoffs allow quick re-tensioning of the snares; I've found it possible to accurately alter the sound of each drum with one well-measured twist. The two drums, along with various degrees of muffling and snare tension, allow for quite a number of different, easily accessible snare sounds on both cover and original tunes. I generally do not mike the drums, but if you do, you might have to convince the soundman that this is worth the extra work to him; if you use a large PA, he may set the EQ for one drum and need to alter it for the other. This method has proven quite helpful to me, as we do everything from reggae, funk and Motown right up to hard rock and Top-40 tunes. We often arrange our sets into three or four groups of songs of similar genres, so I usually switch drums two or three times a set. I hope that this is of help to other readers.

David Meiland
Ann Arbor, MI

ON THE MOVE

I'd like to suggest a monthly salute on one or more of the up-and-coming drummers in various cities around the country. Not only would it be interesting to hear about some new, unknown talent, but it would be a real benefit, career-wise, to those particular drummers profiled. There are a lot of incredible drummers out there going unnoticed!

Candace Avery
Boston, MA

Editor's Note: We agree with you. In fact, we started the On The Move column just for this purpose. See page 30.

A THING OR TWO ABOUT MD

Why waste eight pages on a non-musician like Myron Grombacher, who doesn't even know how to tune his own drums, and then use only two pages on J.C. Heard, who after 50 years of playing with the world's greatest musicians could definitely share more musical knowledge than some young hyperactive pounding machine? Stop directing everything towards the 14-year olds, and try to keep MD up to the high standards you started with.

There are so many great drummers you haven't touched yet. Some of them may not be around much longer, so you ought to talk to them while you still have a chance!

Another thing I've noticed is the bad language a lot of the featured artists use! Come on, guys. Remember how influential you are to young kids, and watch your mouths.

In the future, try to remember: Just because somebody is playing with a famous rock band, doesn't mean he's a great (or even decent) musician! I wish you would try to be a little bit more selective.

Ralph Murphy, Jr.
Marina del Ray, CA

STEVE GADD

I thoroughly enjoyed Rick Mattingly's interview with Steve Gadd. Something crucial was brought out why Steve is such an inspiring musician and it so often gets overlooked. That is, the love feeling that he puts into everything he plays.

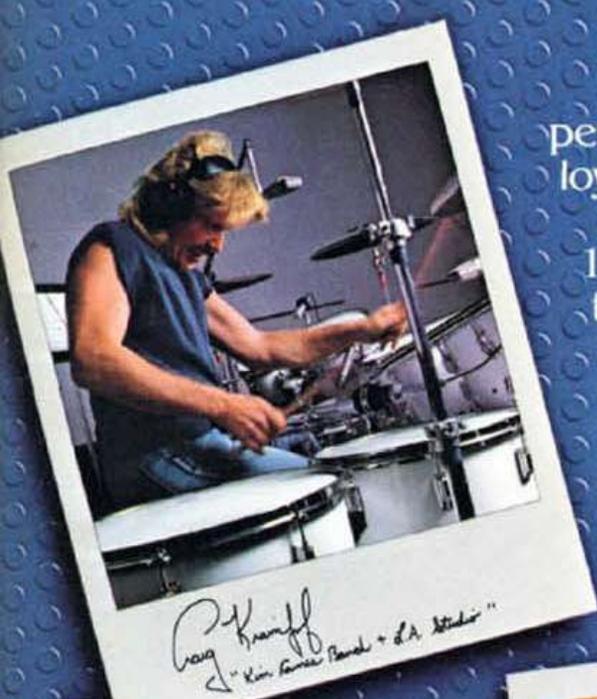
Having had the privilege of working with Steve on the *Up Close* video, I know that he puts his heart into every note. That, I believe, even more than his phenomenal technique or chops, is what has put him in the category of musicians who will be remembered for years to come.

Paul Eric Siegel
Drummers Collective
New York, NY

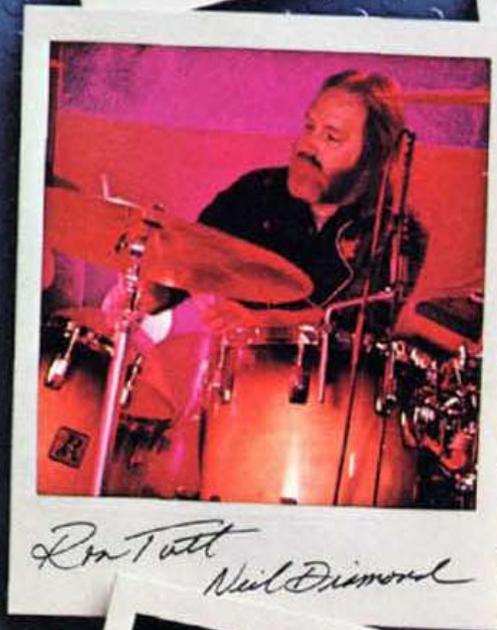
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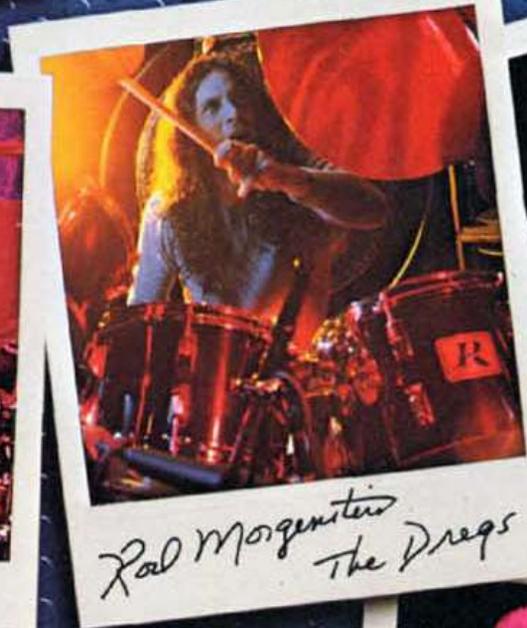
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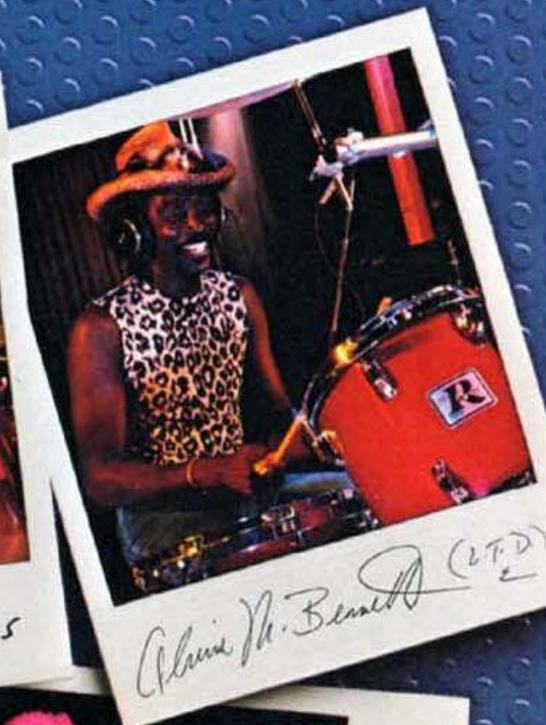
Craig Krampf
"Kin Lane Band - L.A. Studios"



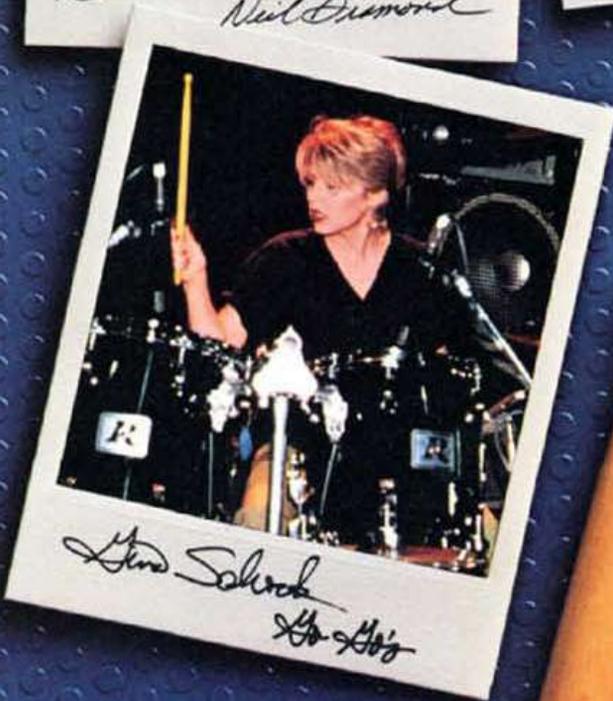
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The Drags



Alvin K. Bennett (L.F.D.)



Linda Schrock
Ho Ho's



Bill Jordan
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ASK A PRO

JAMES BLACK



Photo by Por-Jolly

Q. How did you develop your great brush technique?

Vaughan Vanderplott
Mill Neck, N.Y.

A. *I don't think of the brush as a brush. I think of the brush as another extension of the stick and play them like I'd play sticks. The only difference is that the sound will be softer. If you get hung up on thinking about playing brushes as brushes, you lose a whole bunch of possibilities of moving into the drumset with brushes. If you think of brushes as soft sticks, it works out.*

I listened to Elvin Jones a lot, Max Roach, Philly Joe Jones, Art Blakey and Shelly Manne. I learned my brush technique through trial and error. I got into a woodshed and said, "Alright! I want to play these drums." I played along with records until I felt pretty good with it and people were offering me jobs.

PAUL JAMIESON

Q. How does head thickness on a bottom head affect the sound of a drum?

E. Fistidis
Sacramento, Ca

A. *The thinner the head, i.e. Diplomat, the more crisp and cutting the sound. It's more sensitive to the moving column of air a stroke sets up. The bottom head is pretty much the "tone" head but it has to work hand in hand with the top head. If the top isn't tuned, it doesn't matter what the thickness of the bottom head is. You would use a thicker snare head if you play real hard. I did a snare for Jim Keltner for example. The bottom head was a Diplomat which worked in the studio on a five-minute tune. Live, in concert with Dylan for two hours, he "blew up" the bottom head, literally.*

VINNIE COLAIUTA



Photo by Lissa Wales

Q. How did you develop the ability to play odd groupings and polyrhythms while maintaining a strong time feel? When practicing the Gary Chaffee material with a drum machine, or when recording myself and listening back, I can easily tell what to work on. But while actually playing, my awareness of the time feel is not as strong or confident. What can I do to improve this?

Keith Wald
Santa Clara, CA

A. *The basic thing that everybody has to do first is just count odd groupings and polyrhythms until you can just hear them. I used to play a basic groove in seven or nine, over and over for 20 minutes until it became comfortable. Then I'd take it further by anticipating the downbeat and playing different groupings within one time signature, to where it became second nature and I didn't have to think about counting anymore. Then I superimposed different subdivisions on top of these signatures - half-note triplets, groups of fives, whatever - and began to syncopate them with rests and ties. Anything I could think of to be comfortable and fluent in these signatures is what I probably did. All these signatures have a pulse of their own. So much depends on where you place the backbeat to make it groove real hard. You can almost make it feel comparable to a 4/4 feel. This evolved over a long period of time. Awareness will build up with repetition. You just have to practice until you're over the hump.*

BILL BRUFORD



Photo by Laura Friedman

Q. What brand of drums did you have with Yes? What kind of snare did you have for your solo album *Feels Good to Me*? Was the snare sound on that album exactly how it sounded or was it studio produced?

Milo Sekulovich
New Berlin, WI

A. *In Yes, I started with some second-hand Ludwig drums, moved to Hayman (English company, now defunct, I believe), and then back to a combination of Ludwig and Hayman. The snare drum on *Feels Good to Me* in 1977 was a Ludwig Concert all-metal snare, with Remo Ambassador heads. Of course, the minute you record any drum in a studio it is "studio produced" with artificial echo and the like. But, the sound the microphone heard is certainly the sound on the album.*

YOGI NORTON

Q. What is your time keeping concept?

Dallas Clemont
Fort Worth, TX

A. *One concept I work on is total integration of feet and hands. Independence to the point where I know my limbs will go where and when I want them to. Then I feel free to concentrate on where the time is. I'm not fighting myself. Tap dancing can really help this. No way can you tap in time if all your limbs aren't controlled. Concentrate on how long it takes your hand to get from one place to another because the time is in that space. For instance, bounce a basketball in different tempos to see and feel this hand/eye coordination. In any tempo, I know how long it takes my hand to move from drum to drum or from downstroke to upstroke. Being positioned properly at the drums helps. Like a boxer, you can't deliver a blow if you're off balance or too far away. If you have to rush to get to a crash and rush to get back, you can't help but rush the music or be insensitive. Blindfold yourself or close your eyes and learn where your drums are.*



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PAISTE



Photo by Rick Marlin

Alex Van

To me, 'rock 'n' roll' is just a term that describes something because there is no better word to use. 'Rock 'n' roll' in the '50s meant something completely different from what it means today. Now they try to be a little more specific by using the terms 'new wave,' 'middle of the road' and 'rockabilly.' When you say 'hard rock' or 'acid rock,' all of a sudden, your mind conjures up a very specific idea, but they're just names. To get away from that, Van Halen took the term 'big rock,'" Alex Van Halen explains.

Everything about Van Halen is big, from the success they have had since coming onto the scene in 1977 and their album sales, to their equipment, sound and stage presentation. And let's not forget the fun they have and initiate in their audiences - that's what they're there for. To Alex, music is fun and not work.

"We don't get out there and pretend we're 'artists,' said Alex, whose warmth and good humor make it impossible for a pretentious bone to exist in his body. "We are out there to have a good time and enjoy it with 10,000 of our closest friends."

If you've seen Van Halen live, you know that Alex's statement is sincere. He is the first to admit that there are no hidden meanings to their lyrics, no political or social commentaries suggested and that the band's primary concern is pleasure for all. That's not to say that the members are not concerned with how to put that fun across through their instruments, because certainly the Van Halen brothers, Eddie and Alex, would not be highly acclaimed musicians if that were the case. It definitely goes deeper than fun.

"In rock 'n' roll, there is always this stereotype of the drummer. This goes anywhere from the maniac bashing away behind the drums on the Muppets, to the real guys like Ginger Baker, Keith Moon, or Bill Ward. People think that kind of lifestyle - including the drugs, the booze, staying up all night, the girls - means rock 'n' roll," he pauses, utilizing his talents as a jokester to set up the punch line, "and yeah, it does."

He continues seriously, previewing the essence of the forthcoming interview: "When I was a kid, I'd go out in the audience and just stare at the drummer. The first thing I did was let my hair grow, but suddenly I realized, 'Hey, this isn't right. There's got to be more to it.'"

RF: Who were some of your influences growing up?

AVH: The reason I started playing drums was when I heard the Dave Clark Five and when I saw Ringo getting all the girls in the Beatles' movie. He wasn't exactly the handsomest looking guy, but I figured that if drums could do that for him, I'd give it a shot. Also, we always did have a very heavy musical thing happening. I started out on piano, and went through violin, clarinet, saxophone - you name it, I tried it. I played guitar for about a

year and I had some classical training - flamenco and reading. At the same time, Edward had bought a drumset. To pay for the drums, he had to sell newspapers, and while he was out selling newspapers, I'd chuck the guitar and get on the drums and it was great. Ed would come back and he'd play drums and I'd play guitar. Finally he just realized that we should switch instruments because I could play drums much better than he. So he picked up the guitar and I could just tell by the way he was moving his fingers around that he could do things that I would never be able to do, no matter how hard I practiced. I guess we were right.

RF: How long did you take piano lessons?

AVH: For about 10 or 15 years. The drums were kind of secondary at that point, more like recreation and a good time to get together with the guys at about 12, 13 years old. That was the fun aspect. The work part was practicing piano because the teacher we had was a concert pianist. At that time, we didn't have a whole lot of money and it got to the point where he said, "Look, I'm not even going to charge you kids. You just come here and you practice and you play because I think you have talent." Our teacher thought we had something and was kind of disappointed when we said we didn't want to play piano anymore, at least full time.

RF: When did you finally realize drums was what you wanted to do and it was no longer just recreational?

AVH: I think it just happened very gradually because by the time I was 13, I was working in clubs with my dad, who was a professional musician. They let me sit in and my dad said, "Just keep your head down and nobody will notice that you're only 13."

RF: What kind of music were you playing?

AVH: Jazz. And later on to make a few bucks on the side when the rock thing wasn't happening for us, I worked with my dad doing weddings, Bar Mitzvahs, parties. And this is where you play everything. You play Latin stuff, you play jazz, they tried to play rock 'n' roll, but with an accordion and a saxophone, it's a bit difficult. Finally I made enough money where I could quit the other job I had. We're moving along about five years now. At that point, I was working in a machine shop and working at night playing with the rock band. It was Edward and me, always with two other different guys. When we weren't making money doing that, I'd play with my dad. Finally, when the four of us got together and we started working, I slowly phased out the Bar Mitzvah stuff and the stuff with my dad.

RF: There was a quote from Eddie that said you were doing odd-time stuff when you were really young.

AVH: Yeah, we messed around with it. It's interesting. At a certain point, you have to decide whether you're going to play for musicians, for yourself, or for the audience. Ninety-nine percent of the people do not understand music. They don't have any training and they don't go to school to learn the stuff, so why bore them with it? If you want to put out a special album that sounds like . . . well, I don't want to name any names, go ahead and do it, but don't expect to make a living off it and don't be upset. You know, it's funny - you get these people who write this way-out music which nobody really understands, including the artist, and they're always saying how they're not interested in record sales, but yet when the album is a flop, they say, "Hey, what's the matter with you people? Can't you understand that I've created some art here?" I wish they'd make up their minds.

RF: Do you think the classical orientation affected your musicality as a youngster at all?

AVH: I think the classical aspect was only just to gain the groundwork, the actual foundation of music and to understand how it's put together and what makes it work. Being able to read music obviously helps. It just gave us so much more insight into what's really going on. Then you can take a Beatles song and tear it apart and know how it works, so you can steal it and write your own Beatles song. [laughs] It's definitely a help. I'm not saying we should play classical music, but the basic training was great for us.

RF: What about formal training on drums? Did you have any?

AVH: None. Formal training to me seems like a strange word. Just

by
Robyn
Flans

H
Hal



This photo was taken midway in Alex's experimentation with adding radial horns to his bass drums. He had already eliminated the fourth bass drum, deciding that his right bass drum sounded fine without the extra drum attached to it. A couple of weeks after this photo was taken, Alex removed the front heads from the two main drums. His right bass drum now consists of a single-headed 26 x 28 shell with a radial horn, and his left bass drum is made up of a single-headed 24 x 28 shell with a radial horn, connected to a double-headed 24 x 14 shell, also with a horn.

because you pay somebody, does that mean it's formal training? I've hung around different drummers and they've said, "Hey, try this," or "You're doing this wrong," but as far as going to a school and doing X amount of hours of classwork a day and paying up the butt for it, no, I didn't do that. I gave up on the "formal" lessons after the piano.

RF: So how did you teach yourself?

AVH: Just by listening and by working. When I finally started playing drums full time - which was about when I was 18 - we were playing all the clubs. To be able to work those clubs, you had to be able to play every song that existed, so aside from learning how to arrange songs anywhere from James Brown to Led Zeppe-
lin to the Doobie Brothers, with only bass, drums, guitar and vocal, you had to really manipulate things. That's partially how Van Halen got such a fat sound out of such a small group.

RF: I read that when you were in high school, you arranged a production of *West Side Story* for a 15-piece jazz ensemble.

AVH: Yeah, it was junior college, and it was a major flop.

RF: Where did the arranging knowledge come from?

AVH: I went to school for that. I would have had a degree in music, but I quit after a while because I just wasn't getting anything out of it. It got to a certain point where these intellectuals—and I'm not knocking any intellectuals—would, just for the sake of making a song, in their eyes, interest-

"I THINK THAT A LOT OF PEOPLE TAKE IT TOO SERIOUSLY WHEN THEY GET UP ON STAGE - THEY'RE OUT TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF HISTORY..."

ing, go through a meter change or a key change for no reason at all. Song wise, structurally, the song didn't hold up. Meanwhile, the four of us were writing songs in typical I-IV-V, just simple stuff with a memorable melody. Then these guys would say, "You guys are musical prostitutes. You're writing garbage." At that point, I said, "Alright, I'll take my garbage and peddle it elsewhere." I don't hold any grudges, but I think they're very closed-minded. Count Basie said, "If it sounds good, it is good." If it takes more to get it across, fine. If it takes less, fine. That's where the producer comes in. He has the ear to be able to tell you, "Well, wait a minute guys, you're going overboard on this section. Let's cool it." And then other times, it may need a little extra this or that. That's why I think a lot of bands who are producing them-

selves are digging a hole for themselves. If you spend 24 hours straight on a certain part, there is no way in hell that you're going to leave that off the record. It's going to get in there somehow and it takes that producer to say, "Forget it. It doesn't work."

RF: Were your parents always supportive of music as a career?

AVH: As a career, no. It was always, "Get yourself a job" while we'd be busting our chops playing five or six hours in an evening—five 45-minute sets. And we weren't doing what most club bands do, which is just stand there and play. We'd do the show that we do now on stage for five hours a night. So for us, this is a vacation. Two hours on stage, no prob'. So they'd say, "Get yourself a job. Look at your cousin—he's an accountant."

RF: Generally parents who have been in the profession go one of two ways. They either really support it or they say, "Learn from my mistakes—I've seen it and it can break your heart."

AVH: That's the same thing my dad would have said, but he was always gone working, so he didn't really have the chance. It was a typical story.

We went out and played and played and played. Sure we didn't have any money and sure this broke down and sure there were lousy people we had to work with, such as psuedo managers and club owners. But the audiences were always there and it was a great time. Some people call it paying your dues, but we just called it having fun. We had a good time. I wouldn't have wanted it any different.

RF: Has anything changed now that you're on a larger scale? Was any of the magic lost?

AVH: No, not at all.

RF: Even the intimacy of the club as opposed to a large hall?

AVH: No, not really. It's just on a larger scale. I think some people tend to put a barrier between themselves and the audience. I don't know why they do that, but we try to keep in touch.

RF: You have a reputation for being a hardy partier. How does one maintain that kind of pace and keep the gig intact?

AVH: Rock 'n' roll is a lifestyle. It's a thing where there are no rules. You can play what you want, you can wear what you want, and nobody tells you that you have to have one bass drum, one snare, one rack tom and one floor tom. Even though Louie Bellson wasn't exactly a rock 'n' roller, he had the right attitude—you *play* the music, you don't *work* it, and you don't have to live by the rules. The whole thing of the lifestyle of not having any rules, includes—I hate to use the word "party" because then you think of Foghat—but I think all of Van Halen, including the entourage, are pretty much into having a good time. Of course, you don't want to spread yourself too thin, but as long as you can do the gig, it's okay.

RF: Have you learned a method by which to pace yourself during the show?

AVH: I think basically it's that you know you have to be there for two hours and you know that those lights make the stage about 150 degrees, so you pace yourself. One consideration is the way the set is put together, as far as which songs are more difficult to play than others, where your drum solo is going to be, and when the guitar solo will be so you'll have a few minutes rest. But I'll be honest with you, the actual stopping and starting, such as having a bass or guitar solo, is actually more detrimental because all of a sudden you cool down and it takes a few minutes to get back into it. So I prefer to take a solo out of the last fastest song. There I again, I don't solo too long. I just make it long enough to make it interesting because I think a drummer's place is more in playing with the band and kicking them, as opposed to playing alone for 20 minutes. It's very admirable to see somebody who has practiced eight or ten hours a day, and see him do a fantabulous buzz roll, but again, the people don't understand. Twenty minutes just seems unreasonable to me—it's just a good time for the rest of the band members to take a break while the good old drummer is back there beating the hell out of the drums, indulgent, getting cardiac arrest. A lot of things that these drummers play could be done during a song and it would make the songs much more interesting. I think it's an ego problem a lot of drummers have.

Drums not being a melodic instrument—even though there have been some things done to them where you can make them a little more melodic, such as the Simmons, the *Octobans* and such—it's not really a front-type instrument. At least that's my philosophy. I mean, being a drummer, I would appreciate having the drums out front, but I look at it from the standpoint of the average person who listens and whistles along with a song. He's not going to recognize a Swiss triplet from a flam. I don't want to spend my time doing something just to impress other drummers. It is true, though, that in rock 'n' roll, a drummer figures more prominently in a band than previous styles. While I don't see the drummer as being up front, more attention is paid since there are only usually four people, so the sound *is* more important than in other styles.

RF: You have said that a concert should be an event. How much consideration do you give towards showmanship?

AVH: Showmanship, first of all, should come naturally. It shouldn't be forced and it only comes through constantly playing so that after a while, you're not even aware of it. When Buddy Rich plays, he's a showman. He looks great and I don't think he consciously sits there and says, "Okay, now I gotta do this and do that." Nowadays I see a lot of people who really concentrate heavily on twirling their sticks and so they drop one and miss a beat. A drummer can't move around too much. I mean, I've seen drummers who will get up on the drums, walk around and it's very novel, very good and interesting, but I think it detracts from the music, which is, after all, the most important thing. It's important that it be a unit. It's fine to show off a drum thing here and there, or a gui-

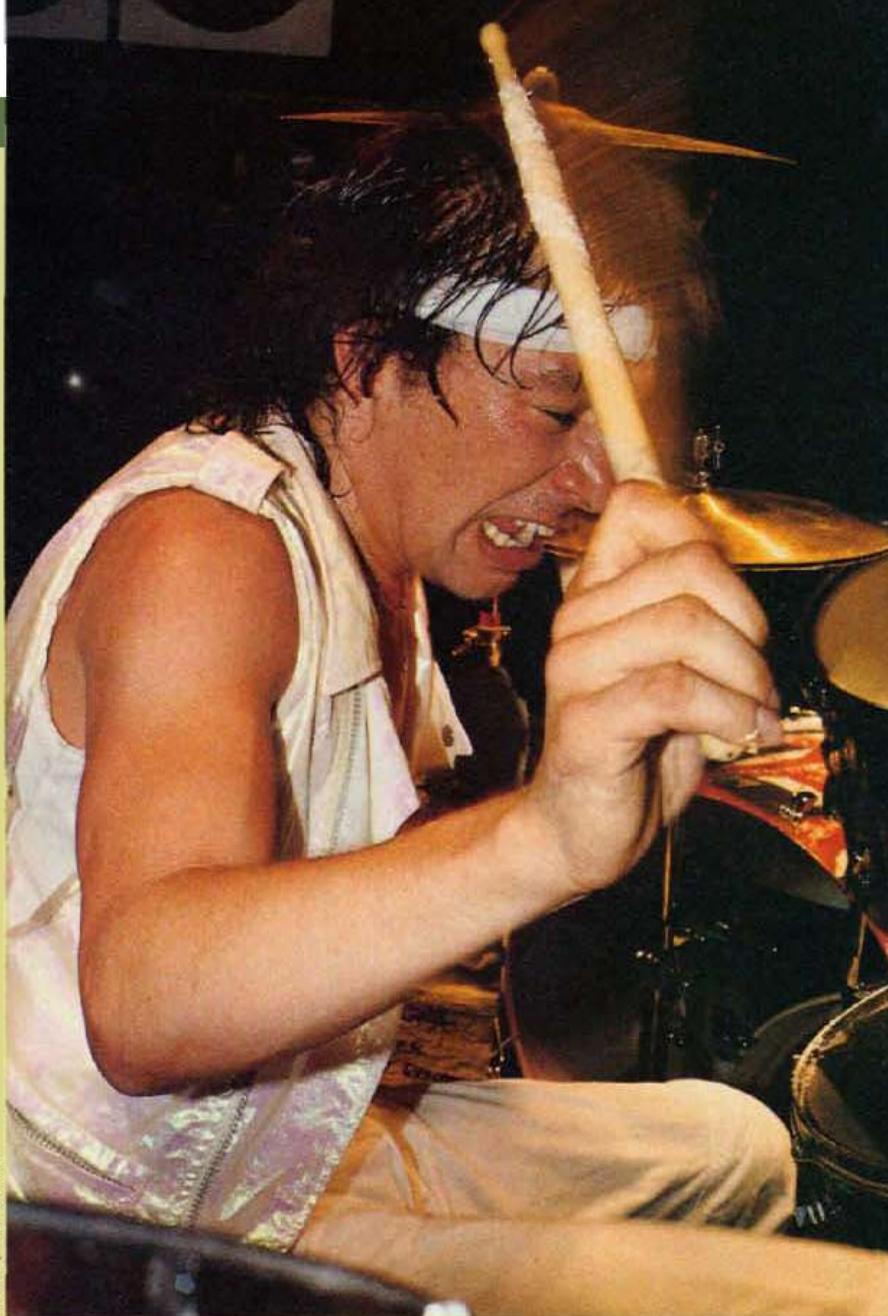


Photo by Rick Malkin

tar or a bass here and there, but the bottom line is that it has to be a unit.

RF: What is required of you as drummer for Van Halen? What is your role in that unit?

AVH: That's a complicated question because it works the same with the guitar and bass. Everything has to flow together; it has to go into a certain direction. There's a beginning, middle and end of a song. If a guy were to do a solo during an entire song, it obviously wouldn't fit. It has to be what's musically appropriate and yet, at the same time, you try to throw in something that's a little bit different—something you may have heard or seen some other person do or maybe something that dawned on you in the middle of a dream. I think the most important thing is to let it flow. If you worry about it too much, then it does sound mechanical. The first priority for a drummer is to keep the meter and if you really start worrying about that, then often it's not happening. I'm sure all drummers can relate to that. That's why they have click tracks in the studios. Ted [Templeman, their



producer] will not allow a click track. It's got to be there naturally and that's the way it goes. And I agree. I think that's what music is—music flows. So what if it slows down a little in the quiet part? Nobody says it has to be right there. You can't slow down while the other guys are still speeding up, but just flow with the songs; flow with the other musicians.

RF: Do you subscribe at all to the bass/drummer relationship theory? It seems like you play off the guitar.

AVH: I don't think the bass/drummer thing makes any sense at all. Obviously, there's an underlying pattern that the bass and the drums play, but as far as throwing in extra stuff or doing fills, I think it's much more interesting to play along with the guitar. Again, when you're in the studio, you're a little bit limited as far as the freedom of really going hog wild and taking a super, super chance because you've got that one take and it's the pure thing. You can edit it and try this here, but that's all tape magic. Live, I think I play a little bit different. I play more open—more stuff that I would normally not do in the studio—because when you're making a song, don't forget, you have to live with that thing for the rest of your life.

RF: When you go offstage, you can say, "Well, tomorrow night I can do that part a little bit better.

AVH: And not just better or worse, but something that might not be appropriate, that might not fit. And again, Ed might not always play the same thing, but that's the beauty of live.

RF: Is there a lot of improvisation on stage?

AVH: Yeah, a lot. Especially when you're on the road for eight months. At first it starts out basically by the rules, but after a while we'll just do a set completely

backwards, or sideways, or we'll throw in a song at the last moment for no reason at all. We opened for the Stones in '81. There were about 100,000 people there and we had the set all written out, what we were going to play and how the segues were going to be. In the middle, Dave just said, "Wait, wait, wait—let's play 'Summertime Blues.'" So we played "Summertime Blues." What the hell.

RF: What is your approach to a new tune?

AVH: Usually Ed comes up with the music and then he'll have a certain idea in mind as to how he would like to hear the percussion. So he'll say, "Why don't you try it this way," and usually it's by name—"Play, it a la so and so." And sure, I'll listen to it.

RF: Who are some of the so and sos?

AVH: [laughs] Well, everybody has a little different style. If I listen to Steve Smith for a couple of days, then for a couple of days I'll play just like him, just to get the feel of it. If I listen to Bonham, I'll sound like him. It's really a chameleon-type thing. When we do a new song, I'll play it a certain way, but the next day, I will have listened to somebody else and I'll play it a little bit different. All of a sudden, in the middle of the song, somebody will say, "Hey, hold on a second. The song sounds different. What's the matter?" I'll just keep my mouth shut. I think it's very advantageous and beneficial to listen to any and all different drumming. Not everybody is an originator. Things have been rehashed and rehashed over and over and you can build on that. For instance, nowadays, when you turn on the radio, almost every single drum sound is identical to the next. There are very few drummers where you can actually hear the difference. I think it's the multitude of different influences that you can finally hone down and you filter through it what you like and apply it to the song that makes it happen.

RF: Sometimes you adopt different styles from different people and suddenly you have developed your own style because you've made it your own.

AVH: Sure. A lot of it comes subconsciously. You don't even know you're doing it. I think a drummer's sound is as important as the way he plays. A lot of times I can recognize a drummer right off the bat by a certain sound somebody has. I think the drum sound is his signature and I can tell, usually, who's who, just by the sound. A lot of times I'm not in agreement with some of the sounds. Russ Kunkel is a great drummer, but I can't stand his snare sound. Sorry Russ. My personal taste is a little liver sound such as Bonham's snare sound. I like Neil Peart's tom sound, but not his kicks and his snare. Don't get me wrong, though.

Anybody who spends his lifetime devoted to music—the suffering, the discipline and all that—is to be commended, but I have different tastes than other people do. Bill Bruford is a great player, but again, I can't stand his snare sound. Usually the snare sound is the signature of the drummer.

RF: Whose do you like?

AVH: Bonham's.

RF: Is that where it ends?

AVH: [laughs] That's it. I like the old ones such as the old Dave Clark Five. It's a great sound for those days with one overhead.

RF: And I wonder if that isn't why it sounded so great.

AVH: Yeah. Lately, now that we have a new studio we're working in, we can try some different stuff, like different miking techniques. It's amazing—everybody has his own technique for miking drums, depending anywhere from what kind of microphones to use, to the placement, to the room he's in, to whether he should be isolated, to whether the other musicians are in the same room as the amplifiers, to temperature control—all of which really makes a difference.

"Sunday Afternoon in the Park" was done with one overhead, one remote, which means the other microphone was at the other end of the room, and that was basically it. The band was in the room and that's why you hear the synthesizer along with the drums. The vibration got picked up by the synthesizer. It was a mistake, but we left it on the record.

RF: You guys don't do a lot of overdubbing.

AVH: No. There's no sense to it. We go in and cut the song once or twice and if it's not happening, we move onto something else because then the magic is lost. If you do it too many times, it gets stale. I recently read an article in *Modern Drummer* about somebody saying you edit the tape, take a little piece from here and put it over here and take the best takes of the two and put it together and that way everybody's happy. *Bullshit!* The person who played that knows that he didn't play it all the way through, which to me, doesn't make any sense. Get it right. If not, go back and practice it. Luckily now, we have the time to be able to mess around since Edward built a studio.

RF: Is the writing really a democratic process? All the records say, "Composed by Van Halen."

AVH: That's because we didn't want to lock ourselves into the problems other bands have, which are, "I wrote this word and you wrote that word and I wrote this guitar lick." Basically, the music is written by Ed and the lyrics are written by Dave, but by the time it's actually on vinyl, it's essentially a four-way deal. That also includes the stage set-up, the way it looks, and the songs we're going to play. It encompasses the entire thing.

RF: Where did the choice of "Big Bad Bill" come from?

AVH: Dave had just bought one of those new portable radios with the little tape recorder. He was testing it at home and picked up this program from, believe it or not, Cincinnati, and it was some kind of weird '40s-type hour. He taped it and we heard the song and it just seemed to click. So we set it up like the old days with one microphone in the room, no separation, no vocal booths, no nothing, and played it and there it was—one take.

RF: I am assuming, when you were younger, you had messed around with brushes, but when was the last time you had seriously played with them?

AVH: That took a couple days of brushing up—ha, ha, ha. It took a couple of days to just get the feel of it again, but basically, if you've done it once, it's like riding a bicycle. I'm no profound player on the brushes and brush technique, but it fit

the song and we said, "Let's go for it." But, I know—you're saying, "Who would think a hard rock band would play 'Big Bad Bill' or 'Happy Trails'?" A sense of humor is very important. If you take yourself too seriously, you find out that you're in the wrong-things. Like I said earlier, you *play* music, you don't *work* it; you don't *compete* it. Just let it flow. It's there for the enjoyment. Not for, "Hey, I'm better than you," or "I can play faster than you." I think that's really a deterrent to young musicians. A lot of times they give up before they really start because they say, "I can't play that fast or do that." Who says you have to play like this guy? It's really a shame because I've heard a lot of good music and raw talent.

RF: That goes back to something that Eddie said in an article about how there is no consideration to the "right way" to do something. He just does what feels right.

AVH: There isn't. And now all of a sudden, people look at Ed and say, "Wow, that's amazing. Why didn't I think of that?" There's nothing wrong with experimenting and trying different things.

RF: On a cover tune, is there any consideration given to how it was originally played?

AVH: Sometimes, but mostly no. First of all, let me say that a lot of people knock us for doing covers. You get the record reviews and they say "Van Halen is really coming to a creative dead end because they now have three cover tunes on their record." If you take the singing off of "Dancing in the Streets," it's nowhere near the song. We could have very easily just bent the lyrical

"... YOU PLAY MUSIC, YOU DONT WORK IT ..."



Photo by Rick Malkin

content, bent the melody just a little bit and made another song, but we felt that was a song we wanted to go for. Plus we felt that Martha and the Vandellas could use the royalties to buy some new lipstick. But this goes back to the same thing: if it sounds good, it *is* good. The old philosophy we have is that if a song is a good song, it remains good. You have to realize that Elvis Presley rarely wrote his own songs, and neither did the Beatles when they first started.

RF: You gave me the example of how you recorded "Sunday Afternoon in the Park." Obviously you don't record like that all the time, so why don't you tell me what you generally do, although I am sure there isn't a general rule of thumb.

AVH: Well, that's the whole point—there is no standard thing. Sometimes we'll do the old technique, one overhead and maybe

just to cover me, we'll put a couple in the bass drums and some close up for the toms. Usually in the studio I record with single heads for the reason of isolation. That way you get a purer tone. The purists will say, "The drum can't resonate unless it has both heads on it," and that routine. The snare is just miked from the top and lately what we've done is put the mic' right against the shell. I'm using a rosewood snare [6 1/2 x 14] now and that's how I got the sound on "Pretty Woman," which gets a much livelier sound. I always record with the kit on a wood something, with wood around it, so it does bounce around a little bit. If you hear the echo, most of it is acoustic, not machine. It makes a difference. I like to keep it generic.

RF: What kind of heads do you use?

AVH: CS black dot because I don't like to switch between the studio and live set-ups because then it sounds different. I know the acoustical problems of the live situation as opposed to the controlled studio situation, but to me, it seems like if this is the drum you recorded it on, then play it that way live.

RF: Doesn't your set-up alter with the situation though?

AVH: No.

RF: Most people with large set-ups live, don't end up recording with them.

AVH: If the song requires only kick, snare and a couple of tom fills, why strip it down? I feel comfortable with what I play. I know where everything is, so why mess with it?

RF: So you feel that you don't always have to use all of it?

AVH: Of course not. Just because it's all there, it doesn't mean you have to smack everything the whole time.

RF: There are a lot of pros and cons to large set-ups. A lot of "purists" criticize the need for all that stuff if you can do it on one tom, one kick and a snare.

AVH: I've heard that argument and I agree and I disagree. When you have a simple set-up, it forces you to be a little more creative, but I think if you don't have the discipline to be creative anyway, why bother with even a simple set-up? Why not go super simple? I admit, a lot of people will take advantage of having the toms and all they do are tom rolls. When you're right, you can play a lot of different patterns and interesting things just on one rack and one floor. Back to Bonham—he did it.

The pros for a large set, obviously, is that you have much more of a tonal range. If you can be creative on a four-piece set and then if you can augment it with different intonations and different sounding drums, such as *Roto-toms* or the Simmons or a double kick and possibly even a second snare to have a floppy snare sound like Russ Kunkel, then I think it can definitely be a plus. Having a large set-up, though, should not be an excuse for just rolling down the toms. I think a lot of people cover their butts by just having a large set and doing that kind of a tom fill. It can work both ways, but a large set can give you so many more possibilities and angles to work from. It shouldn't be used as a crutch, though.

RF: In a lot of what I've read about Van Halen, there is a feeling, which David has even outwardly said, that the band does not take its music seriously. How do you interpret that statement and where do you draw the line between not taking the music seriously, yet taking your playing seriously?

AVH: What Dave meant by that is that we don't write songs about changing the course of history. We don't go into outer space, we don't use double entendres and we don't get into politics. It's more of a reflection of what we

see around us—our experiences. Fortunately enough, there have been enough people who have had the same experiences so they can relate to it.

RF: He made the comment that there are even times that he doesn't care whether he remembers the right words.

AVH: The bottom line, obviously, is that the music has to be there. By saying "not too seriously," we just mean that we take it as it comes. If tomorrow the whole album takes a dive, then what the hell, we'll record another one. I just think that a lot of people take it *too* seriously when they get up on stage—they're out to change the course of history and they get *so serious* that they go off the deep end. If you can take it with a smile, great. It should be really *you* up there. I've seen a lot of people where, when they get offstage, they're completely different people. There's no genuine feel behind it. That's why the timeless performers are the same offstage as they are on, and it shows. Some people put on a funny suit or funny clothes and think, "Hey, I'm going to get a haircut just like this guy, get the guitar that looks like this guy, play like this guy, move like somebody else, how come nothing is happening?" The feel just isn't there. Maybe one album, maybe two, but I think longevity is if you're really into it. We've been together for ten years, even though we've only been recording for five or six.

RF: Let's talk about your elaborate equipment.

AVH: Okay. First, God created the bass drum.

RF: And Alex uses six?

AVH: Well, it is six because the two main ones I play are two joined together. They're actually 28" long, which started because the projection is much better. For some reason, I got a much better punch on stage when I had a longer kick drum. I wasn't really happy with the sound I was getting, so I tried a longer bass drum and it really did make a difference. Each one is a regular 26 x 14, and when you join both of them together, it's 26 x 28. That's my right one. The left one is a 24 x 28 and then on the outside of each of those, I have a 24 x 14. I may end up only using three, because that right bass drum sounds good by itself. The center drums are open; there are no heads on them. The ones on the end do have heads on them. They're all miked and what happens is I get a balance between a double-headed drum and a single-headed one because the air goes through the pipe and forces air into the end ones. It's not as loud as if you would kick it, but it's enough to make a difference, and if you put a mic' to it, it gets a little bit more resonance. There's no dampening of any kind except for a felt strip on the inside ones, and that's it.

RF: When did you start using the kicks joined together?

AVH: That was after the first album was recorded during the hiatus between the recording time and the time we actually went on tour. That was when we had the time to test stuff out on stage and found that the longer bass drum had more projection in a specific direction. Shortly thereafter, Ludwig came out with their longer bass drum.

RF: How are the middle drums connected?

AVH: Just bolted together, air tight. Billy Cobham was the first one who started screwing around with this by using two snare drums and

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FOCUS ON ALEX

The high-energy style of Alex Van Halen is representative of heavy metal drumming at its finest. It's a style characterized by simple rhythmic patterns, played with driving force, intensity and clarity.

The transcriptions below focus on several rhythms from a selection of Van Halen recordings, and offer an inside glimpse at the powerhouse drumming of Alex Van Halen.

Van Halen: "Runnin' With The Devil"

Cym.
S.D.
B.D.

Van Halen: "I'm The One" and "Ice Cream Man."

Note: Both recordings are based on a very fast, very intense shuffle rhythm, a notable Van Halen trademark. Note how Alex keeps it simple on top, while at the same time, propels the band with a driving shuffle feel through the use of double bass drums.

Cym.
S.D.
B.D. 1
B.D. 2

Van Halen II: "D.O.A."

Cym.
S.D.
B.D.

Van Halen II: "Beautiful Girls"

Cym.
S.D.
B.D.

Diver Down: "Hang 'em High"

Here again, notice the interesting use of double bass drums which ignite the bottom end of this tune.

Cym.
S.D.
B.D. 1
B.D. 2

Diver Down: "Pretty Woman" (Intro)

O = Open
C = Closed

Hi-Hat
S.D.
B.D.

Diver Down: "Little Guitars"

Hi-Hat (half open)
S.D.
B.D.

PHILLIP

WILLSON

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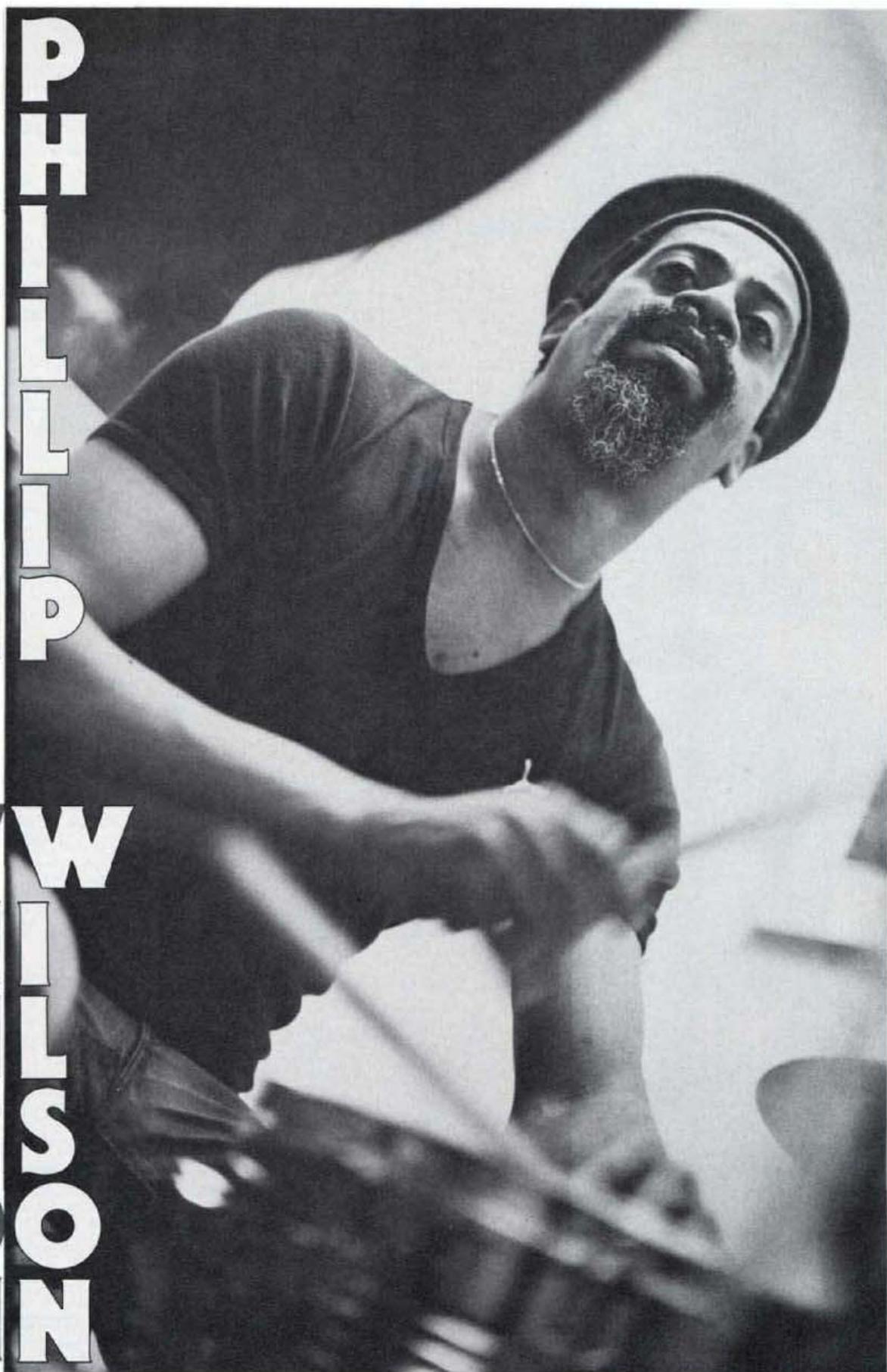


Photo by Jennifer Kotter

Beyond the beats

by Chip Stern

You hardly have time to settle on a bag for Phillip Wilson when he pulls a rabbit out of his hat to confound all your preconceptions and expectations. Just when you've settled into a groove, it up and disappears; watch him turn the beat around . . . looks like he's in trouble, but he still manages to rein it all in. Do you suppose he knew where he was all that time? You can believe that.

Watch him juggle duple and triple meters at pianissimo volumes, when suddenly here comes a triple-fortissimo rim shot aimed right at the solar plexus of the beat, cutting inside the time like a sneaky left hook. Sort of shakes things up, it does. Watching him rollin' and tumblin' around his set like a beserk beer truck—just the other side of what might be called "loose" in polite conversation—you might think that this isn't exactly a precision machine, when here comes a textural blossom so sweet and serene it's like Debussy playing traps.

Muscular and irrepressibly garrulous, Phillip Wilson looks like a street-wise Egyptian Pharaoh, what with his long goatee and a mischievous yet somehow regal demeanor. If pressed for a generalization, I might tell you that Phillip Wilson is a blues drummer, which sure isn't a limiting term, given that the blues is the roots source for just about any form of American music. But . . . how shall we put it? Phillip Wilson's drumming is funky yet sleek; earthy yet artful. It's as if you pulled into a truck stop and the gas jockey were to check your oil, pulling a lace doiley from his overalls to wipe your dipstick.

Since I've been in New York City, Phillip Wilson has been the mainstay of some of the finest jazz improvisers and composers of the past twenty years, including Lester Bowie, Olu Dara & The Okra Orchestra (surely one of the most infectious, ribald jazz/r&b/funk/blues/third world/et al. combos never to record an album), Julius Hemphill, David Murray, James Newton, Oliver Lake and many, many others (including his own band Magic, a

delightful blend of funk and jazz with old friend David Sanborn, and collaborations with bassist Bill Laswell of Material, heard to definite advantage on the latter's latest album Basslines).

What I've always loved about Phillip Wilson is his unpredictability: the subtle nuances and shadings; an ability to steam heat a band with a fat, nasty beat (usually performing on some of the most scabrous drumsets in existence), gospel-like asides, and powerful, salty fills, balanced by a seemingly non-metric sense of colors, shadings, tribal rhythms and pregnant pauses. Indeed, what Phillip Wilson doesn't play is often as significant as what he does, but when he shifts into overdrive, each beat is like a counterpunch.

Still, as strong as Phillip Wilson can play, he places a higher premium on feeling than technique. "I used to be into being dynamic with all those hands things," he explains, "but to have all that hands doesn't really mean anything in and of itself. To hell with that—I don't believe in it. You feel the music with your heart, not with your hands. My approach centers around being sensitive to the way the whole band sounds; to textures and the subtleties of dynamics. That's what music is—period. I mean, I'm trying to get back to the rhythm thing of the '20s, that way of playing a very pronounced top-of-the-beat rhythm, but be laid back at the same time—to incorporate all of the elements that made jazz what it was. Which means bringing the bass drum back, phrasing with it to carry the music, which is what the essence of jazz used to be, and is what rock and funk is today. Phrasing the rhythm so that the accentuations hit you in the body. It's not about the "one" or the "two," but all those cracks in time, like "2-e-and" or "3-and-uh"—I'd like to get people up and moving to jazz again."

Which, given Wilson's experience playing with the likes of Rufus Thomas, Solomon Burke, Muddy Waters and Otis Rush, usually results in a powerful jazz body music.

CS: Can you tell us about your personal background and origins?

PW: I was born September 8, 1941 in St. Louis, Missouri. All of my environment influenced me—totally. My father was an all-around kind of intelligence. My father and mother used to run this thing in St. Louis called the Neighborhood House, which was like a community center. That's where I first found out about people like Langston Hughes, because he used to put on plays all the time; he also played saxophone, and although he wasn't so much a sax player, I learned a lot about music in general. My Daddy, Claude Wilson, was really something. He taught me gymnastics. He held a record in the 100-yard dash;

was captain of the football team; taught arts and crafts; was a Scout leader; did metal work; worked with brass and wood. All of that basketball, football, gymnastics and arts related to music to me, and made me want to play music.

My grandfather played drums on a riverboat, and we were very close, so we talked a lot. He used to tell me about the drums and I was really fascinated by them. Then, when I was around eight, I wanted to play something, and my grandfather got me a violin. I played that for a year, then put it down, and the drums were still there. At that time we stayed in a place called Carr Square Village and they had a little drum corps; no bugles, just this little American Legion Hall thing, and there were drums down there, and the little kids used to go down and play them.

I met this guy over there, and he could play real well, so I pretty much learned what was happening from him about sticks and sticking. I was over there every day. So from then on I was into it. By the time I was 10 I'd picked up a bit, then my mother sent me to drum school—which I hated. They had this school called the Ludwig Music School in downtown St. Louis. And this guy named Joe would give me these lessons which were really boring, because the things he was giving me, like reading 8th notes, I already knew.

So after like two or three lessons I figured I was wasting my time, and I quit, but without telling my mother, because I'd joined a drum and bugle corps called The American Woodsmen, which is where I met Oliver Lake. And I was taught by this guy about my age, who taught me for free, and his name was James Meredith. Outrageous reader. Great all-around drummer. He had control of the drum section in the American Woodsmen, and he would have us practicing eight hours a day—serious.

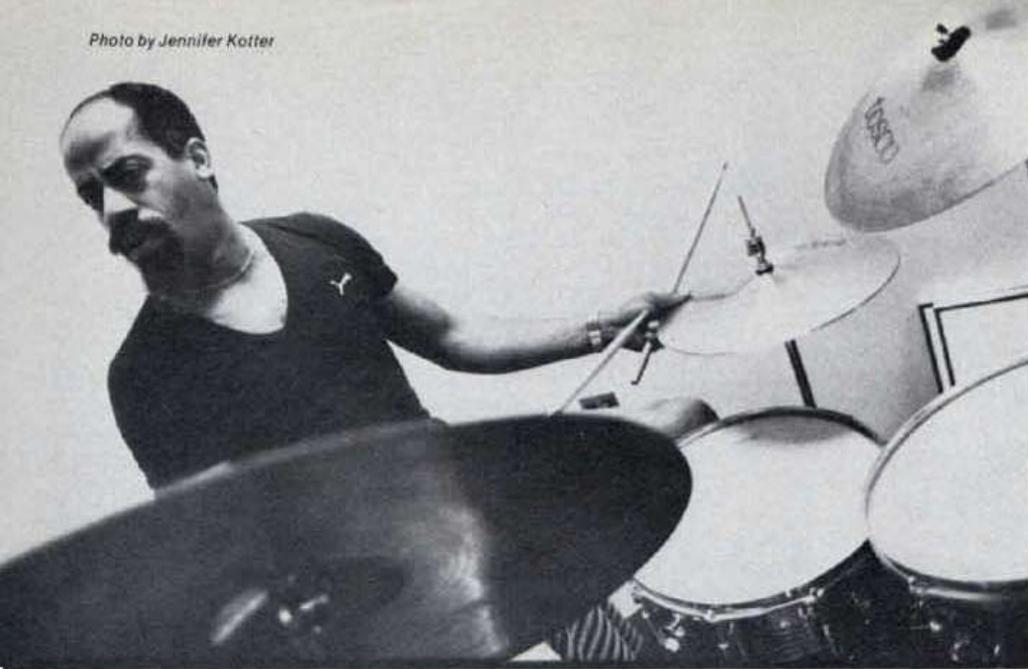
CS: What would you practice?

PW: Double-stroke rolls, single-stroke rolls . . . whatever. And not just playing the drums—during the summer we'd practice three or four hours on the drum line, then another three or four marching, getting our moves and coordination together. In the winter we'd practice a couple of nights a week.

Meredith really had a great influence on me. He really made me aware of holding the sticks, and how to play doubles and singles. And they had this particular way of sticking that he had developed himself; we would enter drum contests, and we would win a lot, because we had so many different styles of playing.

CS: What was so different about his sticking?

PW: It would look like he was playing backwards. And we had to work on his sticking patterns, which gave us the free-



dom to come out of the left or right side without getting hung up. And we had to practice maneuvers—a real precision group—marching as we played. You had to remember steps as you played—how many steps before turning. And then we'd do that with the bugle corps and rhyme that with the music and its subtleties.

So I played in the Woodsmen from grade school through high school, when I met Lester Bowie, and his father taught me; he was a music teacher at the time. Played cornet . . . funny lookin' chug, everybody used to pick on him. But a beautiful person. And he helped me work on my reading in the school band.

Now around the time I was 15, I began to try and swing, to play the whole kit.

CS: You mean up until this time you had been playing snare?

PW: Nothing but snare drum. Right.

CS: Rudimental style?

PW: Totally. Nothing but. He would have us play them inside and out, change up the accents on us to create some new figurations, and have us reading snare parts.

CS: So you got to the point where you wanted to play a kit, but you'd only been playing snare drum. Don't you think that your early grounding playing snare drum might have accounted for your unique approach, which is sort of a throw-back to the old New Orleans style parade drummers? And your unique touch—it's like you were hearing drums as a string instrument.

PW: Yeah. Right. Not playing it like a musclemán. But playing the instrument orchestrally. The drums have a pitch, a timbre, and when you get the timbre of the drum right under someone's note, you'll really get the music happening. *Tone*. And touch. That's the basis of my concept.

CS: So what had you been using until then?

PW: I had a snare drum that my brother-in-law had bought me. And other than

that, they had drums at school that I could use or take home to practice with. Then I got me an iron to use as a sock cymbal on my left, and I got an old bass drum pedal which I'd position against the wall to beat against. Then I'd use a pillow as a ride cymbal, just to see what it felt like to play in that posture.

It really wasn't that hard for me, I'm telling you. I remember there was this guy in the drum corps we used to call Big Stupe; this cat had so much coordination—he was a natural drummer. He was so agile it amazed me. And he was the first one to really make me conscious of separating my limbs—what the purpose of each hand and foot was for.

CS: Didn't you find it difficult making the transition from snare drum to full kit?

PW: It wasn't that hard, because he showed me how to work at it. The main thing he got across to me was the idea of being relaxed: *make yourself a center of energy*. Do things real slow—very slow. Work on your feet the way you do your hands, and play the rudiments with your feet, real slow; keep time with your hands and change the accents between hands and feet.

So I worked on that for a while, and then when I was around 16 I'd gotten it pretty together so that I could play with people and take care of my end. There was this club near me where you could go and sit in,

"I WANTED TO SOUND LIKE A SYMPHONY, LIKE AN ENTIRE ORCHESTRA. SO I BEGAN WORKING ON DIFFERENT ATTACKS AND DYNAMICS; A RISING AND FALLING OF SOUND INSTEAD OF JUST PLAYING GROOVES."

back in the time when they used to have jam sessions, which is really the best format for working your thing out, seeing what works and what don't. So you could play at these sessions all day *and* all night. And all the young cats would go down there and woodshed; me and Lester'd sit in and through that I met this organ player named Don James. He heard me play and just took me on. He'd say, "Come on, man, I've got some work." So I was working every night at this place called The Midtown Bar, and that was really good for my education.

CS: What about school?

PW: Well, I had to do that, but I concentrated all of my energies above and beyond that on my drumming. Stopped running track, everything . . . I'd do my schooling, do my homework, then I'd go make a gig. But I had a lot of energy in those days, I was working, had a car—I could take care of myself.

I worked with Don until I was 18, then I tried to go to college for a year, and I didn't like it. But then I had this offer to come to New York with another organ player, Sam Lazar. Grant Green was in this band, and a tenor player named Miller Brisker who was later with the Supremes. Miller had a tremendous impact on my life and my music. But we went to Chicago first, and played at McKee's Show Lounge with Gene Ammons and Sonny Stitt. So I was an up-and-coming star as they say, and I could play fast and cut the music pretty good.

CS: Playing in all of those organ trios, what sort of grounding did that give you in rhythm? What type of grooves did they want?

PW: Swing. A kind of a laid back shuffle-swing. So I learned a lot about the shuffle; not backbeat kind of shuffle, but an open kind of feeling where you had to anticipate the shuffle thing within the swing, and be ready to put that feeling to the music. If you've ever heard the way organ players play in those kind of groups, they play in

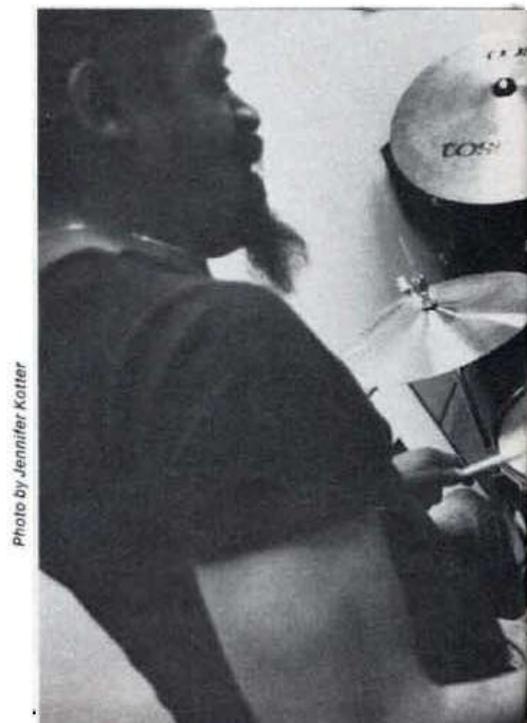


Photo by Jennifer Kotter

the back of the beat mostly—they play behind the beat—so that's usually where the shuffle is. So they could keep a straight beat, and they could sound like a shuffle.

CS: What could you play against that?

PW: I could play a shuffle, I could play rim shots, I could play anything else, but there was a certain feel you had to create. You had to get up under the organ player and push him. For instance, you've heard Jimmy Smith. Well he used to hook up and do rhythms with his drummer, between the snare and the bass drum, and the organ player was always laid back. So sometimes they would do backbeats, and other times they'd do these figures [*sings an intricate boppish melody*]. It was almost like funk but it wasn't funk. It was all of that: swing, bop, funk, blues—with a big beat.

One of the masters of that kind of playing is Donald Bailey, who played with Jimmy Smith for many years. I learned a great deal about that feeling from him, and I used to go and watch him when I was with Sam Lazar. Man, his coordination was impeccable. He would keep time, and create all kinds of funny things against the beat with his right foot and his left hand. It was laid-back funk-swing. That's a style of drumming that's fallen out of style. You don't hear that so much anymore, but I try and use it every chance I get, 'cause there's some music with Olu [Dara] and Lester [Bowie] where that feeling is definitely called for. You can really get to the people with that kind of groove.

CS: Were you still using an iron and pil-lows, or did you have some of your own tubs by now?

PW: I had a set of Slingerland that this guy had given me. Some black *Radio Kings* . . . Marvin Shuck was his name, an organ player. He was a good organist, too. Man, I played in a lot of organ trios. After my period in Chicago with Ammons and Stitt I came to New York and played at Minton's Playhouse, which was an outrageous place for me to find myself after everything I'd come through. I met a lot of



Photo by Jennifer Kotter

people there, and I got a chance to play with Mr. Henry "Red" Alien which was really something else. Unfortunately he was never really documented. He could play, man. But that period in New York—around 1961—was one of the most fantastic periods in my life.

CS: You'd been developing your own style of grooving when you came to New York. Who were the heavy hitters that made a big impression?

PW: There was one drummer in particular: Edgar Bateman. He had something wrong with his leg or he was a hunchback or something, but, man, he had independence that was outrageous. So I used to just watch him when he'd come by to sit in at Minton's, then I'd go home and practice on the bed. I was trying to get to different feels and rhythms. I got to the point where I'd have different approaches to using my feet. How to play if your heel was flat, and how to play when using your toe; trying to get the flexibility of playing off of either heel or toe.

CS: What's the difference between playing off the heel or toe?

PW: From where I'm coming from now, when I'm playing from the heel I can play more laid back, like on a bossa nova. Then sometimes I might go to the toe for another thing. It's according to where I want the feel of the song to go; where I want it to go, or where it's going—period. So I have to sometimes back off the music; if I don't want to push it too hard then I back up and use the heel. It works. And I learned this from Edgar Bateman. Plus, he had all the coordination things together, and he sounded just like a big band drummer, and I wanted to learn that, too.

Then I travelled to Cleveland, and met another drummer, I can't remember his name, but he had this toe thing playing with an organ group, and created this tension between the laid-back and the top-of-the-beat approach. And I used to practice

everyday, whether I was working or not, and when I was rooming on the road with Miller Brisker, he turned me on to a lot of things to shed, mainly reading things. There was this one book that was very helpful to me that I studied from, *Stick Control* by Lawrence Stone, I believe. He gave me some new approaches to accents. He'd have triplets in, say, short, little two-bar phrases, and there'd be different accents falling in some strange places; then you'd get into paradiddles with the accent falling on the back of the beat, front, second beat, third beat, fourth beat. And it would make you feel things differently; I would take them and work them between my hands and feet, sometimes keeping time with my hands, then shifting to my feet.

CS: That's interesting, because it seems like a big part of your style involves all sorts of displaced accents; not accenting the strong beat, but the off-beats.

PW: Yeah, sure, like putting the accent on the middle beat of a triplet. I used to put all my own accents in there—mark off different things for myself—because it felt so awkward all the time.

CS: Did your grandfather ever show you press rolls and stuff?

PW: Press rolls was about all he showed me. That's how they played time in those days, and he sounded just like a buzz saw—could bring it in at any point in the music. That was a big influence on me.

CS: Do you think that his influence with the press rolls, and the violin studies, and the years you spent playing snare drum gave you a different perspective on the kit?

PW: Yeah, plus I played the snare drum in church when I was still young. I had to go to church every Sunday, anyway.

CS: So you played snare drum to keep from falling asleep?

PW: No, no, you didn't fall asleep in the church I went to, man. You didn't want to

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DRUMS AROUND

Japan's

by Stanley Hall

STOMU YAMASH'TA

The stage of the small Georgetown club is crowded with equipment and players. Near the far corner, with a look of intense concentration on his face, Mike Shrieve provides locomotion behind his white Hayman kit. The entire back wall is covered by Patrick Gleeson's synthesizer. Patch cords run wild over the flashing, blinking banks like electronic ivy. Second keyboardist Peter Robinson is elbow-to-elbow with the guitarist and bassist while stage right is occupied by two black percussionists, one on congas, the other covering timbales and hand percussion. The front line is taken up by another guitarist and vocalist Ava Cherry and Jesse Rodin and someone else. And this someone else is the focal point of the whole extravaganza. He's Stomu Yamash'ta, a wild-haired Oriental who's in constant motion, dashing around behind a set of clear, plexiglass Octobans and a serpentine array of concert toms, gongs, sound plates, metal pipes, synthesizers and miscellaneous instruments. His punctuations spark the band as they burn through the frenzied riffs that have the whole place sweating, tense and excited.

They say, "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet," but Yamash'ta has successfully bridged the gap several times before with such works as *Red Buddha Theatre*, *East Wind and GO*. But he's disappeared from sight for four years, only recently emerging with the score to Paul Mazursky's film *The Tempest*. *Modern Drummer* went to Tokyo to find out what Yamash'ta's been up to.

SH: Most American drummers know you through the *Go* project, the first *Go* and *Go Too*. Originally *Go* was supposed to be a three-record project. The third *Go* record was a live recording in Paris, but it wasn't new material. Wasn't there supposed to be a following record?

SY: It's not finished yet. It's still in the works.

SH: What's it about?

SY: Generally, it's about optimism and positive thinking. To be positive, you have to be aggressive in your feelings. If you are pessimistic, you don't do anything, you're passive. But if you do something quite often, you face some kind of trouble. So you have to overcome it. That is also an Eastern strategy. You need a goal.

SH: Before we get too deep into the *Go* story, can you illuminate your background a little? Is it essentially classical?

SY: Yes. I started off on piano at the age of



six or seven. Then I switched to percussion at the age of 10 because I'm too active for the piano. It was a natural thing to change to percussion. Even in childhood, every individual person has a different energy. Some people are very aggressive, movable; some kids are very stable. For a stable person, I think it's easier to go through with the piano, violin, or a melodic instrument. But if you are active, it is much easier to start off with percussion. So that's why I chose it.

From there I went to a conservatory in Kyoto. It's a national music school. I went there for three years and then had three years of junior high school. Afterwards I was going to go to a university conservatory in Tokyo, but I met Saul Goodman, timpanist from the New York Philharmonic. He recommended that I come to Julliard. That was the original plan. I went there and I took lessons from him. I only stayed about five or six months because I didn't like it.

SH: Were you going to Julliard or were you just taking private lessons from Mr. Goodman?

SY: I was in a diploma course, but the main thing I was concerned about was taking lessons from him because everything else—theory, method, everything—I had already learned. So I wasn't too interested in attending normal classes.

I had difficulty practicing because the school was too small and had only two study rooms. There were too many students so I couldn't get in enough practice time. You can't practice much in the apartment either—especially timpani! I was very depressed. Summer was coming and I

was looking for a better environment. New York was too hectic for me. I was looking for a school, but every music school in America was in a city. I found only one outside a city, at Interlochen, Michigan. So that's where I went. I got a full scholarship from them and I stayed two years for special courses. I majored in percussion and orchestral scoring and composition. I was also taking music education courses, to learn about other instruments. It was good for me because I had an opportunity to study every instrument. It helps in orchestrating to know what the ranges are and what techniques are involved. Then I joined the Chicago Chamber Orchestra. I toured throughout America with conductor Thor Johnson. He's the one who gave me encouragement when I was developing my musical direction. I stayed only one season with the orchestra. I wanted to study some other things like jazz and other different kinds of music. The only school I could find that offered it was Berklee. They had all the jazz courses. I went there and stayed a little over a year.

SH: What did you study?

SY: I studied drumset and improvisation with Alan Dawson, which later became very good for my musical foundation, because in classical forms you don't have much improvisation.

SH: What happened after Berklee?

SY: My musical conception got wider because of studying improvisation. Soon after that I became a solo percussionist. Without one or the other I couldn't do it, but with both I became a guest solo percussionist with symphony orchestras. I started with the Chicago Symphony. We did other composers' material; concertos for solo percussion with orchestra.

A couple of years later I was invited to Europe. I had a great career as a solo percussionist in what was essentially a classical situation. I was doing recitals at the same time. I was going back and forth, doing these recitals and concerts in Europe and America. Somehow I should have been satisfied, because I had a great career recording with Deutsche Grammophon and playing with the greatest composers who dedicated many pieces to me, but I had to go forward because I'm still young. I couldn't be a master of percussion because I was too young, so I began to get interested in theatrical form. That's when I started the musical theater company. It started off all Japanese, but later we went

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England's

by Simon Goodwin

RONNIE VERRELL

The few musicians who manage to remain "at the top" for 30 years usually do so by becoming household names as bandleaders or leading stylists in a particular type of music, it is rare indeed to find someone who reached the peak of his profession 30 years ago at the age of 26, and has remained close to that peak ever since, by absorbing new styles as they came along, without losing the enthusiasm and musical values which put him there in the first place. Ronnie Verrell is just such a man. From playing in a top British big band in the 1950s, he went on to work with a formidable array of top names including Tom Jones, Barbra Streisand, Burl Bacharach, Tony Bennett, and jazz talents like Al Cohn, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis and Flip Phillips. Recently his playing has excited millions of TV viewers of all ages, because Ronnie is the human drummer behind the legendary "Animal" of The Muppet Show.

If you ignore a few wrinkles on his face, it would be easy to imagine that you were talking to an energetic 26 year old. At 56, Ronnie looks as fit as ever, his conversation is lively and witty, and he displays a rare talent for mimicry which unfortunately cannot be reproduced on the printed page.

RV: I was always looking at drums in shops and wanting to go in and tap them. I kept on and on until finally my mother bought me a snare drum for Christmas. But within five minutes I was through the skin. That's the truth! She came in and said, "How's it going?" and I turned the drum over so that she couldn't see, I was so broken hearted.

Later, a record I heard on the radio featured some drums. It was an English drummer named Joe Daniels. I started collecting pictures of Joe and then I started failing in my lessons at school. To top it all, my mother took me to see a film called *Hollywood Hotel*. It was Dick Powell and the Benny Goodman Orchestra with Gene Krupa and he did this "Sing, Sing, Sing" number. My God, I nearly passed out with excitement. We had to sit 'round and see the film again. And that was it—completely hooked. I went out and bought Gene Krupa records, and he was my original inspiration.

Then one day I heard a record and there was a short drum break on it. I said, "What's that?", it was so clear and clean; so tasty you could eat it. I'd never heard anything like it. And do you know who it



was?

SG: Buddy Rich?

RV: Right, it was Buddy, and it has been ever since. All these years later it's still Buddy Rich. There never has been a player like him and there never will be.

SG: How did the transition from keen youngster to professional drummer occur?

RV: Somehow, a fellow called Claude Giddens heard about me and asked if I would like to play in his band at the Gillingham Pavilion. That was really how it all started.

SG: That was a professional band?

RV: That's right. My first professional band, and it was heaven. Later, I got an offer to join Cyril Stapleton. I went on the road with his band, did loads of broadcasts, that sort of thing. I was with him for three years and I got the confidence and experience that way. Then I got the offer from Ted Heath. I joined Ted and never looked back.

SG: So you had reached the necessary standard through experience. But weren't the educational opportunities in music in England very limited, particularly for somebody playing drumkit?

RV: You're absolutely right. You see, now the standard has gotten very high in this country. We have American players coming over and we see how the best play. We learn from them. In those days, there was nobody. If you were playing drums, you didn't see many other drummers. Today, there are some good teachers around. It still doesn't rate with America though. I mean there are some wonderful colleges in America. We're still struggling a bit over here, but there is more of an opportunity these days. In those days, everybody here

was self taught.

SG: What about the reading though?

RV: It was hard going, but I gradually learned so that now I can be given a drum part to read, and I'm so familiar with all the different things on arrangements, that there's no problem. You know what to leave out. Some arrangers get so busy with the drum part that if you tried to play it, you'd get a leg wrapped 'round your neck; you wouldn't know what to do. They think we've got eight pairs of hands, you know! They haven't got a clue. You learn what to leave out and what to put in.

I can go into any session now and nothing frightens me. I sometimes don't know who I'm accompanying, or what the part is on a TV show, but it doesn't worry me. They put the part up and you know what to do. It takes years and years of experience of course.

SG: When you joined the Ted Heath band, it was the top band in the country.

RV: Right. Everybody wanted to join Ted Heath because it was such a great band. Once I had done that, I thought I had achieved everything I'd ever wanted. "I'm in the best band in the country." It was the greatest thing ever. I just couldn't wait to get on that stand at night. Once I got used to the band, I couldn't wait. We used to pack them in everywhere we went.

SG: Presumably you were playing the style of music you liked best?

RV: That's right, big band stuff with plenty of beef to it. We played a few commercial numbers, ballads, things like that, but they were such good arrangements that I didn't mind playing them. I enjoyed the ballads just as much as the beefy things.

SG: What about the impact on the Heath band in the States? It was very successful, wasn't it?

RV: Unbelievable, yes! We didn't know what to expect, but it was really great. Mind you we couldn't miss with the tour bill we had: Nat King Cole, The Four Freshmen, June Christie. We packed them in everywhere. We played the first half, and the other people would come on after the intermission.

Our last job on the first tour was Carnegie Hall, the home of all the big band concerts. There were quite a few musicians there, and I was very nervous for the first couple of numbers. But once we heard the reception we got, it really inspired us. I think the band gave one of its best performances ever at that concert in Carnegie

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DRUMS AROUND

Brazil's

by Robin Tolleson

IVAN CONTI

As the Brazilian trio Azymuth finishes its first song at a rare U.S. concert, the audience breaks into enthusiastic applause. The drummer rises quickly and begins clapping back at the crowd, an infectious smile on his face.

Ivan Conti, also known by his nickname *Mamao*, is one of the most highly regarded drummers in Brazil. His band, *Azymuth*, is known throughout South America. *Azymuth* bridges the gap between *Weather Report* and *Bob James* with a slick, rhythmic and catchy instrumental sound.

All three members of *Azymuth* play percussion, and there's quite a bit of it sprinkled through, filling spaces and adding texture to the sound. *Mamao* impresses with his ability to lay back and not over-complicate the rhythm, and his ability to propel a simple beat in an interesting way.

The 36-year-old Conti lives in Rio with his wife and family, and is active in the studios there, having recorded with *Deodato*, *Milton Nascimento*, on the CBS debut of trumpeter *Marcio Montarroyos*, and with international singing star *Gal Costa*, among others. Conti is also a popular choice for movie and TV soundtracks in Brazil. "Where I feel good playing is with *Azymuth*," he says. "But as a professional I have to be open enough to play all kinds of music."

RT: Are people very percussion-conscious in Brazil?

IC: Yes, especially now, they are focusing a lot on percussion. Many songs are using a lot of percussion.

RT: What was your first experience in music?

IC: My first instrument was guitar, then I switched to drums. I've been playing for 20 years. I think every person who wants to be a musician should start by learning harmony.

RT: What made you switch from guitar to drums?

IC: There is more room and mobility with the drums than the guitar. The guitar helped me in writing songs, but I don't play guitar anymore.

RT: Did you start playing the drumset or percussion instruments?

IC: Drumset, and after that percussion. I think you should learn the drums first. The two are very closely related. They are almost the same in my opinion.

RT: What was your first drumset like?

IC: It was a four-piece instrument, with cowhide skins. There is no such thing anymore.



RT: I understand that you do a lot of studio work in Brazil, besides playing with *Azymuth*.

IC: I've played with almost everybody down there. *Gal Costa*, who is very well-known. *Milton Nascimento*. *Simone*; she's probably not known here, but is well-known there. I play with orchestras too, on TV. I worked a couple years back with *Paul Mauriat*. I really enjoy his music from a technical standpoint. It's very correct. I am a great admirer of his.

RT: So you do know how to read music.

IC: Yeah, the industry has forced me to. I like the idea of the conditioning of reading. Just the fact that if you see "da do da" written, then you have to do "da do da."

RT: Did you go to school to learn to read?

IC: I studied with two private teachers, and also took a correspondence course from *Berklee School of Music*. I wanted to get a scholarship to *Berklee*, but it just didn't work out. I think I learned the most just working with music.

RT: Are you comfortable in the studio reading music?

IC: I feel somehow better when I don't have to read. When I'm involved in the music a lot, then I like to read it. But when it's something I'm not really part of, then I'd rather just play by ear. It depends on how creative the music is. I definitely enjoy it more when I've got room to put myself out naturally instead of having to read. But if the music is good, if there's room, if it feels good, it really doesn't matter to me. I get into it just as easy.

RT: Did you study the rudiments?

IC: I did study some and sometimes still do. I think one should keep on studying,

especially to improve technique.

RT: Do you still practice a lot?

IC: I have a little studio outside my house, and every time I feel like playing, I lock myself in and play.

RT: You are basically a right-handed drummer, aren't you?

IC: At home I play with the left hand, but out in the world I play with the right. I am always trying to get the left hand to play as well as the right. If you can improve the left hand it makes the whole thing much easier, but I don't think I'm ever going to get them even.

RT: I understand you have quite a collection of *Gene Krupa* albums.

IC: I am a *Krupa* freak. I have almost all his records. He was a big influence on my career. Also *Buddy Rich*, *Max Roach*, *Joe Morello*, *Steve Gadd*, and *Billy Cobham*. There are so many.

RT: Are you still being influenced?

IC: It's possible that I am being influenced by someone, but at this point in my experience, I've got my own personality, musically speaking. But there are idols all the time. There are a lot of Brazilian drummers that I really like. *Bituca*, who plays on TV *Globo* in Brazil. *Wilson Das Neves*, who plays with *Elizeth Cardozo*. *Roberto Silva*, who played with *Milton Nascimento*. *Elcio Milito* has fantastic brushwork.

RT: There is a drummer with the band *Viva Brazil* who is very good.

IC: I know *Rubinho*, and I identify myself with that kind of playing. *Rubinho* grooves.

RT: How much do you work with *Gal Costa*?

IC: I've worked with her a lot onstage, this last year. Probably three months. I went with her to *Israel*, too. That's a totally different type of work from *Azymuth*. I've recorded with her also. It's good practice playing with a big band like that. There's a lot of punch, and rhythmic certainty playing in that context. *Lincoln Olivetti* does the arranging, and I like his concepts very much.

RT: Isn't it true that most all the different parts of Latin America have their own rhythms?

IC: Yeah, there are totally different folklores from area to area, even within a country. Especially right now, there are a lot of musicians out in the sticks in Brazil. There's a lot happening out in the sticks in Brazil. It's always a pair of musicians. *Quinteto*

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Canada's

by John Dranchak

STEVE NEGUS

JD: What type of music were you listening to growing up?

SN: Top-40 and rock 'n' roll.

JD: More Canadian artists, I assume?

SN: Actually, it was mainly British artists. It was the time of the early Beatles, The Dave Clark Five, and the whole British invasion.

JD: Did you consciously decide you were going to make music your career?

SN: I think I made a mental commitment. I was playing in a '50s rock 'n' roll band. We played very authentic '50s rock 'n' roll, so it was straight fours on the bass drum. Very simple stuff. I was with that band for two years. It was a very good show band, almost like a Las Vegas show band; visuals and all sorts of show sets. It was toward the end of that, that I realized I really wanted to get more into playing. I wanted to be a good player instead of just in a band. I left that band, and decided to put an r&b band together. That was a big turning point.

JD: Who were your influences?

SN: I'd say Garibaldi was definitely an influence on me. And to some extent, Bonham. I think listening to Bernard Purdie was a bit of an influence too, because he's the master of the "pocket." He can put a groove in a pocket and leave it there all day and it just bubbles and bounces. But, it stays right in the slot.

JD: What do you see your role in Saga as?

SN: I look at the structure of the bottom end being body music. The bass and the drums, almost in a disco kind of thing. Something that makes you want to move your body. I think kids today want to hear something they can bounce to, and that's why we've always sort of stayed away from the progressive rock category, though we like to think of ourselves as a "progressive band."

I approach it almost like an orchestra, where there are definite parts that you play. With all of the little intricate melodies and counter-melodies, and all the things that are going on, each one is dependent on the other. If you take one away, it destroys the other.

JD: What is your current equipment setup?

SN: Well, I've used the double bass for seven or eight years. I find I'm using it less these days, but I still like it for little shots and things. It's an all-Ludwig kit. There are 8", 10", 12" 13" and 14" toms, a 16" floor tom and two 22" bass drums. There's a brand new snare drum that I'm using that I really like. It's the new Ludwig 8" deep,



slotted snare drum which has a slot all the way around the middle. When I went in to get my kit built by Ludwig, they showed me this snare drum. I liked the initial sound of it, but I found it didn't have quite enough snap from the snares. So, I got them to take off the regular strainer and to put on a *Super-Sensitive* strainer, and now it really kicks.

JD: Are you using wire snares on the bottom?

SN: Yes, it's the whole standard Ludwig *Super-Sensitive* mechanism. A big problem when you get into bigger sized snare drums is you get the depth, but you lose a bit of definition. So long as you're laying into it, it's there, but as soon as you do anything double strokish, it gets mushy. This drum doesn't.

JD: Your drums are wide open, aren't they?

SN: Yeah, I'm a believer in that. For years I liked that big, open sound, and when I'd go into the studio, the engineers would stick gaffers tape over the drums. It used to drive me nuts, because it sounded like a cardboard box. I've never liked that kind of drum sound.

I like a lot of crack and even more so these days. I'm definitely tuning my drums slightly higher than I used to, as well. I mean, a drum should be open. If you've got to start sticking tape on it, I think there's something wrong.

JD: Exactly what cymbals are you using?

SN: Paiste. They are almost all 2002's. A 22" heavy ride, 20" rock, and a 20" concert crash which I really like. It's on my left side, and normally there's a 16" on the front, but there's a 15" now because I

cracked the 16".

JD: Have you had any problems cracking cymbals in the past?

SN: No. Actually, that's the first cymbal I've cracked in two years. I was on the Jethro Tull tour and they didn't have a 16" for me at the time, so I took a 15". I also have 2002 14" rock hi-hats. On the Simmons kit I'm using a 20" China type, and I love that because it works beautifully with the actual Simmons sounds.

JD: You were one of the first people in North America to use the Simmons kit.

SN: That's true. I'd been into electronic drums for a while, but nobody had really built anything up until that point that really did what I wanted it to do. So, I went to see the people from Simmons and they were just in the initial stages of putting the company together. I sat down with them, and even though they didn't know anything about me, we talked for a while. I bought a kit and I used it in rehearsal for three months, and in the studio. Then, I started touring Europe with it, so they were using me as a testing ground through Europe, just to see how it was going to hold up on the road, and they made some slight changes in the design.

JD: How do you adjust to the change of going from the give of a plastic drum head to the hard playing surface of the Simmons?

SN: It takes a little getting used to. Also, the Simmons kit is set up really different because it has to fit under my riser, which means nothing can be over four feet high. With the Simmons, I have to play everything really low, but it doesn't take a lot of adjustment. As for the feel, well, obviously you can't play them as hard because it's a surface that doesn't give. So, if you really lay into them, there are two things that are going to give: the stick is one, and your hand is the other. Other than that, I still do lay into them, but you don't have to punch the sound out, because it's being created electronically. So, they're actually easier to play.

They respond really quick, but the big difference is when you get down to the low tom sounds. On an acoustic kit, you've got to punch a bigger drum, like a floor tom, harder to get the sound out of it. Harder than you do, say, a little rack tom. A smaller head will respond quicker than a big one. On the Simmons kit, you don't have that problem. Basically, you've got the floor tom, the lower section, respond-

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DRUMS AROUND

Israel's

by Joseph Ben-Dor

ARON KAMINSKI



Aron Kaminski has been Israel's number-one drummer for more than 25 years. He is popular with all generations due to the variety of shows he has appeared on, and his extensive work as a studio drummer. His work has included backing many of Israel's top singers and jazz artists. Like many drummers, he started at an early age playing pots and pans.

"I got into drums when I was 19. While I was in the army somebody recommended me to a guy who was looking for a drummer. Because the salary was twice as high as that in the army, I immediately borrowed money from my father, bought a very cheap set of drums and set out to work."

Although he took a few lessons from Mr. Burla, who at the time, was the most prominent drummer around, Aron is basically a self-taught drummer. "The truth is that I didn't learn much from him because I already knew so much that I had learned by myself. He just showed me how to hold the sticks and a few beats, but most of my drumming skill came to me naturally."

Kaminski's introduction to jazz was through pianist Zigi Scarnik, who he met in a night club where Zigi's trio played. "If I ever had a teacher, it was him. I've learned so much just from playing in a piano and drum situation. There are a lot of things Zigi taught me which I accepted and understood only many years later. He was younger than me, a gifted musician, and our musical friendship continued until he died at the age of 24."

After service with the Military Entertainment Band, Aron had to devote his time to the family factory. Six years later he decided to become a professional musician. At the age of 26 he was a member of a few jazz bands.

"The Mel Keller Quartet in which I played was also a great experience for me. Saxophonist Mel Keller is known as the 'father' of jazz in Israel. At that time we used to play half the show and the other half was dedicated to a lecture Mel gave on

the history and meaning of jazz. During that period I became very popular and in demand for various recordings. Because I had very little choice, I learned to read music by myself and with some help from other musicians. In 1970 I toured Latin America. I got to know the typical Latin instruments and their different rhythms. Up until that time, no one in Israel used them and I started to use them on recordings. Later I came to the USA with recommendation letters from CBS in Israel, and I learned a lot just from visiting studios. I met Hal Blaine, who at the time, was the most in-demand studio drummer and I simply went with him to all kinds of recording sessions. In New York I met Mel Lewis and saw some of his recording dates. A very educational experience for me was seeing live jazz in New York. At that time there still weren't any jazz groups visiting Israel. Seeing others play is a must for your learning experience."

The '60s were frustrating for Kaminski because although he was known as the "Israeli Ringo Starr," Aron always preferred the jazz drummers. "I have respect for Ringo, but during that period, I listened to Kenny Clarke, Max Roach, Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones and later to Tony Williams and Jack DeJohnette. I thought they all did better things than Ringo."

At the end of 1970, saxophonist Roman Konzman came to Israel from the USSR. Later, the two formed The Platina which

soon became Israel's number-one jazz band and the only one to appear at Avery Fisher Hall in New York during the Newport Jazz Festival.

"The reactions to our band were good, especially from musicians. The arrangements were all originals by Konzman. Since then I've played with many great jazz players who came to Israel, like Chick Corea, Stan Getz and Joanne Brackeen."

The highlight of his career came in 1979 when he was asked by the musical manager of the Manhattan Transfer to join them on two tours. "I got a call from him and three days later I was in London. Playing in that kind of a professional show was a lot different from anything I'd ever done in a small place like Israel. I was sure I was supposed to play everything very quiet, almost like in a night club, but suddenly it was big stages and I had to play very loud with a lot of energy. This really was a great professional experience for me."

Today, Aron concentrates mainly on teaching in his new School for Drummers. "Through the years I've developed a certain way in which I give my students all I learned without having to repeat my own mistakes. I teach groups of five, and every student has his own set. At first, I was afraid of teaching groups, but now I find it very successful because it creates a healthy, competitive atmosphere among the students. They all learn to work as a team when keeping time, or as individuals when everyone has his own part to read."

As for equipment, Aron uses Rogers Drums and Halilit, made in Israel. "I do all kinds of jobs so I have many combinations of sets and cymbals. I find it interesting to change set-ups due to the musical situation, or to my mood that day."

How does Aron Kaminski see his future? "I'm dedicating most of my time to the school. I work less in the studios, except for special recordings with a more jazzy feel or Latin American flavor. I play jazz twice a week and I hope to go on doing exactly that."



Denmark's

by David Samuels

ALEX KIEL

DS: What kind of exposure did you have to jazz growing up in Denmark right after World War II?

AR: My father had jazz records, especially Fats Waller with Zutty Singleton on drums. I was listening to those from a very early age and I liked them a lot.

DS: Did you study formally with anyone?

AR: Yes, with Borg Rits Anderson, a timpani player in Copenhagen's Radio Symphony Orchestra.

DS: How old were you when you got your first drumset?

AR: I was 14 years old. It was a Danish-built snare drum and a big bass drum, which I filled up with paper, and a cymbal. The hi-hat cymbals, if I hit them too hard with my foot, would go backwards and bend. It was rather difficult, but my parents didn't have much money after the war.

DS: Were there many people, as you were growing up, that were also into jazz?

AR: One of the top policemen in Denmark was playing drums and he told me about this teacher who I'm very glad I went to. I didn't get to hear a lot of jazz when I was starting out because I wasn't allowed, though I did hear Krupa. And I'd hear rumors about the big dance halls in Copenhagen, especially the Tivoli Gardens. Right after the war there was a lot of big band influence from the United States. But there were age limits, and there was no television. I listened to a lot of records and radio.

Copenhagen was always a stop for a lot of the great jazz players. The Club Monmartre has been there for a long time. The first time I actually got into Monmartre, and got to hear some real good music, was because I donated my first, fairly good drumset to the club for the drummer who was coming in to play. Because of that, I was allowed to sit and listen for the first set every night. Eventually, as time went on, I more or less became the house drummer at Monmartre.

After a while, I was playing with two different swing bands and doing a lot of work around Denmark. Finally, I met Niels Orsted Pederson while I was at his parents' house playing with one of his older brothers who played trumpet. We had this half bebop, half swing band. This little kid would come over and ask me if I would like to play with him. I was really shocked, because he was playing like Art Blakey records; the melody line on bass, which was unheard of at that point. Even Oscar Pettiford, who was living in Copenhagen, had a hard time playing all those melody lines. But this little kid was just incredible. That was Niels Orsted.



Actually, there was a lot of jazz going on. There was no pop or rock 'n' roll. It simply didn't exist. And there were a lot of jazz clubs, though none were supported, of course. They were all private.

DS: Aside from Krupa and Zutty Singleton, what other drummers did you listen to?

AR: Well, there was William Shipford, a Danish drummer who Getz had around in Europe. He was the only one. There was really no jazz education going on. There still isn't, actually. You've got to get a private teacher and that's very difficult. But they are working on getting jazz into the Copenhagen Conservatory. That's one thing I've noticed about the U.S. I've seen in Boston, when Elvin Jones showed up, the classical professors came down and were really digging Elvin.

DS: Were there American musicians that you listened to that you really liked?

AR: Of course, there was Louis Armstrong, and that was with a German drummer that I've never heard about since. And then there were the films; *The Gene Krupa Story*, and *The Benny Goodman Story*.

My classical teacher loved a lot of Shelly Manne's drumming so he was completely in agreement with me becoming a jazz drummer, which was very good, otherwise, it could have turned out differently. Later on, I heard Roy Haynes playing with Gary Burton and I must admit that was to my taste. The best rock 'n' roll drummer.

DS: Rock 'n' roll drummer?

AR: His jazz is outstanding; that we all know. But he was sitting there playing his own rock 'n' roll and a lot of the drummers in Copenhagen said, "What is this?" It wasn't stiff at all. It was great. One nice, big painting.

DS: There was a period where you did a lot of playing with Americans who came to Europe. What was that period like and who were some of the players you worked with?

AR: Ben Webster had been living there and I worked a lot with him. Dexter Gordon would come in every summer and play for three months at Monmartre. And Archie Shepp; he was there a lot. Johnny Griffin was living in Europe at that time, but he mostly used Art Taylor. He preferred him all the time.

DS: You played with Getz as well.

AR: Stan Getz, yeah. Also, recently in Europe—Germany especially. Roland Kirk would be there many times for a long period and I would play with him.

I've played with Bill Evans, Eddie Gomez, Yusef Lateef, Wayne Shorter and Freddie Hubbard. That was really a kick. He's a very strong player so there would be no limits, you know.

Then there was a period where I got a little tired of playing jazz. It had become very complex, especially when Tony Williams came on the scene. He was more or less straight ahead, but very fast and very competent. So I formed a rock group. I started listening to The Who and a lot of the English groups. But I started to find out that I couldn't play it because phrasing jazz and phrasing completely straight is very different. I hear jazz musicians that want to play straight rock, but they really can't.

DS: You also went to Berklee at one point.

AR: Yeah, that was in '65. I studied for three months with Alan Dawson. I didn't like Boston as a city. I like New York. I still like it very much. There was so much going on. There were a lot of clubs. You walked around and there would be jazz clubs all over the place.

I was there again in the early '70s, but there was very little jazz activity going on. We went to Washington, D.C. and the people were shocked that we were playing jazz. They were saying, "We love jazz so much and there isn't that much jazz around. How come you play so good?" We'd say, "Well, we learned it from over here; from your own countrymen. We

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Frank Beard is a friendly, down-home sort of guy who makes you feel very comfortable talking with him. Even though he is a member of ZZ Top, a major rock band selling into the millions in records and concert tours, there is no pretentious attitude intruding on his just-folks manner.

In his soft, Texas drawl, he modestly tends to downplay his drumming abilities. This is something that Beard's fans would vehemently disagree with. His rock-solid drumming provides the foundation from which the band launches some of the best rock to come out of the land of chili and sagebrush.

ZZ Top has been around for 14 years. Hailing from Texas, the cowboy, boogie blues band conquered the Lone Star State before moving on to introduce the rest of the world to their Texas style.

In the early days, audiences expected to hear country/western music when the band, consisting of Dusty Hill on bass, Billy Gibbons on guitar and vocals, and Beard on drums, would take to the stage in cowboy hats and boots. Now, with their eighth album, Eliminator, gracing the charts and the three-man band playing to packed houses around the country, no one mistakes the hard-driving rock 'n' roll of ZZ Top. This is not a power trio, but simply a well-integrated musical unit playing straight-forward, hard-driv-

ing music. This is music for the masses. No esoterica, just good, clean rock 'n' roll. These guys don't pull any punches.

Sitting behind his drumset, Beard provides a solid beat for the band. He plays economically with no unnecessary fancy frills. This is not to imply a lack of inventiveness, just that Beard knows what to play and when to play it. He doesn't get in the way of the music. No one in the band is adopting a rock-hero stance. They play good music for good times. This band respects their fans and is not interested in pretense.

The "Little Ol' Band From Texas" likes to have fun; the three-some doesn't like to take themselves too seriously. They are there to entertain and hope that their audiences have as much fun as the band does.

Their lyrics reflect their sense of humor and their off-stage manner is refreshing and a bit off-the-wall. Their laugh-along-with-me attitude is catching.

In 1973, the band hit big with their first platinum selling LP, Tres Hombres. This album included the hit single, "Le Grange." This was followed in 1975 by another platinum seller, Fandango, which featured another smash single, "Tush."

In '76, the band embarked on their "World Wide Texas Tour"

FRANK BEARD'S

supporting their *Tejas* album. This tour featured live buffalo and vultures along with cactus, sagebrush, tumbteweeds and other Texas goodies. It was quite an extravaganza, and when the tour was completed, the band disappeared for three years. They re-emerged with *Deguello* which featured, among other things, the debut of Billy, Dusty and Frank as the Lone Wolf Horns.

SA: How did you get started in music? What sparked your interest?

FB: Well, like so many people in the '60s, the Beatles came along and I saw them on Ed Sullivan. I think I was 13, and I decided that music would be a good way to get some chicks. So, I just took it up.

SA: Did you ever have formal training of any kind?

FB: No. Later, after I'd been playing about ten years, I took lessons for about six months when we had a little time. I went down and took some lessons in Houston, but really, I would say I was just a self-taught musician.

SA: Who would you say influenced you?

FB: In the beginning, the Englishers. You know, all of those guys; probably everybody I've ever heard a little bit. I loved listening to Ringo Starr because the things he did fit that music—it wasn't flashy. Then in the same evening, I'd turn over and listen to Ginger Baker or listen to Jimi Hendrix and his band. But, just everyone. I would say that it seems that I preferred the real tasty licks as opposed to the more flashy stuff.

So, I guess that goes back to originally liking the Beatles. Of course, I played in a band that only did Beatles material. We played in a club for about a year and it was mandatory that everything was precise.

SA: It's a good thing that you liked the Beatles so much, but didn't it get a bit boring after a while?

FB: Oh, I really liked it, though. Just producing that music was great, especially when you're like ... I think we were 16 at the time and it was really great.

SA: You were still in high school at that point. Was that your first band?

TEXAS ROCK by Susan Alexander

FB: Well, it was my first working band. Of course, I went through a couple that played in the high school talent shows and that kind of stuff, where the guitar players knew how to play "Louie, Louie" and "Wine, Wine, Wine."

SA: I remember those days well. What did you do after these bands?

FB: Let's see ... when I was 16, I went over to Fort Worth, Texas and there was this sort of strip club. I went over there one night and Dusty Hill and his brother, Rocky, were the featured act there. I walked in and I just flipped. I said, "This is my place." So, I managed to get a job with them and we formed the American Blues. We had blue hair.

SA: Blue hair?

FB: Oh, yeah. This was in like '66 and the psychedelic era was just ushering into Texas at the time. So, we dyed our hair blue and we played psychedelic music and stayed working. There were three of these cellar clubs. There was one in Dallas, one in Fort Worth and one in Houston and we'd do the little circuit two weeks at each place. I did that for about maybe a year and a half. I think we worked six hours a night, six nights a week.

So, basically, where I learned how to play was on stage. I had to

quit high school and the whole bit. The American Blues disbanded in late '68 and I did some road work with a few bands. You know, just more or less the ABC circuit as it was called.

SA: ABC?

FB: This ABC booking agency. We'd play two weeks in Terre Haute, Indiana and two weeks in Green Bay, Wisconsin; different bars. I did that up until the middle of '69 and kind of got burned out on that. I think we were making \$200 apiece per week. I came back to Texas and heard about a guitar player down in Houston. So I loaded up all of my drums and all of my belongings into a Volkswagen and drove down to Houston and met Billy and we formed. There was another bass player at the time. The three of us started ZZ Top. Then that bass player quit and I told Billy, "I've worked with this other guy for four or five years and he's pretty good. Why don't we call him down," and so we got Dusty.

SA: How did you come up with the name ZZ Top?

FB: Ah, B. B. King was taken [laughs]. We just wanted a name that sounded like maybe some crusty old blues player. In the beginning, when we put that first record out, we would do a local TV show like in Houston and it was a black show. When we showed up, they were totally floored because they thought that we were a black band.

SA: Was that the first time you had ever recorded?

FB: No. The American Blues did two albums. One was on the Karma label which was a local Dallas label, and one was on Universal; the old UNI label. They're semi collectors' items now and I think there are maybe 2,000 or 5,000 of each pressed. They were really localized operations. But, I hear that they've been bootlegging some of those now. Somebody's got a hold of the tapes and is re-releasing them. I'd love to have a copy. I don't have a copy of either one. They're called, *American Blues Do Their Thing* and *American Blues Is Here*. This was definitely in the psychedelic era.

SA: I read a quote of yours somewhere where you said that you only know three beats.

FB: [Laughs] Yeah, I've had to live with that. I don't know why I

said that, but basically, it's true. In the rock 'n' roll format, you play your 4/4 beats—which I call the monkey beat—and shuffles, and cut shuffles, and that's about all that this band ever wants to do. I know other beats. I can play the 5/4 and all of that, but I just don't get to. [Laughs] I can play "Satin Doll."

SA: Tell me about the writing process that you go through when the three of you get together.

FB: Well, basically what we do now, and what we've done since the formation of the band, is we get together and play, and something will happen. We'll just start doing this, that or the other thing. It's the three of us adding ideas and commenting on ideas and forming the tunes.

SA: How do you mike your drums for the studio? They really sound good and clear.

FB: I use Shure SM57's on all the tom-toms and I top mike them. I use both heads. I put *Hydraulic* heads on the tops and then I use clear *Ambassadors* on the bottom head until I get to the floor toms, and then I use *Hydraulics* on both sides because when you get to the larger heads, you've got a lot of displacement and a lot of rattle that'll occur. So, I'll use the *Hydraulics*; kind of dampen everything down and it'll give this warmer tone than say a coated

head or a clear plastic head.

I think I use some Sennheiser 441's on the kick drums, and a 421 on the snare. The overheads are just kind of optional; whatever they've got—some sort of condenser mic'.

SA: How do you tune your drums for the studio?

FB: Basically, I don't go for a note. I don't say this drum is going to be an E or whatever. I try to get the voice of that drum, and if you can do that, then they'll pretty well fall in line. Then change one just a little bit. Basically, try to get the best voice out of each drum and then come off the bottom head just a little bit so it'll decay slightly.

SA: Does that philosophy change for live situations?

FB: Well, I use a different set of drums in live situations. The technique is the same. In the studio, I use a drum that's got a cover on it; some sort of laminate. Live, I'll just use the wooden drums. I had them painted. I'm signed with Tama drums. I had them make just some raw maple drums and then I sent them off to this guy that makes all of Billy's guitars and had him paint them up for me. So, they're a little louder, they're a little brighter and the wood grain is a little tighter and it makes them louder. Whereas, the ones I use in the studio are more of a composite-type pressed drum and they're a little warmer sounding.

SA: Are both sets the same sizes?

FB: Yeah, they're tiny drums. I see so many large drums and power toms, and 26" bass drums and everything. I've just always preferred the smaller drums, so I use an 18" and a 20" bass drum and they're just tiny.

SA: Those 18" bass drums can sound like cannons.

FB: Oh, they're quick. You don't have so much head to move, and they're easier to tune. That's one thing, you know, being on the road, a lot of times we don't get the opportunity to go in and screw with the equipment every day, and they don't get so out of control. With those big ones, you've got so much head and so much air to move and so much displacement that it's just critical, you know, or they start fuzzing and slopping.

SA: Yeah, I had a 24" that did that. I had an 18" floor tom that sounded so good and the bass drum sounded sick next to it. That's when I decided that, for me, smaller was better. Especially since I'm only 5'5".

FB: Well, see I'm only 5'7" and that works well for me, too. At least maybe the audience has a shot at seeing me. All of our publicity people have been on me ever since we've been together that, "Frank, we can never see you back there. You disappear behind them drums."

SA: Just get those big overhead mirrors.

FB: But, I never get hit with anything either.

SA: That's true. It's safe back there.

FB: I got my little barricade and I've got my own little world built.

SA: In the studio, how close does your drum sound come to what you hear in your head?

FB: Well, it's never exactly what I hear in my head. I've got in my house row a 16-track recording studio. I've got the set of drums that I take to the studio set up, and I'm all the time messing with it and all the time trying this and that and the other. I'm intrigued by these new things, like the snare sound that The Cars get, which is totally electronic. You know, I believe that there's not hardly any of the drum left in there. He's just keying some white noise in. I'm just doing this, that and the other and trying to come up with something that's fine. I've been doing a lot of work with gates lately; noise gates and keying different things and with Kepexes and stuff. But, it changes. I'll think that I have the definitive tones for an album, and find out that I don't.

SA: The home studio definitely will help by giving you the time to explore. I see that you're open minded as far as effects go.

FB: Oh, yeah. I like to try all effects. I don't like an "effected" sound; I like a subliminally "effected" sound. Like I was mentioning, The Cars' snare sound—I like that crisp high end, but I would



like a lot less of it; you know, more of the real snare drum and just a little bit of that sound that you almost don't even hear, but it would give it that top edge.

Are you familiar with the Linn drum machine?

SA: Oh, yes.

FB: Well, I'm waiting on them to send me one because on the road we had one of those drum machines with just horrible tones, but it was fun to play with at night in the room. So, I'm real anxious to get that Linn and see what it sounds like.

SA: While we're on the subject of equipment, we should go over yours. What size drums you use, etc.

FB: Okay, like I say, I'm signed to Tama now. I've played every set of drums there is throughout the years, and I've talked with different companies. They'd say, "Come on, we'll give you two sets of drums and blah, blah, blah." But, Ken Hoshino from Tama came to Houston when we were doing a show there and I'd been talking to him on the phone. I'd been playing Tama drums for about a year and what I'd been doing was grabbing the 14" floor tom and cutting it in half and making an 8" deep snare drum.

So, Ken shows up and he opens up a box and it's this beautiful rosewood 8 1/2" deep snare drum. I said, "Well, let me try that!" I tried it on stage and came back after the show and said, "Man, that's great." And he said, "It's yours." So, I ended up signing a contract with him. Most of the stuff I play is pretty well straight production-line drums. There's the 18" bass drum I think they have to specially make, but then I've got a 20" bass drum. I've got the 8 1/2" deep snare drum which is a rosewood snare. Then, rack toms—they go from a 6", to an 8", a 10", a 12" a 13" and a 14", and then a 14" and a 16" floor tom. And then I have a second 16" floor tom that I set on the other side and I only play on "Tube Snake Boogie," because I've got it tuned so low it won't play anything else. It sounds like a huge inner tube.

SA: I like fun sounds like that that are a little off-the-wall. A friend of mine has an old 15" marching snare drum that sounds almost like a synthesizer.

FB: Really. You know, the old drum sometimes is the best one.

SA: Definitely. Do you use the *Hydraulic* heads on all of your drums?

FB: Everything but the snare.

SA: Is that true in live situations as well as the studio?

FB: Yeah. I use it totally. Like I say, it's a warmer, more in-control top sound. It's not near as percussive and I just prefer that type of

mellow tone.

SA: What about pedals?

FB: When I signed with Tama, I'd always played a Ludwig *Speed King*. My first pedal was a *Speed King* and I loved them. I told Ken, "I'll play the drums, but I can't give up *Speed King* pedals." He said, "No problem, but here, we just got the Camco pedal. Try these." I tried them and I liked them. I'd like to make some sort of mutant between the two. I like the chain drive a lot. I'd just like to see it have a compressed spring action instead of a pulling spring. You know, take the best of both worlds and grab the compressed spring off the *Speed King* and the chain drive off the Camco. It probably would be terrible. I've had some terrible ideas in my time [laughs].

SA: What kind of sticks do you use?

FB: Right now, I'm using Pro Mark *Hands Hickory*. It doesn't really matter, just some sort of 5A.

SA: And cymbals? Shouldn't forget cymbals.

FB: Those are Paistes. I started using those as soon as they came out, maybe ten years ago. I use them mainly because they wouldn't break and I've just stayed with them. I don't think that I would break cymbals like I used to when we were all using a 3S stick and playing psychedelic rock 'n' roll, using the butt ends and all of that. But, I've just always liked them. I started out with the old 602's. You know, I've still got some of those and they're classic cymbals, especially for the studio.

SA: What sizes do you use?

FB: Well, I like odd numbers. I don't know why—it's probably just some sort of thing in my head. But, I seem to feel like the odd numbers sound better than the even, so I like 17s and 19s, as opposed to 18s and 20s.

SA: We should go through the sizes of your ride cymbal and your crashes and all that exact detail.

FB: Ah, right, for the technically minded. Let's see, I've got a 21" ride. I've got two 19" crashes, a 17" and a 15" splash. I've got a 20" pang, or *Chinese* cymbal; you know, one of those inverted savages. I've got a 20" sizzle cymbal that I use on the hot blue and righteous songs, you know, for the blues numbers, and a cowbell.

These are all 2002's. I don't take the 602's on the road. I use them in the studio and leave them slightly dirty.

SA: On the *El Loco* album, you played some different instruments on a couple of cuts like "Groovy Little Hippie Pad," and "Heaven, Hell or Houston." What did you play on those cuts?

FB: Well, "Groovy Little Hippie Pad," we built that song up at my house. We started out on the synthesizer. I did the bass drum first. I did the bass drum and the snare clicking. Then I came back and took the bass drum out of it. If you listen with headphones, you can still hear that bass drum in there. It's this little tiny sound that's in there. I was trying to get rid of that bass sound because I wanted to go to another one. But, it's still in there and it kind of adds to the percussion of that song. Then, we took floor toms and laid them down flat on the floor, face down, and I played those with some sticks. Then, we went back and I think I taped a clave across the snare drum. I was beating it with another one.

SA: That's what that sound is!

FB: Then, we went back and added the tom-toms, and then I think finally the cymbals. So, that song was built piece by piece.

SA: That must have been a lot of work, but fun, too.

FB: Yeah, that was a lot of fun. Because the synthesizer is so relentless in its time, you know, I mean it's just perfect. It's just a clock going off. We did the whole thing that way. We did the bass and the guitar and added on that way, too. Just a piece at a time. And the tambourine . . . I forgot the tambourine and the hi-hat. All of it was just layered in there.

Now, we did some strange things with "Heaven, Hell or Houston." We didn't know what we were going to do with that. We had this piece of a song, and we didn't have a bridge for it. So, we just kept the bass drum going and counted off X amount of bars and

then went back and decided, "Well, let's do something exotic." Up at Ardent [studios] in Memphis, they brought in this box of special percussion instruments and we tried all of them. We were beating on microphone stands, you know. I think we ended up with some temple bells in there and an agogo.

SA: A little bit of everything.

FB: Uh huh, and trying to not play as though you were taught, you know? Playing left handed or something like that to give it a little bit of a rough feel to it so it would sound more native.

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SA: Speaking of instruments you play, tell me the story behind the Lone Wolf Horns.

FB: Well, we'd been on this vacation, you know, this three years we took off. And, we came back and started writing some material for the new album. We wrote "Hi Fi Mama," and we said if ever a song needed horns, it's this song. We've never used any outside help on any of our records. We'll manage to get through somehow. Like Billy will get down on his knees and play an organ's foot pedals with his hands or something. We've always managed to get what we wanted ourselves. And so, I said, "Let's go buy some saxes and learn how to play saxes. It can't be that hard." So, we did. We went and plopped the money down for three of the finest saxophones made and hired us this musician in Houston that plays saxophone to give us lessons. We each learned the scale and Billy wrote the parts out because he could transpose. The saxophones are tuned and they're in different keys than a guitar. Then they're even in different keys from each other. Like Billy's and mine were the same and Dusty's was in a different key.

So, we had to figure all that out and Billy'd say, "You blow this and you blow this and I'll blow this," and we'd blow these three notes and they'd sound pretty good, so, okay that's that note. And we just went through and figured it out. I think we each had about 12 notes that we had to play during the whole song. We learned that and then we practiced and practiced. I think we'd spend two hours a day for a month just running the tape of that song and playing our parts with it until we thought we had it and took it into the studio and did it. And it was a gas. Ahh . . . it was so fine. And, you know, we're a bit crazy anyway, so we made a whole production out of it. We did a film of us playing. So, whenever we went on the road, we'd lower a screen and the Lone Wolf Horns

continued on page 98



Photo by Fred Carneau

ON THE MOVE

"On The Move" is a column devoted to drummer/percussionists who aren't in the public eye, but still have something to offer. This "something" could range from technical ability, lifestyle, new drum set-ups or inventions, business ideas or musical ideas. If you're interested in being considered for "On The Move," send up to three double-spaced typewritten pages about yourself, an 8 x 10 b/w glossy photo and a cassette or album. Be sure to include your name, address and telephone number. Send all correspondence to: Modern Drummer, 1000 Clifton Avenue, Clifton, New Jersey, 07013 in care of "On The Move." Because of the expected response we will not be able to return your material.

Nelson Montana

I'm 29 years old. Some highlights of my formal education include studying with Elvin Jones and attending the Manhattan School of Music. But, my most serious studying was done listening to the great musics of this planet on my record player with my trusty drumset nearby.

It's so important for young drummers to be conscious of absorbing a variety of music before they become specialized by choice or by circumstance. Today's drummer is going through a difficult time. Many drummers of professional caliber who haven't "made it," are finding it increas-

ingly frustrating to maintain their growth as musicians. And although I relate easily to today's music, I'm sorry to say that it's truly non-rhythmic. It's almost as if all the reasons why I chose to play drums for a living no longer exist.

As for equipment, I use Gretsch drums. I've found that the middle size tom-toms work best for me. The thin shells and the diecast rims make the sound. My tom-tom sizes are 10 x 9, 12 x 9, 13 x 12 and 14 x 14. I use a 22" bass drum and a beautiful 5 1/2 x 14 maple snare drum that was built for me by Tim Herrmann at The Modern Drum Shop in New York City.

After trying every head imaginable, I started using Remo coated *Emperors*. They're very fat sounding and still have a resiliency that I haven't found in any other double-layered head.

As for the kind of sticks I use—don't ask! But, they're always wood-tipped hickory sticks.

I'm currently looking for a recording contract for my original group called Square One. I'm one of two composers in the band. We're now playing the New York club circuit.

I feel that my work opportunities are limited, but I've always managed to make my living from music. Doing this while trying to make a mark with an original band, plus raise a family, has got to be the most frustrating, unrewarding work imagina-

ble. But it's what I do.

I've been spending more time practicing bass, guitar, piano, singing and developing my physical being. Maybe after a while, the world will again want to hear what an acoustic drummer can do.

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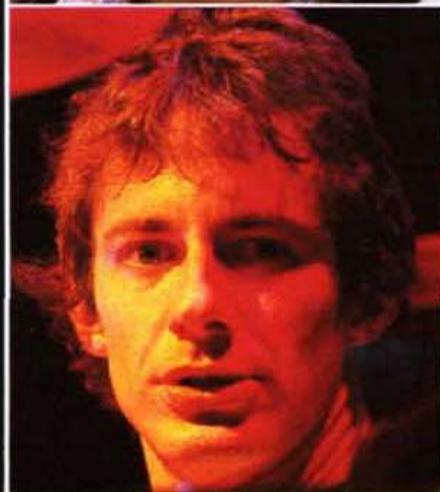
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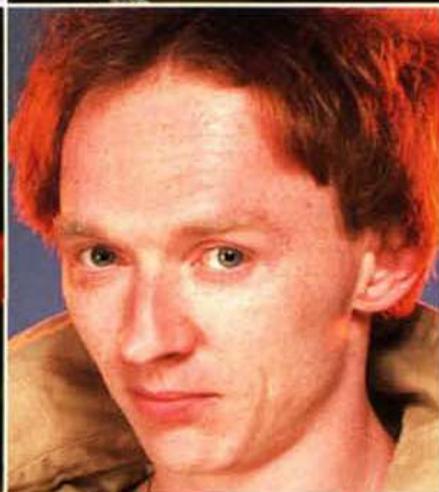
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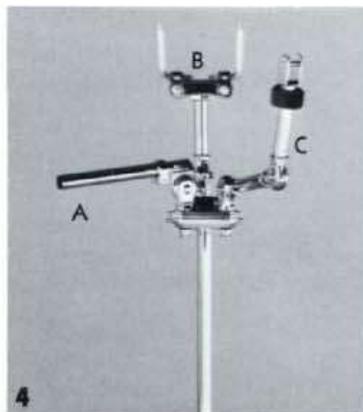
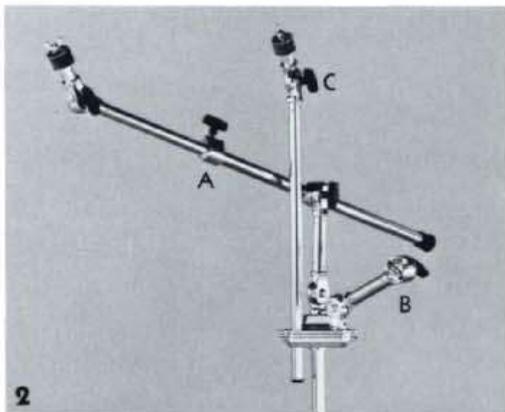
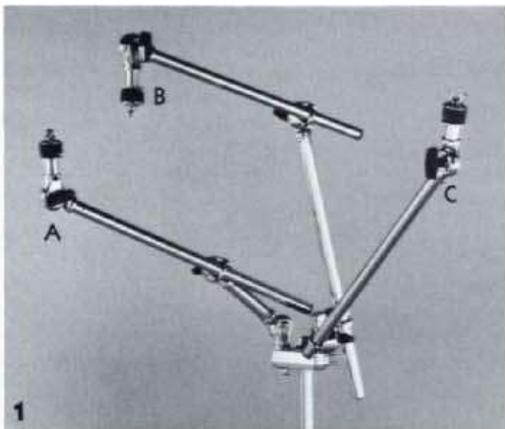
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Van Halen continued from page 14

three bass drums, and everybody said, "Wait a minute—how does he play three bass drums?" It works for me and makes sense. It may not be everybody's cup of tea, but for me it works. I like it because it gives me a wider range of acoustics. Each drum is tuned differently and depending on which one you accent through the PA, you get a different sound. Sometimes you want a little liver sound, so you just mess with the faders and you can balance it out front.

I use 12", 13", 14", 18" and 20" toms, and then I use three of the latest Simmons and two *Roto-toms*. I used to have five rack toms, but it just got to the point where I didn't need to have little concert toms. If it's not necessary, I don't use it. It's not just for trying to create the biggest drumset in the world. I had the concert toms, but it made it very difficult for me to see Ed on stage, who I really mainly play off of, and secondly, I can get that kind of sound just by tuning the 12" up a little higher and then anything else can be played with the Simmons.

RF: Your rack toms are single headed?

AVH: Yeah. Especially live, where you don't really have a great ambience. Sometimes we use double heads in the studio, because the studio is a little more adaptable to that situation. The bleed from the other instruments is not there, so you can tape a little bit further from the drums, such as having an overhead that will do only drums and pick up room ambience. Since we don't really have to worry about re-patching guitar and playing it again because some of it does leak onto the drum track, there's no problem. We play that song straight through and it's there. If you start doctoring it and say, "Wait a minute, this guitar part needs to get out and put something else in," then you're in trouble, but we don't do that.

RF: What about miking for a live situation?

AVH: How I keep the monitor I use from bleeding into the different drums is I use a limiter which is set at the frequency of the drums so it picks up only that drum and nothing else. I'm sure a lot of people have the problem of when a guitarist plays, you really have a hard time hearing what's going on. So I have a special set-up which is a cabinet which is a direct hook-up to Ed's amp so it doesn't even go through a monitor system. It's an identical cabinet he plays through. For the drum mix, that goes through a side monitor guy who sits there and has the 16 channels. During the sound check, that will be adjusted and then we adjust the noise gates to the point where nothing bleeds through. When you're playing at such a high volume, problems you can encounter tend to multiply, but after all the trials and the testing, we finally found how things work best for us. I'm sure our sound man would say, "Wait a

minute—you guys really can play quieter on stage. Come on, have a little control." But there's a certain point where you draw the line and that's how we wanted it.

RF: Of course the question that comes up is do you really need all that wattage?

AVH: It depends on where you play. You obviously don't want to make it uncomfortably loud for everybody, but at the same time, you want it to project across the whole thing. Part of the music we do is the raw power that's involved. You have to feel the music as well as hear it and it's just one big package. That's one of the things that used to impress me when I was younger and I would go see Black Sabbath. You could feel that kick drum go right through your chest, and I said, "I want to do that!"

We carry the most extensive sound system that anybody ever takes on the road. We don't sell our audiences short by cutting back on sound. I think we usually carry about 40,000 watts, which is twice what most bands use, but the difference is the same thing as if you were to take a transistor radio and turn it full blast and get the distortion, or take a nice stereo and play it halfway. Sure you encounter certain problems, but the one thing we always demand is that we get an extensive sound check and we have all the best sound men available. For our kind of set-up, it works. It took us four years to really get the best situation happening with somebody who

has a good ear, because the sound mixer out front is your producer on the road. You can be playing the best stuff you ever played in your life, but if the sound isn't good, what's the point? And that includes anything from the balance of the instruments, the tonality, to the way the speakers are set up, to the hall itself. In one respect, sound check is almost pointless because the sound changes so drastically by the time the people get in, but it gives you a good point to start at and especially to make sure everything works. It's a tedious type thing, but we always do it. I just wouldn't get up there if I didn't know what it sounded like. We usually will tape a piece and then play it back and stand out front to see how it sounds. You can't really go by one person's ear. Everybody has different tastes and what might sound good to one person, might not be what somebody else likes. We also have reference tapes we listen to.

RF: How do you protect your ears?

AVH: [laughs] I don't. Over the last 15 years, I've lost about 20% in my left ear and about 15% in my right ear. It just comes with the job. If you want to be able to hear what's going on, you can't really effectively use any kind of ear plug. I was thinking of using cotton because it does help to cut the super highs out. When I went to the doctor, he gave me a DB meter to go out and actually measure what was



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happening. The chart he gave me said that if you're exposed to about 110 decibels, you can get away with it for about half an hour before there are any dangerous side effects. He told me with 120, you can last for about five minutes. So we went to a rehearsal, and before the monitors were on and before any of the sound was plugged in, with just straight drums, I was banging away at the cymbals a little bit, and it was already 130. It's something that most drummers, I'm sure, can identify with, especially under loud situations where the ride cymbal just really chews into your ear. At the end of the night, it's called noise drunk. You don't hear any more highs, and you kind of feel alienated when you're finished playing. It happens. I guess if you can get used to ear plugs, it might be a good idea. But it's just one of those things that comes with the territory.

RF: Tuning. Is there a method to your madness?

AVH: Each drum has an inherent quality that lets you tune it only to a certain extent. You don't tune it to a note, really. The best thing is to make the individual drum sound the best it can to itself. You can't make a floor tom sound like a little concert tom. You just play with it until it sounds like the drum. Certain drums have certain frequencies that respond well. You can tell when you're out of it, below it or above it, and when you hit that right spot, there it is.

RF: You mentioned before that you like a live snare sound. How do you achieve that?

AVH: I like to have mine tuned a little higher than the average person. The best person I can use as an example is Bonham. His snare is tuned pretty high. I'm not saying high to the point where it sounds like a concert snare with a little pop, but not like a thud, although we've done that. In the studio, you do a variety of things, but I prefer that higher sound. The best way I can describe it is it is almost like chopping wood. It has the attack and the resonance, but it also has a bottom sound to it and a lot of mid. Everybody has his own taste, though.

RF: What snare did you use on *Van Halen II*?

AVH: A 6 1/2 x 14 *Super Sensitive* with the same head combination as I use now—the CS black dot on top and a clear bottom. I stopped using that particular snare after the third album. From the fourth on, I have used the rosewood.

RF: What about muffling, taping, etc.?

AVH: There's a minute amount of taping on the snare just to get certain pitches out. It depends again on the song. That will usually dictate what kind of snare sound you want. If you tend to tune it lower, sometimes certain rings will come out, and as opposed to using the built-in muffler which only muffles a certain area on the drum, I usually just put a thin layer on the outside where the rim meets the head.

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RF: All the way around?

AVH: I just put it on until the ring goes away. I find that the higher I tune it, the less problem there is with ringing.

RF: Do you endorse Ludwig?

AVH: I didn't endorse them until two years ago. Even if I didn't endorse them, I would have to say they are the most dependable, road-worthy and best drums I've ever played. I'm sure that some of the 9-ply shells with so-and-so veneer with extra-heavy-duty spurs are fine for maybe playing a club, but you have to consider going through all that electronic stuff and what comes out of the speakers. Basically, when you're miking a head, the resonance of the drum has very little, if anything, to do with it, except for the difference between double head and single head.

RF: What, in your opinion, can you do with two bass drums that you can't do with one?

AVH: Well, the reason is obviously that your foot is only so fast and if you want to do a certain pattern, you have to either have an incredibly fast foot or you cannot play that pattern.

RF: Do you find that you tend to rely on the hi-hat less?

AVH: No. I think there is a time and place for everything. Again, it's back to the same thing we said earlier—just because you have them there, you don't have to play them all. Steve Smith uses them tastefully. It just gives you an extra dimension to be able to play something you might hear in your mind that you wouldn't normally be able to play with one foot. The proof of that is they have even gone so far as to develop a pedal where you can play two feet on one drum. Also, if you want to take it one step further, you can make the tonality of the drums different, which is another added thing. Baker used to do that. His left one was always a little looser.

RF: How long have you been playing doublebass?

AVH: Since about a year after I started.

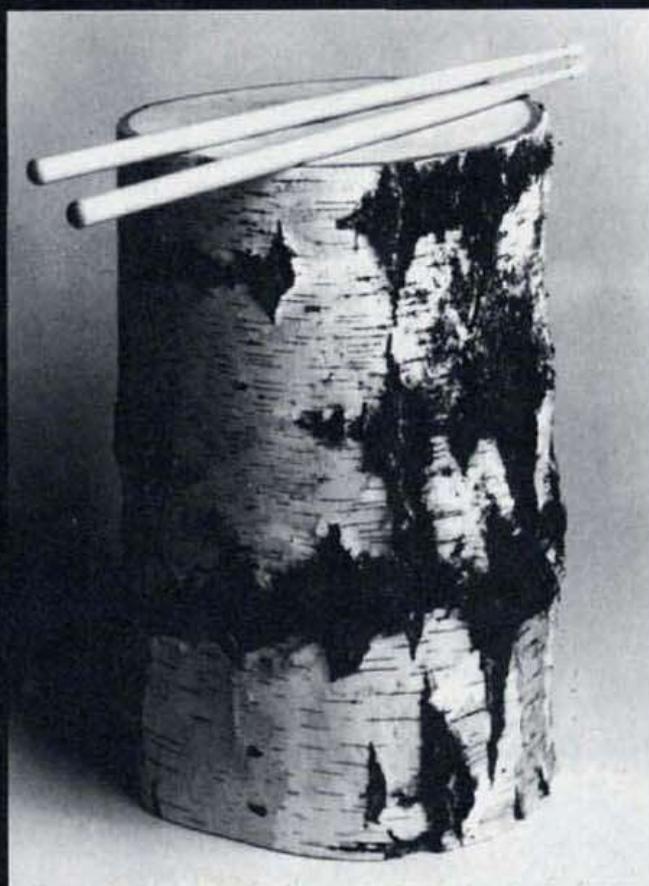
RF: Was Ginger Baker the one instrumental in that for you?

AVH: I think so.

RF: You mentioned Louie Bellson before.

AVH: Yeah, I have some of his old tapes. A lot of people think Baker and Keith Moon were the first to use them, but that's not so. I think Baker played music on the drums—not just rhythm. I could listen to him play by himself. It's interesting. Of course his solos are great too, but not everybody can relate to that. Ninety percent of the people do not play drums. It was around that time that I began to play drums and I tried to pick up on what he was doing and I was thinking, "How did he do that?" because I only had one kick. I finally saw a picture and the secret was out. And there's no reason why your left foot can't be as good as your right. It just takes time.

RF: What did you do to work on that?



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AVH: It's just a matter of playing. If you do it often enough, it gets good. One trick to do is, if you're practicing, play everything in reverse that you normally would. Set up your drums left handed and put the hi-hat on the right side as opposed to your left, like Ian Paice.

RF: I assume you don't use the double bass drums much when you're recording.

AVH: I would say I use them about ten times more live than recording, basically because in the live situation, you do improvise and you have room to expand and sometimes it warrants it. I won't use it in a song unless I feel it really needs it. Again, I'm not there to solo. Sure, I could pack in all the double bass licks that you can find, but with us, the important thing is that we sound as a band, and it's a good springboard for Ed to go out and do melodic things. There won't be any solo projects because we all have the room to breathe and the freedom in this band is really good.

RF: Cymbals.

AVH: Paiste all the way around. I endorse

them for the reason that I think they're the best quality-control cymbal. When you're in the middle of nowhere and you need a cymbal, you can go into a store and if you want a 20" ride, medium-heavy, you're going to get a 20" ride, medium-heavy. I played Zildjians for years and years, but they're unpredictable. Some people will say, "This is a one-of-a-kind cymbal"—fine for you, but not for me because I go through an awful lot of cymbals. I think the clarity of the cymbal is much better too, especially the hi-hat. Listen to our records. The brightness of those cymbals is amazing.

I have a 24" ride, 20" China cymbal, a 20" heavy, which I use for that "SHHH" effect, a 20" medium, which I use for a crash, then there's a 20" *Rude*, another 20" ride so that when I go back and forth between two, there's no tonal difference, an 18" *Rude*, and a gong that I use once or twice a night. The hi-hats are 15's. The top is a 2002 and the bottom is a *Rude*. I mixed them up because I wasn't quite happy with

the sound I was getting from the *Rude* on top. It was too dead. My preference is still the 20" medium for a crash.

RF: Why?

AVH: It has the sustain, it has the instant attack and it has durability. I've tried lighter cymbals and they fall apart. Not everybody uses 3S sticks. I found in a live situation, especially, you tend to hit a little bit harder than you do in the studio and once I got the hang of them, it was odd to go back to a different stick just for studio work and go back to the bigger ones for live.

RF: Why do you ride on a crash cymbal?

AVH: It's the 20" medium and I picked that up from the old Beatles' records when Ringo would get that layer of sound. It fills it up. I think it's a very nice texture. Of course you can't do it on all songs, but there's an appropriate place and time for every little part. I just ride the crash to the point where it sounds like a wash and then use the left hand for accents.

RF: Your music requires you to be quite

Nick Ceroli

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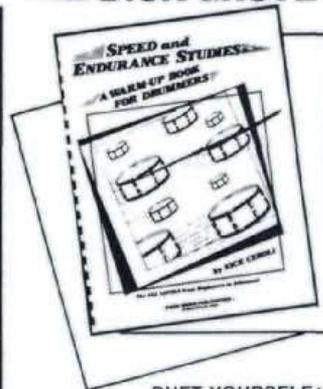
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Gregg Bissonette on the DW Double Pedal



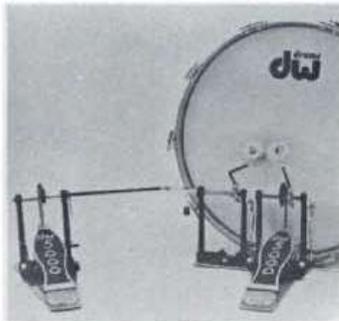
"I'm using the 5002 in place of my second bass drum. The pedal's very sturdy and it holds up great on the road. Here are a few licks I played on Maynard Ferguson's soon to be released live album"

Gregg Bissonette



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powerful. Do you feel that sometimes you might tend to lose some of the finesse? Does being a powerful drummer have to exclude being tasteful?

AVH: Not at all. I think that's a popular misconception. If everybody is blazing and you're trying to be dynamically different in certain points, there are two problems: you're not playing with the band and it's not going to come out. If there are quiet parts, you can play quiet parts with 3S and as far as finesse, you can throw in little drags and things here and there.

RF: Sometimes an arena makes it difficult to be subtle.

AVH: It makes it difficult to hear it. It doesn't mean you're not playing it.

RF: What do you do with the Simmons?

AVH: Since they're relatively new, a lot of people just think they sound like the Syn drums when actually, the way you can adjust them, you can make them sound anywhere from a timbale to a timpani, provided, of course, that after it comes out of the PA, you have some room ambience. It's limited in certain things, but I use them basically for different sounding toms and I use the bottom one to make it sound like a kettledrum.

RF: How do you feel about electronic drums?

AVH: Why not try it? That goes back to the purists—"Let's only do this; only with wood shells; only with double heads; only with one kick drum; only with so and so." I prefer to try different things. It wasn't until Bonham used kettle drums that people started using them and now, Michael DeRosier uses them, among other people. There really are no rules or limitations. Go for what sounds good to your ear and do it.

RF: What about a computer like the Linn machine?

AVH: Well, the Linn machine will never replace a live drummer.

RF: Would you mess with it?

AVH: I would never put it on a record, no. I think one of the interesting things about it is that you can program different patterns. You can program your foot pattern and program a left-hand pattern on a tom and snare and vice versa, and a right-hand pattern on something else and a left foot doing something else. You can play it back and something comes out that you have never thought of or that nobody ever played before. Then you learn through independence that, "Hey, it might work."

RF: So then you're talking about using it as a stimulus as opposed to using it as an instrument.

AVH: Right. But it is sterile and it isn't human.

RF: Could you take me through some of your prior set-ups?

AVH: Well, in the past I had the *Vista-Lite* set by Ludwig. It had the black and white stripes and it was put together by gluing the different strips together. One of the first things we do before anything—because

Dave tends to jump on the drums, stand on them and humiliate them—is to test them for strength. I stood on the drum and it promptly snapped in half, so we took it to a place where they coated the inside with a quarter inch of fiberglass and the sound on it was unreal. That is what I used in '81.

In '82, I wanted to try something different, so what we did was take different lengths of tube which projected from each kick drum along the lines of church organ pipes. Each different length would accentuate a different frequency and we isolated the ones that we liked and pumped those out front. We also miked the batter head so there would be a balance between what comes out the front of the drum and the actual impact of the pedal hitting the head. I use wooden beaters, and to keep them from going through the head, I put a little pad of leather on it so it gets the same attack. You don't lose any punch and the heads don't break.

RF: What do you have planned for your set on this tour?

AVH: We're putting some radial horns in the front of the bass drums. You put a radial horn in there and it will be hooked up electronically just to punch a little more highs out in the stage area in front. The batter head will be miked, the front will be miked and we'll get a balance out of that. That way, it will almost be like a pre-mix. There will be a mix that goes into the thing before the sound man out front will have a chance to, again, accentuate the proper frequencies because all halls are different.

Also, this year I changed to power toms, the longer ones. They seem to have a little more resonance and depth and if you tune them just a little bit higher than the drum actually should be tuned, you get a cross between a regular tom and a deeper sounding one.

RF: Is it difficult working with someone to whom you're related?

AVH: No. I think after a certain point, you're basically related to everybody in the band anyway, if you work with them long enough. You eat together, you sleep together on the bus, you travel, you practice, you rehearse, you throw ideas around. We stopped fighting a long time ago.

The thing is that you have to keep an open mind. Never lock yourself into something, because then you can get really frustrated if, for instance, the other people who are involved, including the producer, don't happen to agree with you. If you're locked into an idea, you have problems. You have to learn to flow with the tide.

RF: What's next?

AVH: Our album came out recently, so we'll be leaving on tour shortly. What's good for us is that we take the music to the people. We don't just want to sit there and release an album, because there is a certain magic about seeing someone live. It's really where it's happening and we have a good time with it.



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Migirian Bass Drums/ DW5002 Double Pedal

The strangest thing about this drum is its oval-shaped head, which is produced by Migirian at their factory. The head is made of the same 1000 weight Dupont Mylar used by Remo, and has a silver oval patch, which doubles the thickness of the impact area. Migirian guarantees an ample stock of these heads, in either clear or black. If you need one quick, they will ship overnight if necessary, I am told. The sound of the head is very much like that of a Remo CS head.

The drum hoop is oval, as well, and seems to be made of a polycarbonate material. Instead of the usual T-handle tuners, the drum has hex-head bolts with very large aluminum claws. The bolts screw directly into the shell. Due to the non-skid pads on the bottom, the drum sits a little higher than a regular bass drum. Because of this, I found it a bit difficult to mount certain pedals onto the hoop (ones with a small clamp space). Also, since the center of the head is lower than on a conventional bass drum, the pedal's beater post must be shortened in order to hit the head dead-center. Rather than hacksaw my beater post, I lowered the beater as far as it would go without interfering with the drumhead. This allowed me to hit near the top of the oval patch.

Migirian will mount any tom-tom base plate on their drums. The drum I tested had a Pearl *Vari-Set* plate. Normally, on my own 22" drum, I usually jack the tom-tom arms up almost to their limits. Since the *Club* model is 20" high, I couldn't get the arms up to my accustomed height. I suggest that Migirian consider a spacer block, or a raised center section on the drum to deal with this problem.

I used the *Club* model on stage and found it to be louder than most regular bass drums. In fact, the drum is capable of sounding like a much larger, single-headed, conventional-dimensioned bass drum even when the beater does strike above dead center. Migirian supplies a black felt strip for the batter head. A small amount of padding placed inside allowed the drum to produce a thick "thud," while still retaining its original volume level. The drum is easy to mike—the same as a single-headed drum; though you'd probably not

even *need* a mic' in a nightclub situation. The oval head's durability seems to be the same as a Remo or Ludwig head. This, of course, would depend on individual playing techniques, type of beater used, and so on. I am curious as to how the drum would sound double-headed.

The *Club* model retails at \$550; the *Concert* retails at \$650. Both are available in either white or black gloss. If desired, any of 135 other Dupont Enamel finishes may be ordered at additional cost.

Migirian also offers sturdy polyethylene cases for both models. These cases are foam-lined, have double straps, and a single carrying handle.

Migirian has made quite a step away from drums as we commonly know them, and depending on the success of their bass drums, may be introducing more products later on. Either it's the shape of the shell, the shape of the head, or the two combined, but the Migirian bass drum does have a loud, heavy sound.

At present, the drums are available factory-direct. For more information: Migirian Drum Company, PO Box 2524, Detroit, MI 48202, 313-873-4500.

The people at Drum Workshop have recently devised a double pedal for double bass drum licks on a single bass drum. The *DW5002* actually comes in two parts: the primary pedal and the auxiliary pedal, each purchased separately.

On the test model loaned to me, the primary pedal was a half-sprocket *DW5000CX* chain-drive pedal, having double posts and a single expansion spring. It has a hinged-heel footboard and a hex axle. The beater can move the length of this axle, and this feature comes in handy with the double pedal set-up. (For a complete description of this pedal, refer to MD: Aug '82.) The entire pedal mounts onto a large L-shaped steel support plate, which has a ribbed rubber underside, and a counterbar with knurled knob spur spikes.

The auxiliary pedal's frame mounts onto this plate as well. It has everything the *5000CX* has, except for the sprocket, linkage, and footboard. Its beater, as well, can travel the axle's length. Mounted onto the base of the frame is a bass drum hoop

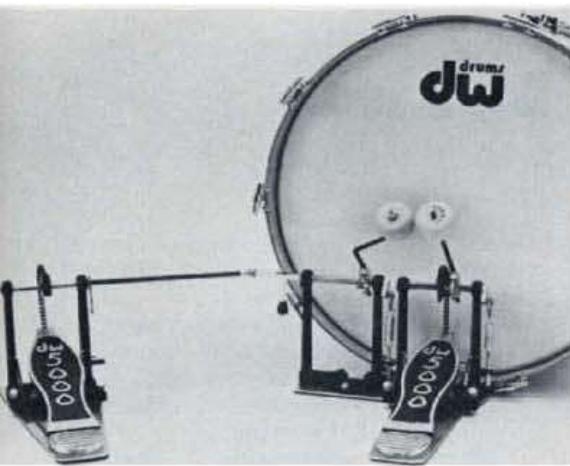
The Migirian Drum Company is based in Detroit, and after eight years of experimentation, has come out with the world's first *rectangular* bass drum with an *oval* head.

The drum shell is handcrafted and hand-assembled. It is composed of high-density fiberglass; felt covered on the inside. Two bass drum models are available: the *Club*, measuring 18 1/2" deep x 25 1/2" wide x 20" high; and the *Concert*, measuring 19 1/2" x 28 1/2" x 2 1/4".

First impression brings to mind the looks of an air conditioner, or even the front of an *Edsel*, since the front of the drum has a chrome, louvered frame, which is able to direct the drum's sound to various locations in a 180° arc. The louver slats are pre-angled to left, right and center, and the entire frame will snap out for easy access to the shell interior.

The bottom of the drum has four six-inch non-skid pads attached, which really do hold the drum in position. To make double sure, a pair of stabilizer bolts screw into the bottom for a secure anchor. Two large grooves are found in the top of the shell for use as stick holders. They'll fit one pair of sticks each.

by Bob Saydlowski, Jr.



clamp for further stabilization. The clamp is slotted in order to adjust for different sized bass drums.

A third frame is used for the left pedal. It is, in fact, the same as a 5000CX, but minus the spring and beater, and it is mounted on its own support plate. This pedal, having a footboard, drives the auxiliary axle, which makes the left beater strike the drum head. The two axles on the 5002 connect via a telescopic, hinged square rod which is adjustable for length and angle, giving you a choice of left-footed positions. The rod is held in place by pin clips, making disassembly quite effortless.

The left beater is bent in towards the right beater to allow closer positioning to the center of the batter head. As stated before, both beaters can be adjusted on their axles for different spacings. Also, the DW5002 is available in a left-handed model.

Both pedals on the DW5002 feel just like a regular, single DW pedal. They have sharp response, and a light, natural feel. The left pedal didn't seem to have as much "whip" as the main pedal, due to its longer axle drive, but this could be compensated for by adjusting spring tension.

The only real complaint I have with the pedal is that the auxiliary pedal tension screw is difficult to get at, since it sits very closely in between the two frames at the bass drum.

I liked the DW5002 very much. The new half-sprocket design gives more toe room than before, and the pedal has all the great advantages of chain-drive. If you don't want the headaches of carting a second bass drum around, you owe it to yourself to check out the DW5002.

The DW5002 auxiliary pedal retails at \$238.00. The primary pedal must be purchased separately at \$119.00 (unless you already own a DW pedal).



Here is what a few master-drummer-percussionists have to say about «The Sound of Brushes».

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Butch Miles

After speaking to Ed Thigpen and listening to the accompanying cassette tape, I've come to the conclusion that this book, «The Sound of Brushes», is an essential element in everyone's educational library. Put it in the section marked «Percussion, Traps, Contemporary». Try it! You'll like it!

Billy Cobham

I would like to endorse your book and feel that it is a great teaching aid I would use for students. Brushes are totally ignored by so many young drummers today that I feel your book is even more valuable and should be exposed. Good luck with it and I hope it's a «hit»!

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Handling the Ups and Downs

It has always seemed to me that performing musicians face a unique challenge: in no other profession (except perhaps stage acting) is the emotional state of the workers so greatly manifested in their work, nor so readily apparent to the people they are working for. Emotional and physical conditions can affect your playing in ways I group into two general categories: Ups and Downs.

DOWNNS

1. Physical fatigue. Club work can be grueling. The hours are odd, the atmosphere less than healthy, and the drumming itself can be physically exhausting. You need to get proper rest in order to have the physical stamina to handle the wear and tear. If you have a family, with kids at home that rise early, it can sometimes be difficult to get the rest you need. Or, if you are young and single, the temptation to go out after work to "unwind" can lead to a cumulative fatigue condition. Your body can only store up so much energy, and how you choose to divide it between work and play is the most important factor in having it to call on when you need it on the job.

When you're physically tired, it becomes difficult to maintain good time; overall tempos will tend to drag. Your fills become sloppy, and you simply cannot be as sharp as you would if you were fresh. There are no magic cures for this kind of situation—nobody bottles sleep. There are, of course, stimulant products on the market such as *No-Doz*; these are concentrated caffeine tablets in a sugar base. They might be useful for staying awake on a long drive, but I don't recommend them on a gig. How much they stimulate the metabolism will vary tremendously from person to person. I'm not an advocate of any form of chemical stimulant anyway. If you are very tired, then perhaps the use of coffee or Coca-Cola might help—at least they can be consumed gradually, in small amounts at a time. I want to stress that there is no substitute for decent rest, and stimulants are not something anyone should use on a regular basis. You're actually just stimulating your body artificially, and you're going to have to pay for it later. A caffeine-and-sugar-rush can leave you feeling even *more* fatigued when it wears

off. The trick is to time it so it wears off while you're sleeping *after* the gig. I mention this kind of stimulation only out of a feeling for the realities of club playing. Even with the best of intentions and planning, situations occur where you arrive at work feeling like it's time to go home. On a steady gig, night after night, it's unavoidable. So I offer these suggestions as a means of surviving such nights.

2. Boredom. This is the single greatest "downer" in club playing. It's also the most obvious to your audience. Such attitudes reflect in the polish of the music, the showmanship on stage, the rapport with the audience—in fact with all the elements which combine to create a group's performance. A bored group is a *boring* group, and I've seen such acts empty a room faster than acts of much less musical quality with greater enthusiasm. An audience will be much less tolerant of a group that performs perfectly, but gives the impression that they aren't interested in what the audience thinks anyway. Boredom is the result of over-repetition. The solution is obvious: create some sort of change to freshen everyone's outlook. Add new material or rearrange some of the old material. Just the challenge of doing this should keep things interesting. You, as the drummer, can use this same approach in your own playing. Find something new to do in the old material—new fills, new patterns, or some new aspect of playing physically, such as trying the ride with your left hand on the hi-hat and the right on the snare. Anything that offers something new to think about will be a positive step towards overcoming boredom. It's very important to start this right away, and keep it up, because a group can fall into a boredom-induced state of apathy where nobody has the inclination to rehearse, or the creative spark to come up with new ideas. It won't be long before they simply grind to a halt.

Sometimes a change of location can make all the difference in the world. This doesn't relieve you of the responsibility of updating your material, but it can give you some breathing space in which to do it. A new room presents new challenges in audience appeal, acoustics, stage set-up, etc., and these challenges help keep your musical and technical creativity at a high level.

A new audience means a fresher, more enthusiastic response to your playing, and this can give you a lift too.

Any kind of change, such as costumes, lighting, even the name of the band, can give a temporary lift to everyone's spirits. Use that lift to encourage the efforts towards longer-lasting change.

3. Tension or depression. Personality conflicts within the band, problems at home, or any other emotional downer that you bring to work is going to affect your attitude towards playing, and the actual physiology of drumming itself. Tension is manifested in the muscles as stiffness and immobility; depression can actually lower metabolic rates and create a very real lack of energy or stamina. You must overcome the source of the tension or the depression in order to get rid of the drumming-related problems they create. If the tension is caused by some conflict within the band, then it's to everyone's advantage to take whatever steps are necessary to eliminate it. Some kind of band meeting with an open discussion of problems might be in order. Don't let something like that keep stewing within you—your playing will become worse, which will probably only aggravate the problem.

It's very easy to say, "Leave your personal or home-related problems at home and don't bring them to work with you," but in reality that's like saying leave one of your arms at home. I've known very few performers with the Zen-like ability to concentrate on what they were doing so strongly as to eliminate all outside thoughts. But you can try to focus your attention on your playing more than usual, as a method of eliminating other, more distracting thoughts. It won't cure the problem, but it might help get you through the night. Being aware of tension or depression is the first step toward overcoming them. Get some help—talk to someone whose judgment you respect—and do your best to eliminate the source of your emotional condition.

4. Illness. Like physical fatigue, illness is something that simply occurs in life. We can try to lead healthy, vitamin-fortified and physically fit existences, but the longer you work in clubs, the more exposure you have to hundreds of people, and the

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greater likelihood there is of coming down with something. Playing while ill calls for a whole new set of ground rules. Obviously, if you are dedicated and responsible, you want to make the gig, and you want to do the best job you can. If you can make it, great, but don't knock yourself out. Try to share the load a little more than usual with the rest of the band, such as having someone else cover your vocals, or not doing some of the tunes which call for high-energy drum parts. Stretch the leads, repeat tunes, even stretch your breaks a little if necessary, but be sure to advise management of the situation so you have their cooperation.

If you are sick enough that you should not be working, then don't. You'll most likely just increase the length of time that you're ill, and handicap the band that much longer (to say nothing of possibly being contagious). Do what you need to get better, and get back on the job sooner. If it means getting a substitute, then do it. Drummers are more fortunate than other instrumentalists, in that our substitutes don't have to worry about keys or chord progressions. They don't *have* to know the song in order to play it. If the substitute can just keep good time, the band can get through the night.

5. *Chemical factors.* I've spoken earlier in regards to my feelings about alcohol on the job. It's your business, but how you handle it *is* business. Any form of drug usage is the same way. I've played with musicians who were obviously out of control due to alcohol, and I've also played with a few who had been indulging in other drugs on their breaks. In both cases, their performance level was dramatically affected. Their playing became sloppy, and their physical posture and attitude was unduly relaxed. This is simply not the way to perform in front of an audience under any circumstances. The boredom I've already discussed is often the excuse for such indulgence, but that doesn't wash with me. Using substances which visibly and audibly reduce your professionalism on the job is not the way to escape boredom—unless you want to escape by losing the job altogether.

UPS

If I had my choice, I'd much rather have problems with being too far "up" on the job than too far "down." But even so, the effects caused by excitement or elation can create real difficulties for you and the rest of the band. If you come to work feeling unusually happy or excited about something, it often causes your perception of tempo to increase noticeably (to others, but not to you). You'll find yourself wondering why the band seems to be dragging, and why they're looking at you with daggers in their eyes while trying to get

through a complicated lyric or tricky guitar passage at twice the speed they're used to. Even if you are *aware* of your excitement level, it will be very difficult to "lock in" to the groove you normally enjoy with the rest of the band. In general, control becomes the greatest problem. In contrast to being down, where you lack the energy to play well, in this case you have more than you know what to do with. Here are some examples of how this might occur:

1. *Eagerness to please/Showing off.* This is the classic situation. You've just gotten a new gig, and you really want to show what you can do. You're excited about playing in this club, so you give it everything you've got—which is about three times more than it needs. Even if you've been settled in for quite a while, if a friend or colleague comes in—someone you'd like to impress, or just someone you're happy to see—your surprise and pleasure at seeing that person can give your energy level a boost. Roy Burns has written about the pitfalls of trying to show off for another drummer—you wind up losing your groove with the band and your control over your own playing, and very rarely do you do the impressive job you wanted to do in the first place. The key to overcoming these particular problems is being aware how prone you are to them, and letting some objective outside source be a guide to you. If you are constantly being told that you're rushing the band, don't get offended. Analyze why and take measures to correct it. A high level of energy can be channelled into more *creative* playing, not just faster and louder playing. Use that energy in your *head* as well as your hands.

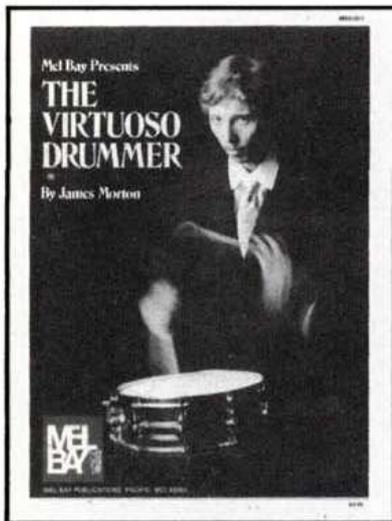
2. *Excitement over new or original material.* When you've worked hard on a new piece of material, and you put it in for the first time, often you'll find that the excitement you feel about the new song works against you—the first couple of performances aren't as controlled and polished as the song sounded in rehearsal. It may not be a problem with how well you rehearsed the song. It's just that the novelty of playing something new gives you an energy boost that affects *everybody's* sense of groove, and the song winds up a little rushed, a little too loud, or just sounding "forced." One solution to this is simply to rehearse it a few more times to iron out the problems. Another is to try playing it a little later in the night, when your fatigue factor might help compensate for the novelty factor. The song will soon settle in.

Original material poses a similar, if not greater problem. I've heard several professional, solid, grooving bands play high-quality Top-40 tunes most of the night, and then suddenly sound like a garage band full of 16-year-olds on a particular tune. Then they'll go right back to the polished sound they had before on the next

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few songs. Later I'll discover that the odd tune was an original. I also discover that they were nervous about performing it in front of people. That nervousness took control of the performance. In some cases it was just excitement about doing something they had written and were proud of, rather than performance anxiety. But in either case, it worked against them, because the tune came out sounding amateurish, and of lesser quality than the cover material they had been doing.

Specifically for drummers, learning a new fill can pose a problem. I recently met a young drummer who had literally mastered most of Neil Peart's intricate fills. This kid was a monster! Unfortunately, when I asked him to sit in with my straight-ahead hard-rock band, he couldn't resist the temptation to put all the fills he knew into the song (which was a very simple, driving arrangement of "Cocaine"). Not only did he rush the fills, but he couldn't lock down into playing simple time for the band. He let his excitement over knowing how to play fills overcome the necessity for "laying it down" for the band. By all means keep improving your technical skills, but maintain the emotional control to know when to use new fills, and how to keep from rushing them in your excitement.

3. *Excitement over new equipment.* This is a particular problem of mine. I have a tendency to be thrilled by the addition of a new drum, cymbal, or even a new type of stick or head. Besides being tempted to overuse the new item, I usually find my excitement once again causing me to lose my sense of groove. I try to correct this by forcing myself to see the new piece of equipment as just a part of the kit that had always been there, and play as I usually would. It isn't easy—it's like giving a kid a birthday present and telling him he can't play with it until tomorrow. But I try once again to channel my enthusiasm into some other direction, such as incorporating the new item *tastefully* into my playing. This generally helps me settle down and just enjoy playing the total kit.

4. *Excitement over a new location or situation.* I mentioned a change of job location as a cure for boredom. Unless the new situation is radically different from anything they've played before, this kind of change poses little problem for a professional group. But I've often seen a club group get the opportunity to do a large-scale concert as a warm-up act, and suddenly this new performance situation seems to disorient them. They feel like they just have to spread out like the "Big Acts" do. Unfortunately, they aren't used to this type of spacing and they lose the perception they normally have of what they're doing, and how they are working together. The performance tends to be disjointed

and disappointing for all concerned. My advice for this has always been to do on a big stage just what you're used to doing on a small one. Set up the same way so that you can communicate the same way. The sound will be different from what you're used to hearing anyway, so there's no need to compound the problem unnecessarily.

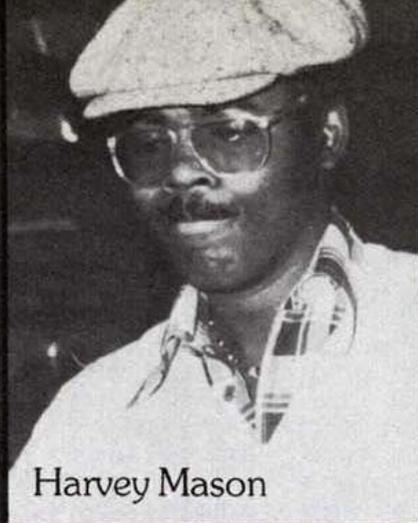
Your adrenaline level when doing a special show or concert will be unusually high. It will be very important for you to concentrate on your control, so that the band can offer its polished, professional-sounding performance. If you want to break out of clubs and into the "big time" concert circuit, now is the time to show everybody (including yourselves) that you're ready to handle it. Part of that is handling the excitement, the nervousness, and the physical effects on your body that an adrenaline rush can create. I've been so excited on occasion that my hands shook, and the muscles of my arms felt like they were in business for themselves. Matt Frenette, the drummer with Loverboy, told me that even though he had worked clubs for years, the first time he was to perform in front of ten thousand people, he threw up immediately before going on stage. He then went up and did a great show. Controlling extra energy by some form of concentration or redirection is a primary attribute of the really professional players in the large-scale acts.

5. *Chemical factors.* Just as the depressing effects of alcohol, grass, or downers can reduce your abilities, the stimulants such as cocaine or amphetamines can create unexpected amounts of energy, which cannot be controlled by even the strongest conscious effort. Even though your rational mind tells you that your body is under the influence of a drug, and thus can explain *why* you feel the way you do, there's nothing it can do about it. The drug takes control. You need to maintain a decent level of energy over four to five hours, and trying to sustain a consistent level with drugs is virtually impossible. The other major fact to remember is quite simply the number of deaths and burnouts attributable to drug use among well-known performers. Enough said.

Playing requires energy, and that energy requires control. You're going to need both to be a successful performer, and so you need to take whatever measures are reasonable to develop both. I've offered some suggestions and opinions, but you alone know the demands placed on you by your lifestyle and performance requirements. Take a moment to evaluate how well you handle some of the situations I've described, and see if any improvements might be necessary. Ours is both a physical and emotional business—it behooves us to be in good condition on both counts. 



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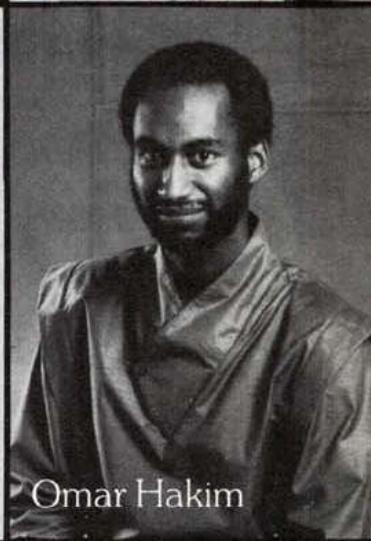


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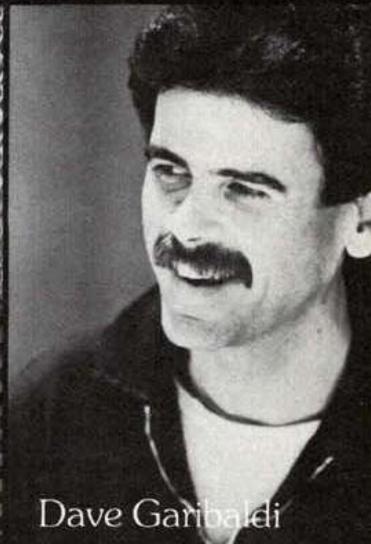
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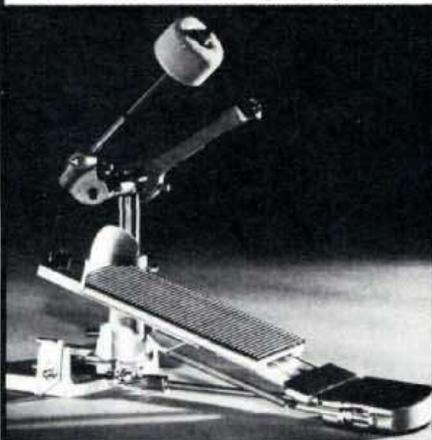


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Wilson continued from page 19

fall asleep in that church because there was so much music going on. People slamming their feet on the floorboard, hollering, being transported into another state of mind. Some deep stuff.

I'm going to tell you something: I came back from Cleveland, because I wanted to get off the road. So I quit for around a year or so, and I worked as a maitre d' and stopped playing entirely. Then Lester [Bowie] came back through St. Louis and we formed a band, so I stopped what I was doing to rehearse with him every day. It sounded sort of like one of Art Blakey's bands from that period, and we were trying to do the sort of thing we're doing now. We weren't into free music then, we were just starting to learn that way though, but our program would cover the whole history of black music. It was after that band broke up that we began working our way towards non-metric things, playing fast and loose with beat. We used to play in the park every day, me and Lester, and Julius Hemphill . . . Forest Park. We didn't just play free though, we played rhythms like 6/8, sevens, fives, and put them against each other.

At about this time I couldn't really play funk very well. I hadn't had that much contact with that music, and when I started hearing these r&b drummers, that turned me around. So Lester told me I should hit with this funk band, and some of the people we played with were like Rufus Thomas and The Drifters. I remember Bobby "Blue" Bland had this drummer once who was unbelievable, and it dawned on me that I had a whole other area of drumming that I had to study and learn.

CS: What was it that set apart the good r&b drummers' style from that of the jazz players you'd been hearing?

PW: Well . . . I can't really say. I guess the foot. More foot, and heavier foot, too. And they had this tight thing with their hands. You know how jazz players can play real straight with their right hand and left hand? Well, I had this ting-ting-ting thing going in my right hand that I couldn't get rid of, and I had to eliminate that . . . well, no, I had to *modify* it to fit the music. I had to tighten it down. The rhythm of r&b and funk is more . . . I don't know, rigid? That's not it. It's tighter somehow.

CS: What was it that you couldn't do at first?

PW: I couldn't get that hand and foot thing going. At first I couldn't keep the straight time going with the hi-hat and get that syncopation going. I mean, I could syncopate, but it was syncopating against swing; keeping a straight four with your hand, then playing the rhythm between the left hand and right foot. But this was something completely different. In funk I wouldn't necessarily be playing a straight four down under; I might have to break

everything up between snare and bass drum, keeping the heavy time on the hi-hats. So I had to learn that, which happened when I went out on the road with this guy Jerry Brown in a band that included Oliver Lake and Bowie. So I learned to tighten the syncopations, keeping the four with my right hand on the hi-hats, and keeping the backbeat, plus keeping the backbeat going in the right foot and breaking it up with my snare drum.

From there, Lester and I traveled out to California where we were more or less left stranded by that funk band. We played free for a while, not working *at all*, just exploring. Then Lester went back with Fontella Bass around the time she had that big hit "Rescue Me."

The day Lester left I got a gig in Phoenix, Arizona making big money. I took Oliver Lake and an organ player and we worked this black country club backing up the likes of Lou Rawls, playing whatever was required. That was around 1964.

Then I came back to St. Louis and Miller Brisker was now working for Motown, and he told me to come on up and he could get me a gig. So I worked in Chocolate Campbell's big band backing up Martha Reeves and Marvin Gaye, and I worked as a road drummer for them for a while until I got tired of it and wanted to get back home to my family. Besides, they didn't treat you too cool. They had these chaperones who thought you were a schlep-per, just there to get things for them. Nevertheless, it was really interesting, and I got a chance to hear this drummer Norman Williams, who was really something. He had the most different style of playing funk I've ever seen in my life. He was with the Temptations, and he was bad, man. Like Elvin Jones playing funk, only lighter. The things he could do between hands and feet scared me. I couldn't believe somebody could play that much stuff and not miss no accents. Miss no band accents, miss no dancing accents.

So that really changed my head around. And I began to take that music much more seriously, trying to incorporate that way of playing into everything I did. Then, by this time, Lester had gone to Chicago and that marked my period working with The Art Ensemble of Chicago.

CS: What was it about the Chicago/AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Music) scene that was different from what you were used to?

PW: Everything was happening, but really we were happening. With the Art Ensemble that's when I really started changing, because I had a chance to practice and play all day every day; the blues or whatever. So I really had a chance to work on my stuff, because for a year I hardly had any gigs, whatsoever. I hardly ever had any money either. But I had a place to stay and people fed me while I was living in this basement.

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wanted to sound like a symphony, like an entire orchestra. So I began working on different attacks and dynamics; a rising and falling of sound instead of just playing grooves. And the Art Ensemble used to work on things together like that: *real* loud, then as soft as we could bring it down. Putting the accents in different places and varying the intensity. By practicing every day by myself and with the Art Ensemble I was able to achieve a great deal of growth. That was a very formative period in the development of my music.

CS: That was in the period when the band comprised Roscoe Mitchell on reeds, Lester Bowie on trumpet, Malachi Favors on bass, and you on drums, with everyone playing percussion. How did those players strike you when you first hit Chicago?

PW: Well, I don't know, man. They're nothing like they were to me then. It was completely different. The music was so dynamic, really different. Roscoe used to carry a little box of goodies around, like Clarabell, with a little squeaker on it and all sorts of whistles and sound goodies inside. He was really *whimsical*; the music was so light-hearted, not so heavy. It's changed quite a bit in time.

CS: It would seem to me that Roscoe was working to attain similar goals on the horns as you were on the drums—new dynamics and textures; another sort of melodic scope.

PW: Yeah, He was practicing every day.

He's changed considerably since I played with him. Not for good or bad, just something else. The band was beautiful, and it's a shame it was never documented, except on that record *Old Quartet* [Nessa], which was released under Roscoe's name, and was basically just recorded at a rehearsal.

I got so much out of the people who were around Chicago during that period. I developed so much and had a chance to play with so many great people. I played with this great, great harmonica player Little Walter, who taught me so much about rhythm. He used to just sit down and talk to me about music, because I wanted to play a whole lot of different blues musics, so he would tell me about the accents and how they were supposed to feel. He taught me about how to play on the upbeat instead of always playing the downbeat, because then it gets heavy. He said, "See, the blues ain't got to be *heavy*." He just explained things about where the beats were supposed to go to make the music sing.

CS: Who were the drummers during this period of time—your formative years up through the Art Ensemble of Chicago—who gassed you up the most and had the greatest influence?

PW: Some of my favorites? Elvin Jones, Philly Joe Jones, a drummer from St. Louis named Joe Charles—another real coordination man. Ask Elvin about him, too. He had a tremendous influence on my playing. He used to practice every day, every chance he got. He had a fish truck, and had his drums set up in the back of the truck. [Laughs] I'm serious, man. He was a big guy, weighed maybe 300 pounds, and was about 5' 6", you dig, but this cat could play the shit out of the drums. Fast and unbelievably light, especially for a cat that big, and the delicacy of his whole approach made me think about what I was trying to do. He played *pretty*, you know.

And Philly Joe, man. He would play all of these accents against the grain of the beat, really turn things around, but he was *soprecise*, so correct—always. And he was heavily into rudiments, which was in my bag anyhow, and he'd take these rudiments and put them in the most unexpected places. And when he'd take a solo, it would be so *right*, you could practically spell it out. Now Joe Charles didn't play nothing like that, but he would swing you to death. It's hard to describe his solos—it was like push and rush, inhale-exhale or something. Nothing in a set time frame, but he could come out of that and put it on the floor and swing—hard. So Philly Joe had an enormous influence on me, as he did on so many people. Then came Elvin Jones and Tony Williams. When I first saw Elvin with 'Trane when I was living in Cleveland, I went crazy; his thing was so advanced I couldn't believe it—he was playing like funk, swing, blues and free all at the same time.

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Philly and Elvin, but it's not like I wanted to play like them, I just wanted to take some of their tonality and textures—the way they *touch* a drum; the certain feel that they had in breaking up the time. Not to play that way all the time, but to have those colors as an option should the situation demand it. And of course I loved Tony Williams. He sounded like all of the drummers and none of them; really helped free up all the drummers who've listened to him since the '60s, and of course, as far as four-way coordination, his thing was scary—still is.

CS: During this time, when you made the jump from the Art Ensemble of Chicago to Paul Butterfield's band, did starvation play a part in that move?

PW: That was one thing. And we had some conflict in the band; the living situation was pretty conducive to creating music, but I just got tired of living in the basement, and my family not having no money in St. Louis, so I said, "Well, I got to make a change." And when this change came to me, and I told them I *have to go*, they were so upset, they didn't even go out and get a drummer for a very long time. Because the thing we had was so tight, and colorful, but the dues just got too deep. My family was tripping, and I just had to get some money for them. *They were important to me.*

Then Butterfield came along, and I'd been playing with him before. I liked him, and I really enjoyed that time I worked with him. I learned quite a bit from that experience because it was like playing with a big band.

CS: That was probably where most people first got a chance to hear you. What was it like for you coming off of a jazz and r&b road life to suddenly find yourself in the big-time rock 'n' roll circuit?

PW: It was beautiful. A lot of people didn't like the way I played, because it was a really different way of playing the blues; it really wasn't even a blues band because we played so many different things. They thought that I didn't fit in, at first. But after we'd done a few gigs, the music was so dynamic people couldn't help themselves. At that time the band was one of the most fantastic groups of its day. There was Gene Dinwiddie on tenor; I brought David Sanborn in on alto; Elvin Bishop was on guitar; Mark Naftalin on keyboards. I got there about a week after Mike Bloomfield left.

CS: Too bad.

PW: Yeah, well we were in touch, and he wanted me to work with him, but that poor cat was so messed up I just couldn't deal with it. The Butterfield thing lasted about three years and then we had a parting of the ways; it was time for us to all move on to something else, and I wanted to do something on my own. I went to live in Toronto for a while and played with this other band, *Mother Load*, which was really

strange—a commercial band.

CS: What sort of drums and cymbals had you graduated to during this period?

PW: I had some Zildjian cymbals I'd bought years before and kept on using, and some Rogers drums that they were supposed to have given me. We did a commercial for Fender and Rogers, and they sent me a contract and I signed up, but I never saw the drums. So Butterfield ended up buying the drums for me, but I ended up paying for them [laughs]. It was those black Rogers you've seen me play for years. They were alright.

CS: After *Mother Load*, was that the time of *Full Moon*?

PW: Yeah, fantastic band. We put it together ourselves—Buzzy Feiten, Gene Dinwiddie, and Neil Larsen. That was really one of the very first of the jazz-rock-funk bands. Actually, just before that, I had moved down to Woodstock, and that's when I played with Jimi Hendrix, which was a beautiful experience. He lived not too far from me. I had a house there, so did *The Band* and Dylan and all those cats. So he'd come over to my crib or I'd go over to his, and we'd just play. It was fun.

CS: You didn't tape any of it?

PW: Jimi Hendrix taped every time he played, so somebody has got all of that stuff—all of it. I didn't believe in it myself. I didn't have no tape recorders, no telephones. I didn't want to be bothered by it.

CS: How did his music strike you, having

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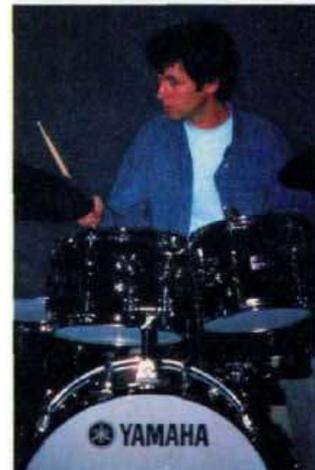
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come through bands as different as the Art Ensemble and Paul Butterfield?

PW: Me and him got along well. I'd met him before when I just went with Butterfield, down at the old Cafe Au Go Go. He came to hear us and couldn't believe it. He said, "I ain't never heard nothing like that." So he brought a tape recorder down to tape us, because we were one of the first horn bands in rock. It was a scene, alright. There was a club used to be around where Electric Ladyland was—huge place, but I can't remember its name—where cats from different bands would meet up, and jam all night. Everyone from Jimi to Sly Stone. So I was familiar with him and his music. It wasn't all that different then what I'd been hearing all my life. Jimi Hendrix played the blues, man, played them strong and free, and had his own melodic thing. He was a player, man, that's what I thought of Jimi Hendrix. They wasted that dude, I believe. I don't think he went out on his own. I think he had help.

CS: How come Full Moon didn't make it?

PW: We just couldn't hold it together. It's hard. I've been in so many bands like that, where the music was strong, but it just wasn't in the cards.

CS: What happened after Full Moon?

PW: I went down to Memphis where I worked as a session drummer for Stax, and did some writing.

CS: That's interesting. Having had some experience with Motown, what do you

think distinguished the Stax sound from the Detroit soul sound?

PW: Al Jackson, man. That backbeat he had was so fat and laid back. That's more of a country sound. That's where reggae comes from, man. From the southern r&b and New Orleans. That's the reason I went down there, because I wanted to get some more knowledge under my belt about what that feeling was about. I had to learn to lay back even further than ever. There are different kinds of laid back, and I never used to understand what they were talking about. Like when I was at Motown, I could play, but they'd always be on me: "Man, you ain't laying back enough." And I'd say, "Laying back? What are you talking about?" Then when I got to Stax everybody'd be telling me to lay back and be tight. "Make it tight, and lay it back on the back of the beat." Okay. Okay. I'll check that out.

Like, you know Willie Hall? Really dynamic drummer, who learned most of his stuff from Al Jackson, and later did a thing with the Blues Brothers. Well, I used to watch him a lot. Did a lot of watching, right up until about 1976, when I returned to New York when there was the resurgence of jazz here, when all of the cats I'd been playing with and heard out in Chicago, St. Louis and the West Coast came to Manhattan and put some fire to the scene. Cats like David Murray, Julius Hemphill, Oliver Lake, Roscoe Mitchell,

Muhil Richard Abrams, James Newton—all these great players. It was funny coming up here after playing with all these country/western and cajun cats.

CS: What's the difference between southern funk and cajun?

PW: Whew . . . that's tough to explain. If you hear it you'll know it. It's like, more folksy. You see, the further you get down into the bayou, the rhythm starts changing. When I was down at Stax I played with this cat Coon [laughs] . . . these were country people, you know, and he'd take me down to Mississippi, out into the sticks; get drunk on cheap wine, and get with these black cats who'd be playing country/western and the blues, and it would just carry me away to hear the real country, not like this commercial stuff people hear up North. Real country is just like the blues, and it's a dying art.

CS: So what brought you back to New York?

PW: Anthony Braxton had been looking for me, because there was a resurgence of the new music, and we'd done a concert together with bassist Dave Holland at Town Hall when I was still with Full Moon. He had written out some very hard music with a lot of rhythm and time changes, a lot of purely textural kinds of sound, and it was a challenge that I enjoyed while it lasted.

Then I met Olu Dara, and that was the best thing that happened to me since I got

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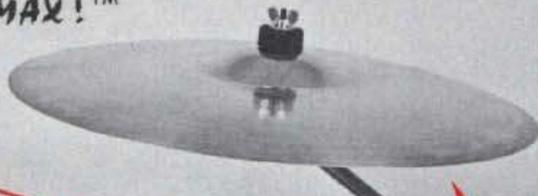
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Right now I'm putting all of my own energies towards Olu and Lester and my own thing. And what Lester has together, I'm going to help him develop that and really make it work so you can see all the connections between the different musics, from the root to the source. It's one of the best bands Lester's ever had, with Albert Dailey on piano, John Mixon, Henri Brown, Fontella Bass and her mother, and David Pierson.

CS: What equipment are you using now?

PW: Anything and everything. I got drums called "Mismatch." I had this beautiful old snare drum which got stolen, and damned if I didn't get it back. This young drummer, J.T. Lewis, got it back for me. I was sitting in a bar the other day, and he came up to me and said, "This is your drum, man. A cat gave it to me, but it had your name inside and everything, so here it is." That was beautiful. I couldn't believe it, man. It's an old Gretsch from 1939, a 6 1/2 x 14 and it's fat and powerful and open. I can get anything I want out of it.

Then I've got an old Ludwig 20" bass drum, a 14 x 14 Rogers floor tom—both single-headed, with a CS head on the bass drum and an old beat-up *Ambassador* on the floor tom. Then I've got this set of timbales that I'm using up top as aerial toms, and that's it. It's a funky set-up, but I don't care about the heads or the shells or any of that. I can make 'em work because I've got over 30 years of experience making any set of drums do what I want.

CS: What are you playing in the way of cymbals these days?

PW: Paistes. The *Rude* people. I've got a pair of 14" *Formula 602* heavy hi-hats which are real crisp and bright sounding. They work surprisingly well with *Rudes*.

CS: I can't believe what a controlled sound you get with the *Rudes*.

CS: I know. But it's like I been telling you—it's about *the touch*. I've got a 20", a



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CS: The Zildjians you said you were playing back during the '70s: were they all A's?

PW: All A. Zildjians. I couldn't find a K. worth looking at. They would never sound right to me—you really had to look *hard*. I'd buy everything at Manny's in those days, and I could have gone to the K. warehouse in Brooklyn, but I'd picked out some great A's. Then they were stolen from a rehearsal studio up around 48th Street—cymbals, drums, the works—so I had to start all over again. I was using an 18" A. medium ride back in those days.

CS: Pretty radical for a rock band.

PW: Hell, I've used a Paiste flat ride in a rock band, too. That's what I had, and that's what was available, so I made the most of it. I try and be flexible, so that any sound I want to hear, I can get out of a cymbal. I mean, they're all different, for sure, but I am the director of the drums—I play the cymbals, *they* don't play *me*. It's up to me, how I play them. So I know where the different tones are on the cymbals and the drums.

That's *my* thing—pulling the sound out

of the instruments. Any volume, any dynamic point, whatever texture you want to get, you can find, just by adjusting your touch. Not playing down on the drums, but playing up, snapping that stick off the head or the metal to let the sound come out. Having enough strength to be able to play real, real, soft or bring it all up for those spontaneous moments. You see, I used to study gymnastics, and I always was conscious of bringing that technique to the trap set. Think of them the same way. Be so agile, you could be centered in your power; sit up straight, and go from one side to the other with no wasted motion, just like a dancer. That's something drummers have to work very hard at: break a sweat, concentrate on your body. I see so many drummers who just have a terrible posture at the drums—you have to keep yourself centered. Otherwise that makes for some strange drumming, to me. You can't get to things fast enough, and you end up dissipating all your energy. I'll see cats like that and they'll be overplaying like crazy, just trying to move around. I sit up real straight, and try and feel the center of my power in the small of my back; then I have control of all my extremities.

CS: Were there any specific exercises you worked on to develop power?

PW: I used to have these two hard rubber balls, and I used to work with them all the time until my forearms got real strong. Used to do 200 pushups a day, to build up

the shoulders and back. Because you need that to play for two or three hours at a stretch.

CS: What is it that annoys you or comprises the biggest fault among the drummers you see today?

PW: These guys who have so much hands but no feeling. That annoys the hell out of me. All that technique but no feeling, and you cannot teach feeling at school. It's a shame that there's no place you can go and learn it, because a lot of that source material is dying, like the music of the South we were talking about; going down there and learning what the music really is; playing in jam sessions with different people and just trying to learn about different music.

Most of the young guys ... I don't know, they just don't listen to older people. You talk to the young musicians today, and they don't listen to the older musicians—what they have to say or what they have to play. Everything is about what's happening right now, right now, right now, and it's a shame. Talking about jazz-rock, fusion and all but not knowing anything about the blues or gospel, or the real classical music or the beginnings of acoustic jazz. It's all interrelated, and yet when they get you into the schools all they be talking about is classical music. They don't have nobody out there teaching the kids about blues music. They've lost touch with where the music's coming from. And that makes me sad, it truly does.

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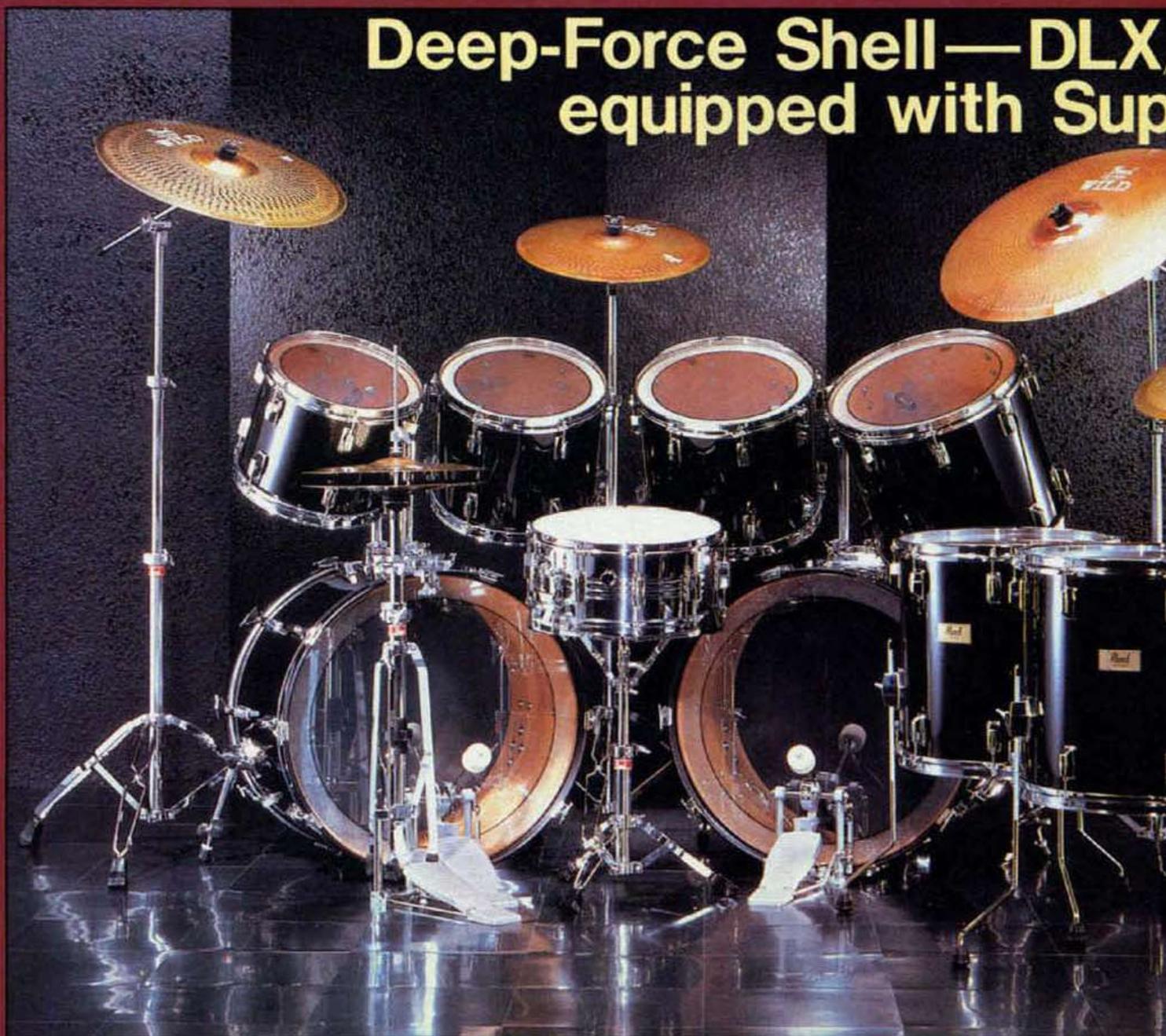
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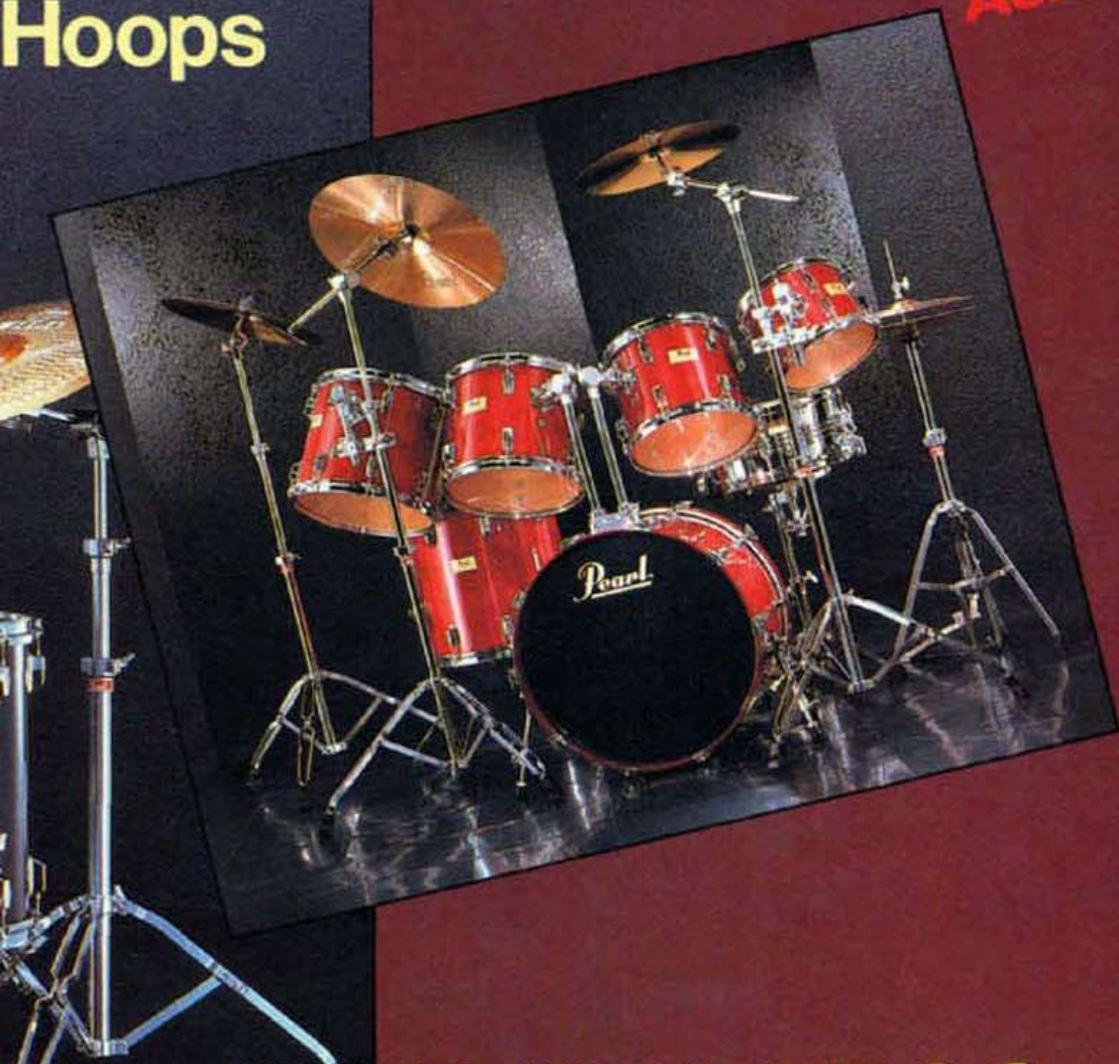
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Junkanoo

The national cultural festival of the Bahamas is called Junkanoo. Held annually during the Christmas season, this organized parade of musicians and dancers displays originally designed multi-colored costumes while dancing to a rhythmic pulse of cowbells, whistles, bugles and goatskin drums, creating the traditional and authentic sound of Bahamian Junkanoo music. The origins of the festival are uncertain, but it was held by Africans who were brought to these and other Caribbean islands as slaves during the 16th and 17th centuries. It eventually faded into obscurity in most areas, but thrived in the Bahamas and has developed into a creative music and art form.

The most recognizable trademark of Junkanoo music is the rhythmic patterns of the hand-beaten goatskin drum. The rhythms are forcefully played, and a strong accent on the downbeat is always maintained. The right hand continually moves from the low-sounding center to the higher pitched edge of the drum, while the left hand plays the more subtle accents, producing a kind of call and response between the main downbeat and other notes of the bar. Following are standard Junkanoo beats:

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Groups contain about 10 to 15 drums of different sizes and tones, 20 to 50 cowbells, whistles and bugles which also vary in size and tone, and 7 to 10 melodic instruments.

The cowbells maintain constant rhythmic patterns which add a distinctive drive and reinforcement to the beat. Each cowbell contains an internal hammer or bell, and is shaken in pairs with an up/down hand motion. Some are also played externally or knocked together producing complementing syncopated figures.

The whistles and bugles are not limited to the basic rhythm and serve to enrich the texture rhythmically. The varying pitches of these instruments provide an interesting contrast to the "ringing" sound of the cowbells.

Also occasionally added to give the ensemble a fuller sound is a car tire rim, which is played externally while strapped around the shoulder.

Below is a score of a typical Junkanoo percussion ensemble:

5

Goat skin drs. (1)
Goat skin drs. (2)
Cowbells (1)
Cowbells (2)
Cowbells (played ext.)
Whistles (1)
Whistles (2)
Bugles
Solo Car rim

The festival is not the only occasion during which Junkanoo music is heard. Native songs have been composed with its unique rhythm and are performed by regular nightclub bands which include a set drummer.

The "Junkanoo feel" on the drumset is derived from the basic goatskin drum and cowbell patterns.

The bass drum plays the important downbeat and low tones, while the hands alternate between the snare (snares off) and tomtoms, duplicating the high and mid tones of the goatskin drum.

6

R.H. (C.B.)
7

A mounted cowbell can be used to simulate the rhythm and effect of the hand-shaken cowbell. The right hand stays on the cowbell while the left alternates between the drums.

The continuous 16th-note pattern can be played in the mouth of the cowbell. Mount the cowbell at an angle facing towards you, use an up (u) and down (d) wrist motion and alternate the stick (preferably with the butt end) inside the cowbell. This creates an interesting roll-like effect.

8

U D U D U D U D U etc.

↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ ↓ ↑ etc.

R.H. (C.B.)

4/4

Once these cowbell techniques have been perfected with the right hand, play the other goatskin drum patterns on the drumset with the left hand (tom/snare) and bass drum. Try distributing each rhythm around the drums in as many ways as possible, keeping the downbeat "locked in" with the bass drum.

The hi-hat can also be added, playing straight quarter and/or 8th notes. If a whistle or similar instrument is available, blow or sing its basic rhythm while simultaneously using the hands and feet. Once this is accomplished, you will have integrated the important rhythmic elements of the Junkanoo percussion ensemble into a cohesive unit.

9

Whistle

Cowbell (R.H.)

Hi-Hat

4/4

or try this:

Whistle

Cowbell (R.H.)

Hi-Hat

4/4

During regular performance however, the more common versions of Junkanoo on the drumset are used. The right and left hands alternate from hi-hat to snare and tom-toms, adding occasional rim-shots.

Junkanoo beats are energetically played at a bright tempo, although a slower, more relaxed groove is also often used.

Legend:

- = rim shot (optional)
- = Hi-Hat open

Tempo: ♩ = 104-160

Right T.T. H.H.
Left T.T.
S.D.
Fl. T.T.
B.D.

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

4/4

Other interesting patterns have evolved from the overall Junkanoo percussion ensemble rhythm and its nuances. When fused with calypso and funk elements some very exciting and challenging results are produced.

18

19

20

21

22

23

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Practicing and Boredom

One problem that all drummers face sooner or later is being bored while practicing. In the early years there are several reasons for being bored.

First of all, the exercises for beginning drummers require dedication because they are so elementary. Keeping up one's interest can be difficult. However, a student who completes the first year of study is over the toughest part. Toughest, that is, in the sense of remaining enthusiastic. Fortunately, for most of us, youthful zeal and desire carry us past the first year.

The next problem usually occurs when the student has developed enough to play the rudiments and basic drumset patterns with a certain degree of skill. At this point, these same exercises and patterns can be-

come very, very monotonous. Even though repetition is essential to develop skill, strength and control, it can also be negative. Repetition can become so boring that it discourages the student and interest may be lost.

To overcome this, the student should be presented with new, challenging material all the time. Even though certain things will have to be practiced many times, it is possible to keep the spirit intact by always having something new to practice. In this way the repetition skills are developed and the mind is continually being stimulated with new ideas and materials. This is a good balance.

After playing for some years another problem can develop: You can become so used to playing the licks you have practiced, that it becomes impossible to think of new ones. Again, repetition can become a problem. You may have practiced the same things so many times that you have created a "rut" for yourself.

The study of other musical instruments can break up boredom and stimulate you musically. For example, study vibes, xylophone or marimba. The keyboard experience will help your understanding of music theory. Music is so vast that it is difficult not to remain interested if you are a serious musician. Studying music will also help you to understand your role as a drummer more thoroughly.

Study piano if you have one available. There is no need to be a super technical piano player. However, most drummers are weak in harmony and theory. Many studio players, such as Harvey Mason and Ed Shaughnessy, have very strong backgrounds on mallets, timpani and other instruments. They both feel that this musical training has been invaluable in helping them to keep up with new musical styles.

If you have been playing a long time, I suggest practicing with music. Headphones and modern recording techniques have made this a very important form of practicing. Even if you are warming up on a practice pad before work, put on some music. Do your warm up to some good records and practice in tempo with the music. This is much more stimulating than just warming up on the pad.

Transcribe rhythms and fills from records. Write out short sections or basic rhythms. Writing them out and looking at the transcribed beats will increase your understanding of them. Also, you will develop better listening skills by writing out what you hear because you have to listen so carefully to transcribe beats accurately. Transcribing will also improve your reading because you are working with your eyes and ears.

Go to see other people play. You will see and hear ideas that might not have occurred to you. Although listening to records is fun and rewarding, seeing and hearing a great drummer live is special. Even though you don't understand everything you see and hear the first time, it will stimulate your imagination and make you feel like running home and practicing.

Imagination and boredom are opposites. Instead of trying to "overcome" boredom, try using your imagination. Try new combinations of old ideas. Turn rudiments around. Play patterns backwards. Use one hand on one drum and the other hand on a different drum. Play a pattern that you usually play on one drum on two drums. You will create some new sounds.

The results will not always be great. However, the results *will* be interesting. And, every now and then, you will discover something hot. Also, if you keep exercising your imagination you will also begin to develop your own style. You will develop your own point of view.

In a nutshell, if you are bored while practicing, practice something new. Study something new. Listen to something new. Reach out and be imaginative. Listen to new styles.

Remember, repetition can become very boring unless something new is added every now and then. Also, remember that although the study of drumming is very worthwhile, it is only a small part of music. It is a *very important* but still a small part of music in general. So, study music *and* drumming.

When drumming, musical sensitivity and imagination are combined, the result is a creative, innovative and musical drummer. The result is also a drummer with a personal sound and style.



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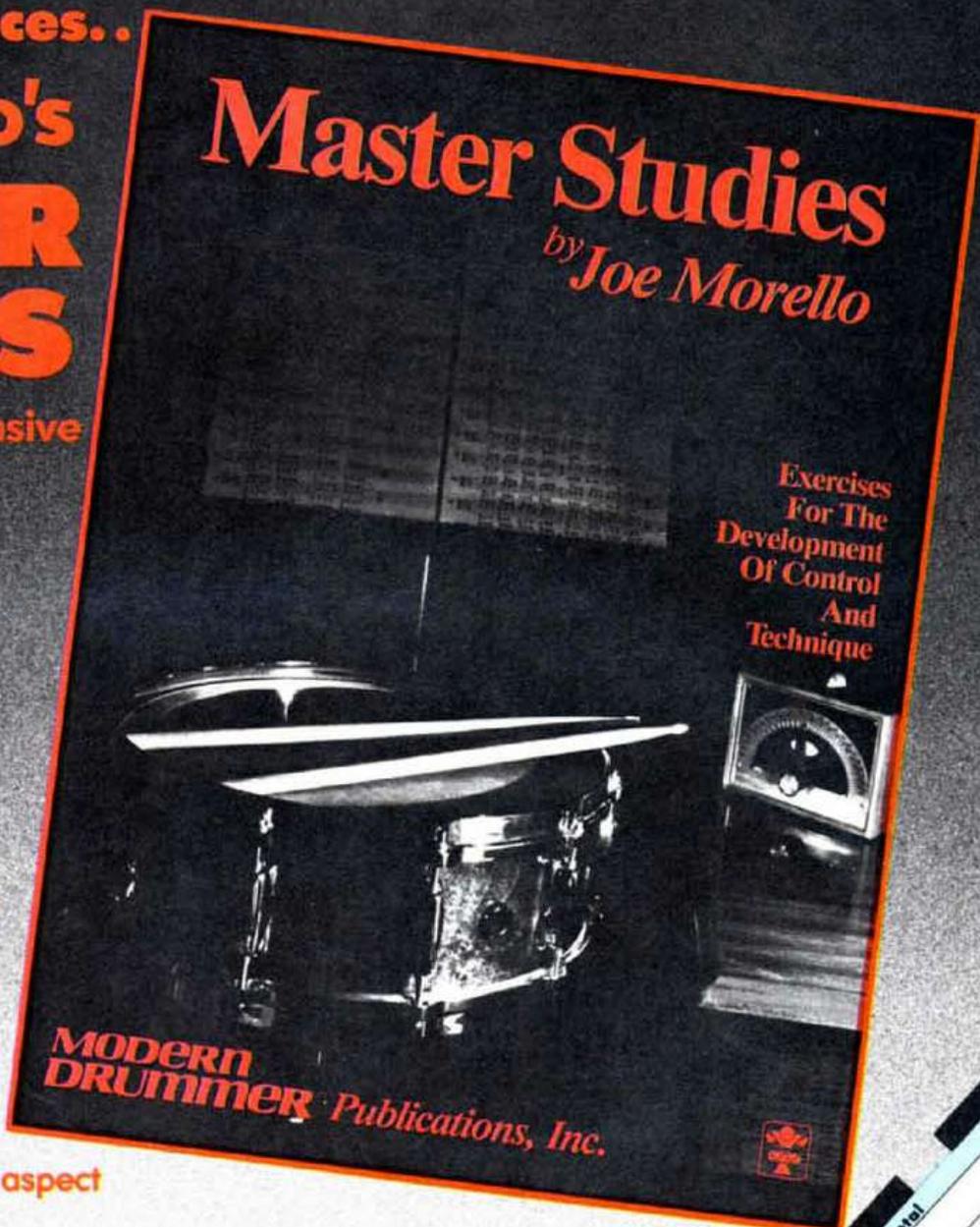
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To help answer these questions, I've designed a study using some very basic rock beats, and exploring the cymbal and hi-hat variations most commonly used today.

To begin with, learn these simple rock beats. Your right hand should play on a closed hi-hat.

1
Cym. or
H.H.
S.D.
B.D.

2

3

4

5

6

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8

9

10

After you've become familiar with all of the beats, apply these cymbal variations to them.

1

2

3

4

5

R L R L R L R L etc.

I've found that for learning purposes, it helps to write out the beat with the cymbal variation above it.

1

2

3

R L R L R L R L

4

With your right hand playing on a ride cymbal, learn these basic hi-hat variations, then apply them to the rock beats.

1

Cym. or
H.H.
SD
BD

HH
w/
foot

2

3

4

When you get the feel for the hi-hat variations with the different rock beats, try them with the cymbal variations.

1

2

3

4

This study should give you a good idea of the options open for using the right hand and the hi-hat. Explore the many possibilities. In so doing, you'll become a more versatile and musical drummer.

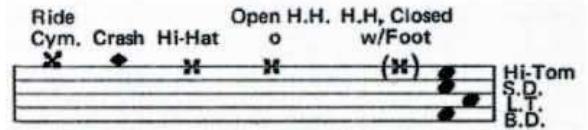
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The musical score is written for guitar and bass. It begins with a 4/4 time signature and features several triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above the notes). The score is divided into sections labeled A, B, and D. Section A starts with a 4/4 time signature and includes a fill figure. Section B continues in 4/4. Section D begins with a 2/4 time signature and concludes with a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.



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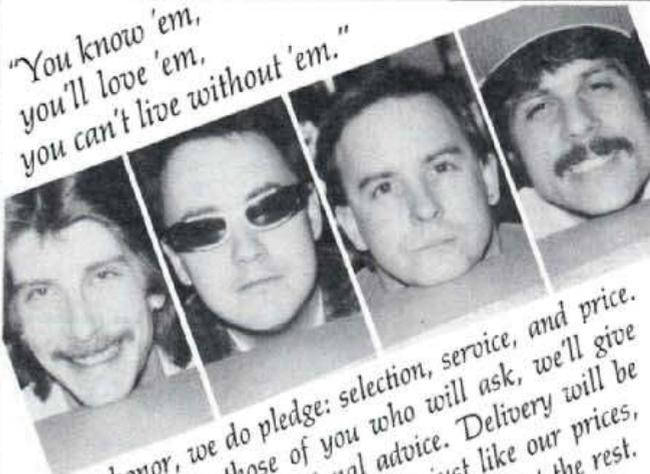
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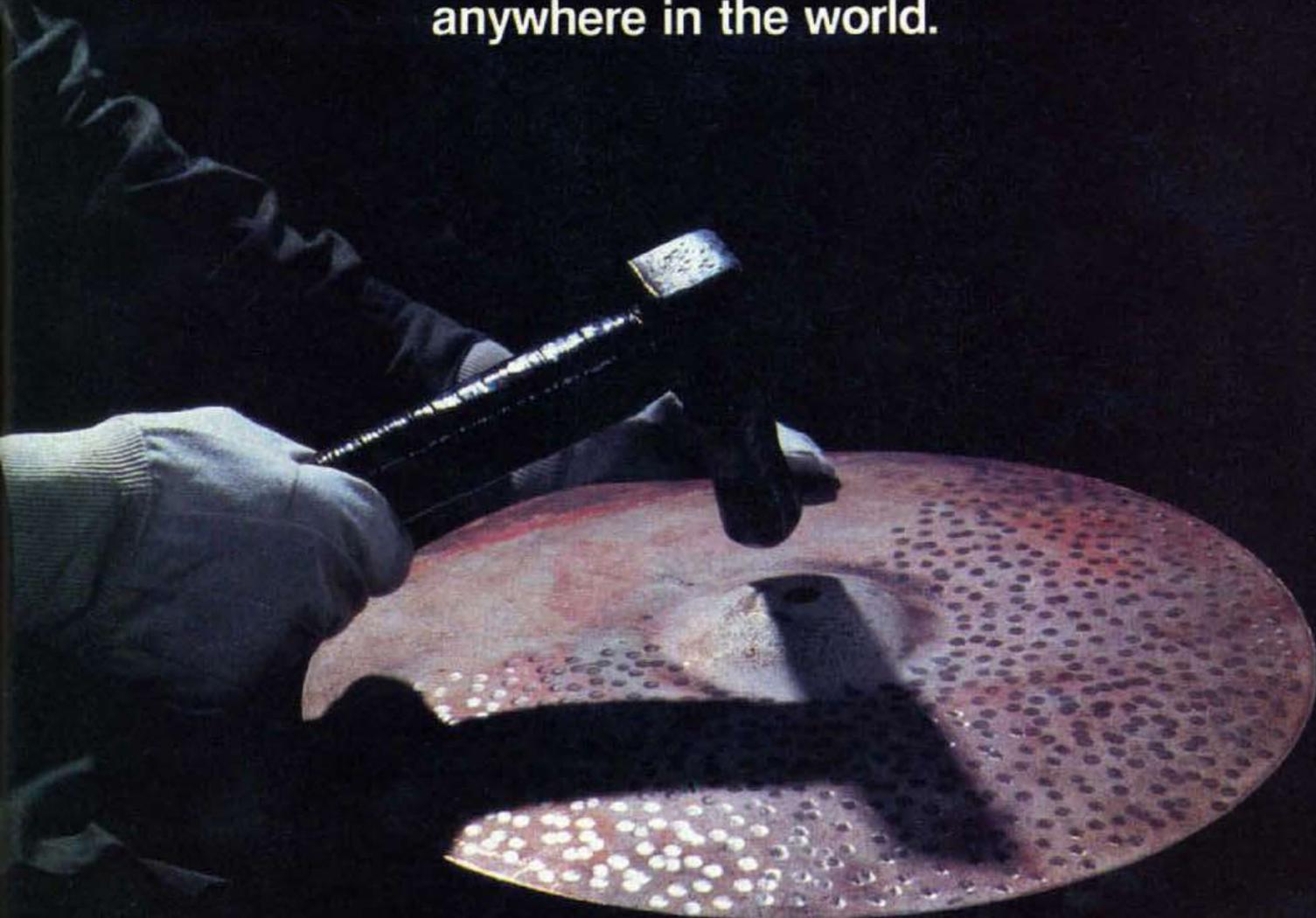
ritard

Detailed description: The score consists of two main sections, C and D, each with four staves. Section C begins with a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, many marked with 'x' to indicate specific articulation. It features several triplet markings (the number '3') and a change in time signature from 4/4 to 2/4. Section D continues this pattern, also including triplet markings and a change to 2/4 time. The final staff includes a 'Cowbell' part and a 'ritard' (ritardando) instruction. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

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Yamash'ta continued from page 20

to many countries, and so many people wanted to join that we had auditions and we eventually became an international cast.

SH: You also started in Japan as a composer of film soundtracks?

SY: Yeah. I was a sort of special studio musician and many composers asked me to do special musical effects. A lot of film scoring cannot be written down in musical notation, so they needed special musicians to do it, to watch the screen and to come up with these effects. I was somehow able to do that for them. That was my speciality.

SH: So you worked through *Man From the East* and *East Wind*. After *East Wind* came what, the *Go* project?

SY: Same time.

SH: How did you get in touch with Michael Shrieve and Steve Winwood?

SY: Michael was looking for me. He was still with Santana. I didn't know him, but his musical passion got through to me. My theater company was very sensational throughout Europe. Almost every rock musician, painter and actor was very shocked. It was a very big influence on theater and musical forms. By that time almost everybody in Europe knew who I was. That's why I had an easy time finding musicians. Michael had heard my solo percussion album and he wanted to meet me. He wanted to play with me and do something very experimental.

SH: How did Steve Winwood come into the picture?

SY: Steve and I were both with Island records, and they mentioned that he was interested in playing, so he came along.

SH: After you recorded the first *Go*, did you tour in Europe?

SY: Only Paris and London. It was too difficult to keep that band together. Everybody was a soloist, so there were many, many problems.

SH: Following that short tour, you recorded the second part of *Go* and then toured it in America with different people. That's the last anybody in America has heard from you. What have you been doing for four years?

SY: American audiences can hear my music in Paul Mazursky's film, *The Tempest*. I did the soundtrack for that. Paul already had a soundtrack in mind because he was listening to my music when he was shooting.

SH: Your music was written before the film was made?

SY: Yeah, some of it. He used some pieces that I'd already done and I added some other new material.

SH: Did you perform any of this or did you just write it and conduct it?

SY: Just wrote it and conducted it, that's all. It was done here in Tokyo. Michael Shrieve came over to do some of it.

SH: Have you been performing?

SY: Only once I performed outside Japan. It was in London last year. It was a new theatre work called *Iroha*. The piece is based on a poem written down by a famous Buddhist priest. It deals with a change of life.

SH: So you've been going through a change of life for four years, mainly concentrating on composing?

SY: Well, I compose and perform. I have to perform music that I write.

Iroha has taken me a long time to write. It has a five part conception. It's about energy: fire, water, wind, earth and cosmic fire.

SH: After you finish the last part of *Iroha*, are you going to complete *Go*?

SY: I don't know. I have other things I want to do. *Go* is not complete yet. There is still another part left, but I have something else I want to do. It's called *Shikisokuzeku*. It's complicated, but it's composed of three basic symbols. The first part means "conscience." The second one means "understanding" and the last means "then what should one do?" That's basically it, but it gets long and involved. I don't know when I can finish it. To me, writing music is almost like doing research and reporting your findings. It's a constant day-to-day thing.

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own style of music—my art form—which every artist has to find in his lifetime. Like a painter. Every painter has his own style. Most music forms are not for me. I can't copy other people. Copying is most difficult for me, because I have my own character.

SH: So when you are playing classical music, that's difficult? I don't mean to *physically* play it, but just the fact that the form is usually very restricted to what's on the page. When you play Prokofiev, for example, you have to play what he's written.

SY: Yes, but not the note, not the note. You play what's *behind* the note. Most musicians only play the note. But music is not just playing a note. What's *behind* it—that is the most important.

Notation is only a technique. It's a signal to other people. But what's behind it is most important. Like a child, when babies cannot speak language, they get through to mothers without words what they want, whether they're hungry or whatever. That is like a music form.

Today's music, especially rock, becomes too realistic—too real. For me, the biggest freedom is not in reality. I get most freedom in creative work, because if I put down some note, then I can put any note down after that. That's freedom. No one says anything about it. That for me is the biggest freedom I can get in life.

Before, when I was deliberately looking for freedom, I could never get it. But now I've found it. That's why I've enjoyed the last four years. But young people don't know about that. They haven't got through that experience. No matter how much you get rich or famous, you don't get freedom. You can't get free.

The only freedom I get is by working. I can write anything I want. My actions are dictated only by my feelings, not by rules or what anybody else says. To find that out took me 35 years.

And I'm very grateful to be a musician, so I can be free. I think people like Beethoven, Mozart and Bach found freedom in that. That's why they wrote such great music. That's why it's still good 300 years later. Society changes, the system changes, but the arts remain. That's the greatness of it.

Verrell continued from page 21

Hall. When it was all over we got an ovation for three or four minutes. And when we came off our heads were light as feathers. We felt we had conquered America. We realized we could hold our own against any big band in the world. I'm only glad I

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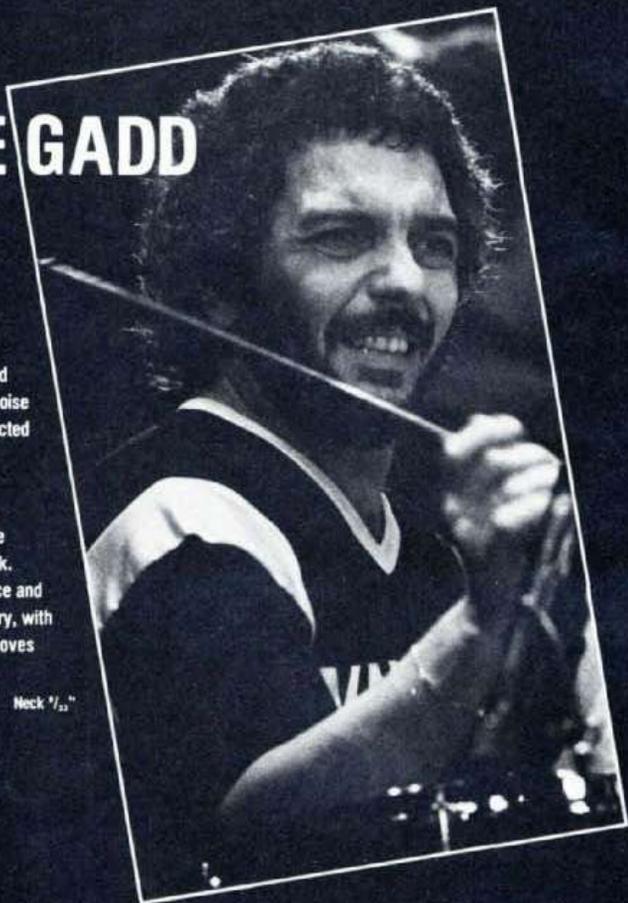
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was around to be in it at the time. I've got memories to last me the rest of my life from that band.

SG: Do you have a particular approach to playing time?

RV: Yes. Sit down, enjoy it and relax. Time is time. I can't really explain it. When I first started playing I didn't have good time. I was so bent on trying to knock hell out of the drums, I didn't think too much about time. I tended to race a lot in the faster numbers and drag in the slower ones, until I became aware of this time factor. What makes these American bands sound so good? It's the time. They work hard on it. They practice with metronomes and things like that. They're meticulous about time. A front line player, particularly in the jazz field, is happiest when the drummer has good time. He's not so worried about the technique and fills. As long as the time is good and he has something to sit on, that's it.

SG: Do you find yourself consciously having to feel the time in a different way for different types of music? I'm thinking, for instance, of laid-back things.

RV: You sometimes get players who will phrase things slightly behind the beat, and so the drummer does too. But stuff that is all laid back? Yes. I did a record with Burt Bacharach called "The Look of Love." That was the most laid-back thing I've ever done. We had all the time in the world just to sit on it and relax. Burt made us aware of this. When we heard the finished product, it was great.

Ray Charles is another one who can do that. How about Erroll Garner? His left hand was always behind the beat.

SG: You played on a lot of the rock sessions during the '60s.

RV: My daughter was interested in the pop music of the time, but the better stuff, the more funky sort.

SG: But you had been involved in pop sessions before that?

RV: Yes, but that was the simple rock 'n' roll rubbish. Anyone could play it. It became more interesting when the Motown stuff started coming through; funky stuff with a lovely bass guitar sound. My daughter would have this music on quite loudly in her room and I'd hear it and say to myself, "Hey, that sounds good." And I became interested in it, so much so, that when I was called on to do it in the studio, I knew what it was all about. So I made the change along with the fashion.

SG: Which means you kept working.

RV: Right. I kept working. Some people scoffed at it. Can't blame them really because the original rock stuff was just soul destroying, absolute rubbish. But I wanted to work so I had to go along and play it. I used to sit in studios and have a pop group looking on. I'd sit in there with session musicians and play some terrible number while the group whose name it came under stood there and watched. Then they'd get

the credit for it, have a hit record and make a fortune.

SG: Do you think these pop musicians deserved to be replaced by session players, or was it that the producers felt more comfortable with experienced people like yourself?

RV: Well, you see they were not capable of going into a studio for a three-hour session and completing two titles in three hours. Some of them were so bad, it would take them nearer two weeks. It was simple recording in those days, not much overdubbing. We would go in and do it without any messing about. Studio time was valuable. Sure the producers were behind it. They wanted to make money, have hits. So they'd get us to make the records, then get these young cats with good looks and give them lots of publicity. When you see them on television they're only miming to the music. They're not really playing it.

SG: What about your live playing during this period? Did it more or less cease?

RV: Completely ceased. Everything was pre-recorded. We never did anything live at all. Talking about television shows, they were all pre-recorded as well. Except later on when I joined Jack Parnell at A.T.V. studios where we did all the big shows. The concert spot for the Jack Parnell band in *The Tom Jones Show*, that was live. The show was recorded to be broadcast later, but we played live in front of the studio



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audience. We didn't get a second shot at it. **SG:** When did you join Jack Parnell at A.T.V.?

RV: About 14 or 15 years ago. I had been recording with Tom Jones and he was due to do a TV series. His manager insisted that I play drums with the orchestra at A.T.V., and that Jim Sullivan play guitar. I thought I was just going along to do the Tom Jones series, but as it turned out, I stayed on with Jack Parnell and did all his work after that.

SG: Which led to some very interesting things.

RV: I should say so. We had some marvelous guest artists along, like Stevie Wonder.

Did you know he's a fantastic drummer? He was trying to explain to me what he wanted on a number called "For Once in My Life." We were pre-recording the track and he was going to sing on it later. I couldn't quite get what he wanted, so I asked him to do it. I watched him and he was fantastic, the bass drum particularly. He's got a boogaloo style with a fantastic right foot. Completely new approach at the time.

SG: Was it the technique or the timing which impressed you?

RV: The timing; the placement of it. I couldn't explain it, it was just natural. I learned a lot by watching him there. He

was terrific. Those were the sort of guests we would get at A.T.V. You never knew what was coming next, until eventually, we had this *Muppet Show* turn up.

SG: How did that all come about?

RV: Well, we were told that we start a new series on Monday called *The Muppets*, a puppet show. I thought, "Oh, Christ, this is going to be a bore, but it's a job." So we turned up on Monday morning and the first thing we heard when we put the headphones on was the leader of the Muppets, Jim Henson. He was singing that thing, "Mna-na-na-na"! And it was quite hilarious, you know. But we still didn't realize what was in store for us—what *The Muppets* would turn into. We had every guest artist you could name—a different one each week. We would spend about three hours doing the recording on a Monday and they'd spend the rest of the week putting it all together. It wasn't until I saw the first show that I realized how terrific it was. It started getting a lot of publicity and it built into a monster show. We were looking forward to doing it every week.

SG: What about the "Animal" drum sound? Was it the Ronnie Verrell sound, or did you tune the drums to be in character?

RV: They showed me this ugly little puppet with the staring eyes and screwed up face, and asked me to sound the way I could imagine him sounding. I didn't change the drums much. I slacked off the tom-toms to get a more thuddy tone. The snare drum was as usual. It was more in the playing. Animal was really mad and *way out*.

SG: What about the legendary drum battle between Animal and Buddy Rich?

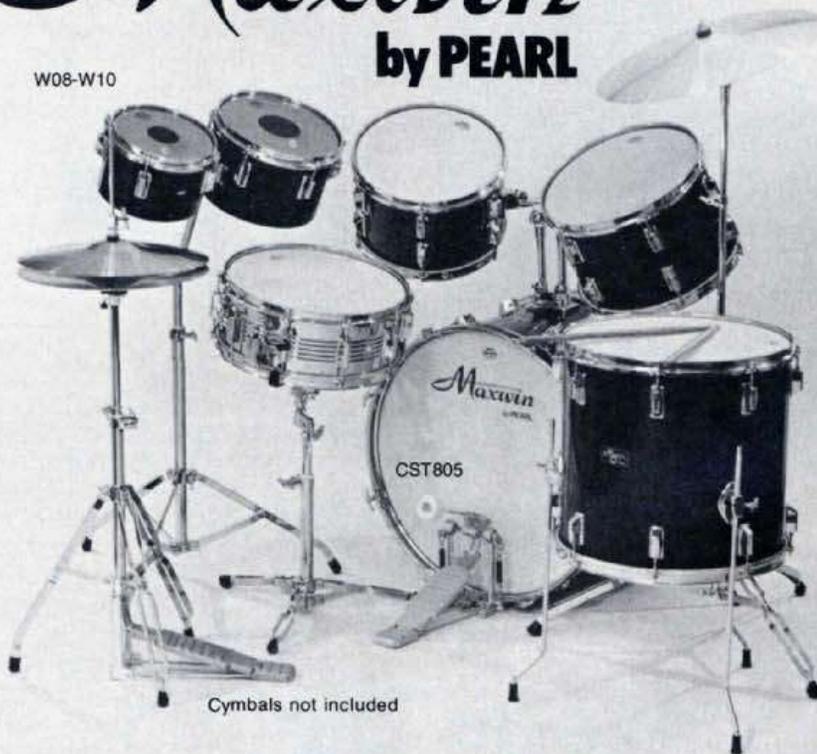
RV: One day they said, "Hey, we've got Buddy Rich coming in a few weeks." I couldn't believe it. Buddy Rich! He's my idol. I said, "I hope I won't have to do a drum battle or anything like that with him," which, of course, I did.

I said, "What am I going to do? He's the absolute master. I can't add much to what Buddy does." They said, "It's not you, it's Animal. Animal will just be his natural self." Frank Oz, who works Animal, had to get the hand movements right, so we worked out a routine together. Buddy would do four bars or eight bars, and Animal would answer him. To get the movement synchronized, we worked his bits out in advance. Frank asked me not to use the cymbals too often because it was difficult for him. So I kept it fairly simple. We went over it again and again. Frank got it off perfectly; he was simply fantastic. Buddy

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was delighted with the whole thing. I was a bit nervous, but it was great. Buddy enjoyed every minute of it.

We were under a bit of a handicap, because Buddy's drums were quite a long way from mine. I was behind a curtain watching Animal. Buddy would do eight, then I'd do it with Animal. But Buddy was such a long way off, that I had to be careful to come in accurately after his eight bars, and he couldn't hear me that well. Anyway it seemed to work out all right.

SG: I find it fascinating that you, Animal, and Buddy were all in the studio doing it simultaneously. I always imagined the visual bit with the puppet was edited on afterwards.

RV: No, not edited at all. One take and it worked out fine. Anyway, you couldn't ask Buddy to keep doing it. It's very exhausting doing those drum duets, and he had to go into a long solo after that, until Animal broke the snare drum over his head, admitting that Buddy had won.

SG: Which you didn't mind doing?

RV: Had nothing to do with me, it was Animal, not Ronnie Verrell. I was glad I was working for Animal and not for myself. Buddy's got quite a few tricks. I wouldn't fancy myself in a heavyweight bout with him. I don't think any drummer would.

SG: Animal has got a good reputation among musicians for good, exciting playing.

RV: Really? Well if he has, then that's a feather in my cap I suppose.

SG: Exactly. So how do you feel about being anonymous? When people hear Animal and say, "We like that," they're listening to Ronnie Verrell.

RV: That's a difficult question. Animal has meant a lot to me financially. *The Muppet Show* was so popular that we get a lot of repeats. These shows are played all over the world. It's more profitable than any show I've been in before. So I love Animal for that.

SG: You're doing some more live playing now. But what about the studio work? Is the drum computer making things difficult?

RV: Very much so. It doesn't matter what you do, or how good you are, along comes this Linn drum machine which can give them any sound they want, volume they want, tempo they want, at the push of a button. You don't have to be a drummer to use it. It's not very healthy for the business. It's making things hard for a lot of drummers. There just isn't the studio work around now. Thank goodness for televi-

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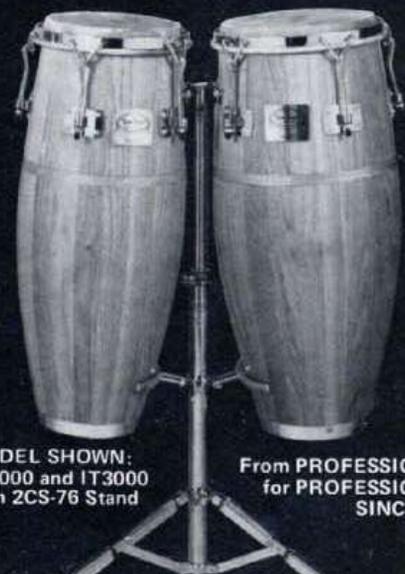
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sion, live work and jazz clubs. Whereas I used to do three or four sessions a day, these days I'm lucky if I get three a week. The machine has taken over. It's more economical to use the machine, and they can probably do it in their front room. They don't have to pay for studio time. It's not only the drums. There are machines now which can produce the sounds of all the instruments in the orchestra. Sad isn't it? You're just listening to microchips really. SG: Do you think this is going to last, or are people going to get fed up with it and want to listen to real musicians again? RV: Do they really know they're *not* listening to real musicians? I ask you. SG: And if they did, would they care? RV: Would they care? Exactly. As long as there's a beat going, they don't care if it's a machine or a man. I've watched them at discos. They don't care what's going on as long as there's this thumping noise. So what price quality these days? The craftsmanship and artistry have gone out of it. The machine has taken over.

But, as I say, I shall keep playing live. It's one thing a machine can't do. You can't have a machine on stage playing to an audience, can you? They want to see something. And there's nothing better than a live big band, eight brass, five saxes, four rhythm. There's no substitute for it. There will always be a market for it.

You just can't fight what's going on at the moment. Some of the stuff I see on television, that passes for music; guys parading about with tatoos, stripped to the waist. They can't really play their instruments at all. They don't play in tune, they don't play anything. They just mouth a lot of obscenities. It's aggression. But the people who follow this sort of thing seem to understand it. It's an aggressive age we live in, and they want to be part of something aggressive. I can't understand it.

I came into this business because of people like Buddy Rich. I was brought up on the bands of Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and Harry James. Since then, I've gone through the whole bit. And now the thing has gone full circle for me. Because of the lack of sessions, perhaps, there's the opportunity for me to go back to doing what I

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came into the business for in the first place. Don't get me wrong; I always do my best, but a lot of what I have to do is rubbish. It's been a means of earning a living. I made a lot of money, but at times it was soul destroying. But now I've gotten back into live playing with a big band, and playing one or two jazz clubs with some great players. I'm doing what I want to do, and I'm really enjoying it.

Conti continued from page 22

Violado is a northeastern group from Brazil that's extremely well known and extremely good. They are all acoustic. There's an accordionist named Sivuca. Tonico & Tinoco. There's Sergio Reis, and a flutist named Altamiro Carrillito. There are so many people. Hermeto Pascoal is one of the best examples of Brazilian folklore.

RT: People associate the samba with Brazil. Did it originate there?

IC: The traditional samba beat is definitely Brazilian. There are peculiarities though. Especially the beat that comes out of the slums and hills. That's the *real* thing.

RT: What other rhythms come from Brazil?

IC: There are a lot of other kinds of rhythms, and most of them come from the samba. Maracatu, frevo, acajere, marajeje, agorere, samba from Bahia, samba from Rio, boi-bumba, rancheira. The reason I am here, is because I came up with a different kind of samba. A certain type of my own.

RT: Did it have more of a rock influence?

IC: There is definitely an influence of the rock 'n' roll beat there, as there is the influence of free jazz. But the beat of the samba is the beat of the samba, and it's got to be Brazilian to have that beat.

RT: The music of Azymuth covers a lot of styles.

IC: I like to play a variety, and that's why I fit into Azymuth real well.

RT: Have you listened to American funk music?

IC: There's a lot of American funk in Brazil. Funk has got a lot of taste to it. Flavor. I like that flavor.

RT: Do you get a lot of records from America and elsewhere in Brazil?

IC: There's no problem getting records. It

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is hard to hear live music, though. To hear good people playing. In drumming, you learn from the visual. It's better to go see people play.

RT: How much touring does Azymuth do?

IC: We do tours, in Brazil. It's a lot of effort, but it's worth it, because it's hard to get people to appreciate instrumental music. It's hard to set up situations where we can play to people. We are quite well known in South America right now, and it came as quite a surprise to find that we are well known in Japan. That makes me very happy. I'm not really concerned with the fame, but I want to play and be appreciated by people who know how to appreciate it. That's my concern for now. When you realize your work is being respected abroad somewhere, that's a great feeling. It creates new energy.

RT: Would you play any differently on an album for U.S. release, than one for Brazilian release?

IC: I would play the same. It's unfortunate that an engineer or producer will try to change the sounds to fit a format that's in *his mind*, and not in the mind of the drummer or the group. I think that's a great mistake.

RT: Have you done any recording with a click track?

IC: I have recorded some disco in Brazil. The new drum machines are being used a lot, especially the Linn. I think it takes away a lot of emotion. I have used a metronome for study, but I would rather follow

along with a record. It's good to condition yourself into the timing, but I don't think the metronome is that great. It doesn't allow you to flow. You're always concerned with following that thing. In Brazil, there is a drum machine they call "George." You can never get away from "George." He always follows you around.

RT: When Azymuth goes into the studio to do an album, do you look over charts or rehearse all the material beforehand?

IC: We work out the basic skeleton of a song before we go in. It's not a stiff situation. We have a sketch, and we go in and do it live. I like the energy of recording together without a whole lot of overdubs. We've been playing together for ten years, so it's very easy for us to just walk into the studio and connect.

RT: Do you have any ideas about drum solos?

IC: The moment of the solo is when I bring out a lot of what I've learned, and at the same time, I face a lot of what I still *have to* learn. There is a tradition of soloing, a school of soloing, that you could learn in a way. People do that. They learn a group of things that other people have done in the past. I can appreciate that, but personally, I feel solos should be more spontaneous and not rely on things that have been done before. Billy Cobham is someone with remarkable technique. I saw Buddy Rich keep a coin on a wall with his drumsticks in a hotel in Sao Paulo. That's beautiful, but I think a solo should be a freer thing, not a

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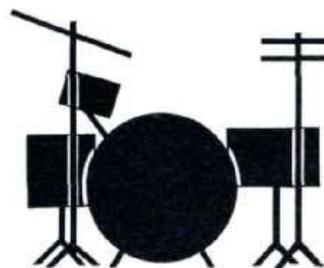
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demonstration of a certain technique. Put yourself out there.

RT: Do you teach in Brazil?

IC: No, not now, but in the future. I still want to learn a lot more. It's very hard to learn the drums in Brazil. In the U.S., there's a lot to learn from, even if you're not going to school. There are so many bands and orchestras, and drummers that you can sit down and listen to and learn from. In Brazil, you don't have as many local musicians where you can relate to it closely. Sao Paulo is the best place in Brazil for learning, seeing somebody play live. Rio is quite poor, still. One of my goals is to have a school for drummers in Brazil. I would like to have more time to learn from other drummers; to look around and listen to drummers and see them play. It seems I don't have enough time. But my dream is to have a drummers' school in Brazil, because there is none.

Negus continued from page 23

ing just as fast as the top.

JD: How does the bass drum feel?

SN: The bass drum is probably the main thing that takes getting used to, because it's a hard surface that doesn't give. A lot of players play into the head and the pedal stops. I do that to a certain extent on my acoustic kit, but with the Simmons you've got to play more, bringing the pedal back. You've got to play a bit lighter on the bass drum, because the Simmons bass drum will not break, but your pedal will. I think if you really kick it, you're going to bend beaters, and eventually break pedals.

I'm also getting into drum machines. I find them invaluable for playing along with. They're definitely good for making you play good time, which is important. You can also play off of it as opposed to on it.

JD: When you talk about drum machines, are you talking about the higher end of the market, such as the Linn and the

Oberheim?

SN: Actually, the band has three drum machines. They're actually all Roland. I have the 808; two of the guys have the little *Drumatix*, the 606's. They're great for writing. I can set up things on my 808 that are fun to play with. It teaches you more about time, too. You start learning how to program in time signatures, and breaking things down that you might not necessarily have thought of before.

JD: Have you ever worked with a Linn?

SN: I've spent a little bit of time figuring it out. I think electronics are the way of the future for drummers and percussionists. It's very important to be open to all that stuff, so sitting down with the Oberheim or the Linn machine, or the Roland machine and obviously the new Simmons, makes a lot of sense. I think drummers are sometimes too closed minded. They think, "Here I am with my 20-year-old Gretsch snare drum, so don't give me anything else." I don't see things like that. I'm always looking for new avenues, and electronics is definitely something that we've always been into.

JD: Do you ever foresee the day when an electronic kit might replace your acoustic kit?

SN: No. It's like having two different guitars: an acoustic and an electric. I don't think one replaces the other.

JD: Do you use any effects in the studio on your acoustic drums?

SN: Occasionally. Nothing very complex. Obviously we use reverb and a bit of Lexicon (DDL). Echoes on occasion. In the middle section of "Wind Him Up" we sound-processed the Simmons kit through a pitch to a voltage regulator. That's what actually gave the white noise sound that's on there. On stage, I just have the white noise setting on the actual rails themselves. We did actually do it differently in the studio. Also, we set up a gate to trigger a keyboard off of the hi-hat in "Wind Him

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Up." In the quiet middle section, there's a part that's actually triggered off of the hi-hat, and then we pulled the hi-hat out of the mix. We just faded in, but the hi-hat signal is actually fed through a gate, with the keyboard just sustaining. The gate makes it trigger only when the hi-hat is hit, and that's what gives it that rhythmic structure. One of the nice things about electronics is that you can trigger things, so it opens up that whole area. Now I can play chords.

I did a clinic in Toronto and I talked about applications of drum machines. One of the things I did is I hooked up the briefcase to a Fostex. The right way to do it is to hook it into a keyboard through a gate, but

instead of having somebody hold down a chord, I just taped four different chords on a Fostex four track. Then I had one pad to trigger each chord. So here I am sitting with this little briefcase and my little pads, and I have four fully polyphonic chords and I got this other drummer friend of mine to do it with me. So, we had a drum machine, a sequencer and polyphonic chords off of the briefcase, and two, double Simmons kits. My friend played one double Simmons kit; at times I played the briefcase, and then both of us played a double Simmons kit.

JD: Would you explain what the briefcase is?

SN: The briefcase is just a smaller version of the full Simmons kit. Basically, it's a briefcase with seven little pressure pads in it. We just multi-pin right into the same electronics that triggers the other kit. It's handy in the studio. You can sit in the control room and put stuff down with the briefcase.

JD: Do you prefer the studio more than live performance, or vice versa?

SN: I like both. I don't think I would be happy just being a studio musician, because as well as being a player, I'm an entertainer. I think that's important. I think a big mistake a lot of drummers make when they play is they bury themselves. They play with their head down and look at their drums and there's no personality, no visual contact with the audience. One of the things I've always made a point to do, is very seldom look at what I play, but look at the audience, look at the other guys in the band, and relate to heads up playing. When you're playing for an audience, they see you, and they want to feel some sort of buzz from you, as a personality.

JD: You play your drums low. Is that to be seen?

SN: I don't want to be buried behind drums. Also, I'm not a big guy. If I used big drums, they'd be really far away, and I like everything in really tight. My kit is worked out now so that everything is spaced as tight as I can get it, and still feel comfortable.

JD: What are your feelings toward drum solos?

SN: I didn't do a drum solo in this band until we came up with the briefcase thing, mainly because drum solos have a tendency to bore audiences. Even when you see the best players up there, and they're playing all of their best chops, it gets into frenzied madness that doesn't do anything. There's this huge barrage of sound coming off the stage, but what is it? I always thought of drum solos as being a little bit self-indulgent, unless you can find a way to put it across that's a lot more entertaining. I just find most audiences get bored when you get really fast. I'm playing enough interesting stuff in a night, and that to me is better than trying to blow my brains out during a drum solo.

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JD: What are your goals for the future, for yourself and for the band?

SN: Well, I think basically when we started this project, we looked at it as being extremely long term. I think the key to achieving and maintaining success is keeping fresh ideas happening. That's why I'm always looking for new things that excite me. A lot of bands, when they achieve it, seem to drift apart. They're so comfortable; they've got nice homes, all these things. They can take off to the Caribbean if they feel like it. They lose the desire to create interesting music. I see it happening to a lot of bands. They achieve the success, fame, and money, and then it just sounds like they've done everything they want to do, so they're just sort of, "Well, let's put out another album and make some money." I think that would really bother us, because we've always tried to achieve a high level of integrity in the music. If it started to go in that direction, I'd have to look at other possibilities.

Riel continued from page 25

worked with them and adored them and, you know, what is this?"

By the way, jazz is on its way up now in Europe, especially the more modern jazz; the type of jazz that Jack DeJohnette is playing and all the type that ECM is recording. Germany, especially, seems to grasp a lot of the very modern jazz.

DS: Are you doing much studio work in Denmark right now?

AR: Yeah, I am. There are rock 'n' roll recordings and jazz recordings, but everything has gone down a little. I've been doing a lot of TV and radio work. At the moment, there is only the big band and the radio jazz group. It seems like they're cutting down on a lot of the live things on the radio and TV stations for economic reasons. They're being careful, you know.

DS: How is jazz supported differently between the U.S. and Europe?

AR: From what I understand, jazz is not supported at all in the States. In Europe, it is, and a lot in Denmark. Now there are cut-backs of course, because many people are unemployed. But recently the new Monmartre received a check for \$1000. The owner is running it very proper and is really making money there. So, he returned the check to the government office and said, "Hey, I don't need this. This is great, but use it for somebody that might need it. But if I should ever need it, please answer when I knock on the door." He wouldn't take advantage of it.

In Sweden they are giving *much* more money to the jazz musicians. But they have cliques. One gives it to the other. The clubs are not supported at all in Sweden, because the money is given to the musicians. They share the money. In Denmark, there is like one musician that is involved, of the older ones, and then there might be other

younger musicians, but it has to be shared equally. And it has to be that the bands come out and play, so people, even in towns where there are not so many jazz lovers, get jazz now and then.

In Norway they're getting the lowest amount of money but for some reason, they're getting the most out of the money. There are so many jazz clubs in Norway.

DS: What are your impressions of western Europe versus eastern Europe, or behind the Iron Curtain?

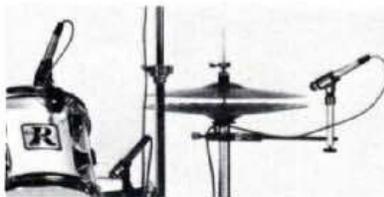
AR: Poland always had a lot of jazz going on. They all do, actually. I remember many, many years back, in Poland, when this Russian saxophone player would come out and play, there would be a man on each side of him up at the microphone, guarding him so he couldn't get away. He'd play 24 bars and they'd follow him back again. It was really bad, really terrible.

Another thing that's very bad, and still is, is that instruments are very difficult to get. And *that's* a drag. They come up and ask, "Do you have any used heads?" There was one drummer in Poland once who I gave all my sticks and heads to because I could just buy some other ones when I came home. He was really happy for that. It just doesn't exist there, and that makes it pretty hard to become good. I mean if your bass drum pedal is terrible, how can you ever become a good player?



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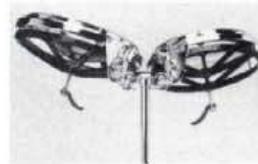
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R L R L > L R L R L R L > L R L L

Closed H.H.
S.D.
B.D.

By placing a cowbell on a stand, on the left side of the drumset, near the edge of the hi-hat, it's possible to play the same pattern as follows:

R L R L > L R L R L R L > L R L L

C.B.
H.H.
S.D.
B.D.

Notice that the right hand is playing the common 8th-note ride f i g u r e , in even rights.

x x x x x x x x

Since this—by itself—keeps a consistent ride, it might be more tasteful to delete some of the corresponding left-hand 16ths. This will allow varied, interesting, rhythmic accents without really changing technique.

R L R > L R R L R > L R

or R L R L > R R L R > R L R L

With very little practice, it becomes easy to bring the left hand down onto the cowbell while the right hand strikes the hi-hat. When a few "down" and "ands" are thus intermingled with the 16ths already learned, the sound changes again without difficult changes in technique.

L R R L > R L R R L > R

The right hand has continued the pattern.

By deleting the down beat notes "1" and "3," we can change the underlying right hand to:

R R R R R R

This adds new flavor when added to the left-hand rhythms already illustrated.

L R L > R L R L > R

The next step is to introduce rebound hits with the left hand on the cowbell. To illustrate, let's separate the right hand from the left hand notation:

L.H. C.B.

R.H.
R.F.

Further embellishment may be added by playing the left foot simultaneously with the right foot, creating the open sound on the hi-hat with each passing "and."

R.H.
B.D.

L.F./H.H.

All left-hand patterns are transferable to any other accessory, i.e. snare drum, second cowbell or left-hand cymbal bell. The patterns and textures are almost limitless. Here's a snare drum variation:

H.H.
S.D.
R.F./B.D.
L.F./H.H.

A second cowbell or trap may be utilized in this fashion:

Hi Bell
Lo Bell
R.H. H.H.
R.H. S.D.
R.F. B.D.
L.F. H.H. + + + +

The bass drum notation may be shifted also. Try any of the preceding patterns with these bass drum lines.

B.D.

Does this one look complicated? It is if it's approached without understanding how the technique developed. Compare this pattern to rhythm #4. As advanced as you make it, it all started with the ability to play 16ths on your hi-hat with your left hand.

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THE POLICE—*Synchronicity*. A&M SP-3735. Stewart Copeland, A. Summers, Sting; all instruments and vocals. *Synchronicity I / Walking In Your Footsteps / O My God / Mother / Miss Gradenko / Synchronicity II / Every Breath You Take / King Of Pain / Wrapped Around Your Finger / Tea In The Sahara*.

Frequently, older musicians will say something like, "Ya know, in my day, when you listened to a record, you could always tell who the drummer was because each player had his own sound." Stewart Copeland is one of the few drummers in existence today who doesn't sound like all of the other drummers in existence today. From the sound of his drums, to the way he fills in the sound of a three-piece group without being overly busy, Copeland charts his own course. Is Copeland's individuality an indication of the future, or is he the last of a dying breed? Time will tell. *RM*



BOB MOSES—*When Elephants Dream Of Music*. Gramavision GR8203. Joe Bonadio; perc. M. Cowings; vcl. Ayieb Dieng; perc. M. Formanek; bs. David Friedman; vbs, mar. B. Frisell; gtr. D.

Gross; al sx. D. Halliday; tn sx, sp sx. T. Hino; cor. H. Johnson; ctrbs clr, tuba. S. Jordan; vcl. J. Lee; vcl. J. Levatin; vcl. L. Mays; syn. Rahboat Ntumba Moses; dr, humdrums, vcl. J. Pepper; tn sx. P. Potocki; vcl. B. Rogers; tbn. C. Rogers; trp. P. Socolow; bs. J. Steig; bs fl. S. Swallow; bs. Nana Vasconcelos; perc, vcl. Bob Weiner; dr. T. Wilson; vcl. *Trevor / Picolo and Lulu / Everybody Knows You When You're Up and In / Lava Flow / Happy To Be Here Today / For Miles / Black Orchid / Disappearing Blues / Blame It On The Egg / The River*.

The term "big band" tends to evoke images of something from the '30s and '40s, so maybe we should call Moses' new disc a "big group" album, because *this* is the music of the '80s. Moses had control of this project from top to bottom—he composed all of the music (and the focus is on composition rather than improvisation), he played the drums (he almost didn't; that would have been a loss because he's one of the best and most unique), and he even did the cover paintings. This is one of the freshest albums to appear in a long while. Highly recommended. *RM*



ELVIS PRESLEY—*I Was The One*. RCA AHL1-4678. E. Presley, S. Moore, C. Atkins, G. Martin, T. Timbrell, H. Garland, N. Mathews; gtr. B. Black, B. More; bs. F. Cramer, S. Long, D. Brooks, G. Stoker, M. Hughes; pno. D.J. Fontana; dr. The Jordanaires, A. Kerr Singers, M. Kirkham, B. and B. Speer; vcl. B. Randolph; claves. *My Baby Left Me / (You're So Square) Baby I*

Don't Care / Little Sister / Don't / Wear My Ring Around Your Neck / Paralyzed / Baby Let's Play House / I Was The One / Rip It Up / Young And Beautiful / Ready Teddy.

In an age when folks are raving about groups like The Stray Cats and The Blasters; when so many groups are re-doing the "old stuff" because they can't think of anything new to write, this music is like a glass of ice water thrown in your face—it'll wake you up! Many have forgotten just how good this music really was. An excellent intro to drummer D.J. Fontana. *SKF*



THE MARSHALL TUCKER BAND—*Just Us*. Warner Brothers 1-23803. D. Gray; lead vcl. Paul T. Riddle; dr, perc, congas. J. Eubanks; hns, kybds, vcl. T. Caldwell; elec str, steel gtr. G. McCorkle; elec gtr, acous gtr. F. Wilkie; bs gtr, vcl. R. Godfrey; pnos, vcl. *8:05 / Stay A Step Ahead / Time Don't Pass By Here / Testify / Long Island Lady / A Place I've Never Been / Wait For You / When Love Begins To Fade / Paradise*.

This is the first album produced by the MTB. The only thing better than that would be a live album. New member Ronnie Godfrey is one of the best country/pop songwriters coming up, and his work is well represented here. He's also an amazing vocalist and should be used more by the group. Gray is already one of the all-time best rock singers. The combination of the two would be sensational. I'm appalled that Warner Brothers doesn't have the good sense to let these guys crossover into both the country

by Scott K. Fish and Rick Mattingly

and rock markets again. Paul T. Riddle, as always, is a master of taste and restraint while always driving this band. *SKF*



THE ALL STAR PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE. MMG 115. Everett (Vic) Firth, Roland Kohloff, Mickey Bookspan, Donald Miller, Walter Rosenberger, John Soroka, Arnold Lang, Bent Lylloff, Abraham Marcus, Arthur Press; perc. *Bizet: Carmen Fantasy / Beethoven: Scherzo From the Ninth Symphony / Berlioz: March To The Scaffold from Symphony Fantastique / Pachelbel: Canon. RM*

Several of the top symphonic percussionists combine to play percussion arrangements of popular classical works. A good album to play for people who don't think that percussion can be musical. The digital recording process brings out the true sound of the instruments. *RM*



ABBEY RADER & MARC LEVIN—*Songs of Street And Spirit*. Sweet Dragon. ML4. Abbey Rader; dr. Marc Levin; flghn, trp, fl. *Sunrise for Charlotte / For Use / You, Me, Let's Try Gunnar / Cat Anderson's*

Cat / Hipness / Hally's Dance / Postcard to Mongezi Feza / The Dog Story / Pantomime of Fear / Sweetest of the Colors—For Albert Ayler / God Was On TV Last Night / Bugle Call For The Tactical Police Force / For Bodhi: Our Legacy, Our Heritage, Our Love / Player.

A drum/trumpet duo with no shuckin' and jivin'. Their material is well thought out, has direction and deserves attention. (Write to: Sweet Dragon Records, Post Box 29, 7500 Holstebro, Denmark) SKF



TOM COSTER—*Ivory Expedition*. Fantasy F-9623. T. Coster: kybds. J. Lievano: gtr. R. Jackson: bs. Steve Smith: dr. W. Afanasieff: kybds. Raul Rekow: perc. Orestes Vilato: perc. *Zulu Queen / Caravan / Gigu / Till We Meet Again / Caught In The Act / Ivory Expedition / Monkey See Monkey Do / I Give You My Love / Sacrifice At Dawn / Journey's End.*

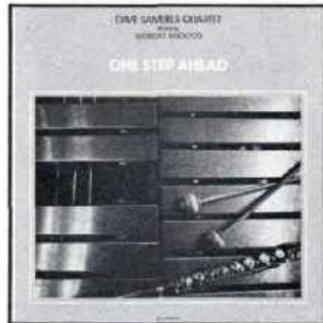
Most drummers would be satisfied if they could play rock as well as Steve Smith plays it with Journey, but for Smith himself, that is only one side of his ability. This album shows another side of Smith—a more "fusiony" side. High energy to be sure, but tempered with taste. RM



WYNTON MARSALIS—*Think Of One*. Columbia FC-

38641. W. Marsalis: trp. B. Marsalis: sp sx, tn sx. K. Kirkland: pno. Jeffrey Watts: dr. P. Bowler, R. Drummond: bs. *Knozz-Moe-King / Fuchsia / My Ideal / What Is Happening Here (Now)? / Think Of One / The Bell Ringer / Later / Melancholia.*

Remember when there were bands where the musicians listened to each other, interacted with each other, used dynamics and nice arrangements? Remember the bands where *all* the musicians could really play? Drummer Jeffrey Watts plays all the right things in all the right places. He's a pleasure to listen to. This is the first jazz band (in the true sense of the word) that I've heard in years. No kidding. And I hope they have the good sense to stick together, because if they do I have no doubt that 20 years from now we'll be speaking about them in the same way we speak about the other great small jazz groups. SKF



DAVE SAMUELS QUARTET—*One Step Ahead*. Dire FO 359. Dave Samuels: vb, perc. G. Baiocco: fl, tn sx. F. Di Castri: bs. Tullio De Piscopo: dr perc. *One Step Ahead / Night Rain / Proud As A Peacock / Helix / Unspoken Words / Knots / Inner Light.*

This Italian import features Samuels in a mainstream jazz setting—a little more straight-ahead than most of his recorded work of late. As impressive as Dave's playing is his composing; all of the tunes on this disc are his and they're all different. De Piscopo provides authoritative, no-nonsense drumming. This record may be hard to find, but it's worth looking for. RM



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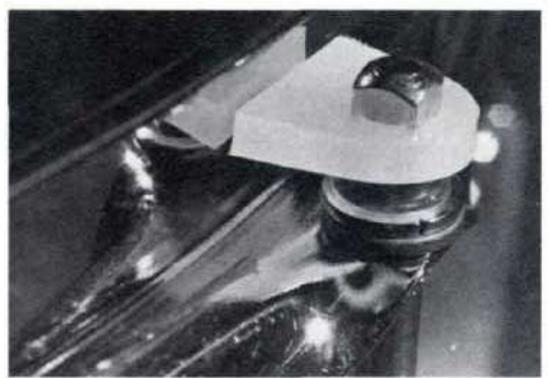
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FUNK DRUMMING

by Jim Payne

Publ: Mel Bay Publications
Pacific, MO 63069

Price: \$7.95

Occasionally, one new entry will stand out above the rest. *Funk Drumming*, published by Mel Bay—who seems to be turning out one meaningful drum text after another—is one of those books.

Author Jim Payne has done a masterful job of compiling an extremely comprehensive text on what's now become a rather complex subject. Everything from two-hand hi-hat style, funk bass technique and snare variations, to shuffle funk, reggae, samba and polyrhythmic application is documented here. In the process, we're also shown how the influences of rock, samba, Latin and blues, have all come together to form the funk drumming style we know today. Along with being a super workbook, this is an equally enlightening musical education, an obvious underlying motive in Payne's conception.

To make it even more effective, a lengthy cassette is included offering the reader an opportunity to hear many of the complex patterns. It also offers a chance to play along with a funky rhythm section (with and without drums) by following the simple, but interesting, drum charts written for each musical application. A marvelous teaching aid.

Jim Payne has literally thought of everything in *Funk Drumming* and has presented it in 156 uncluttered, graphically attractive pages, quite in line with what we've come to expect from the house of Mel Bay. Teachers should love this one, as will seasoned players who may need to play a little "catch-up" on the ever-widening array of new techniques. Highly recommended.

Mark Hurley

MASTER TECHNIQUE BUILDERS FOR SNARE DRUM

compiled by Anthony J. Cirone

Publ: Belwin Mills

Melville, NY 11746

Price: \$5.95

If you've ever wondered what some professional drummers do to improve their speed, control and endurance, and stay in tip-top form, well, wonder no more. Well-known performer/author, Anthony Cirone has taken this basic question and answered it by way of 46 pages of the actual practice routines (technical studies only) of twenty of the nation's leading drummer-percussionists.

Though the majority of the players represented are from the symphonic percussion field, Cirone also chose to include the likes of Louie Bellson, Ralph Humphrey, Peter Magadini, Joe Morello, Fred Sanford and Ed Soph on his impressive list of contributors.

Of course, some of the programs tend to overlap each other, but that's a minor flaw. Actually, this is a rather valuable study with a wealth of challenging material that could be a nice change of pace from the standard literature. "With this wealth of knowledge available to students, there can be no limit to the level of technical proficiency for those individuals willing to develop themselves to their highest potential," writes Cirone.

Master Technique Builders for Snare Drum offers a unique approach to an old subject. And Cirone should be commended for his effort, as should all the artists who unselfishly agreed to share with us, in this book, some fine ideas from their own personal collections.

Mark Hurley

PROGRESSIVE STEPS TO FREEDOM ON THE DRUM SET

by Chuck Kerrigan

Publ: Mel Bay Publications
Pacific, MO 63069

Price: \$7.95

Chuck Kerrigan has written a comprehensive study dealing with four-limb coordination. The book has three main sections, presenting 8th notes, triplets, and 16th notes, respectively. Each section contains seven pages of notation in 4/4 and one page each of 3/4 and 5/4. Preceding the reading pages, the author presents 21 exercises which are applied to each reading page. Many of the exercises also have one or more variations. Each reading page then becomes 21 or more pages, which the student should complete before proceeding to the next page.

The exercises require right- and left-hand lead, as well as right and left foot. Each exercise sets up one, two, or three constant patterns while the assigned limb plays the written page on a given part of the drumset. This "relative" coordination requires a great deal of concentration and provides a systematic study that will improve the control of the weaker hand and foot, and build balance between all four limbs. Another interesting concept the book presents is *filling* the measures with 8th notes, triplets or 16th notes. The author uses a full page in each section to explain the fill concept, which again requires total concentration. The fill concept not only adds another dimension to the book, but is a very practical way of interpreting drum parts. This book covers many forms of drumming and can be used by intermediate through advanced students, who are interested in developing a more ambidextrous style of playing.

Glenn Weber

SYNCOATED RHYTHMS FOR THE CONTEMPORARY DRUMMER

by Chuck Kerrigan

Publ: Mel Bay Publications
Pacific, MO 63069

Price: \$6.95

This 100-page book is divided into four sections: Section One deals with quarter notes; Section Two with 8th notes; Section Three with triplets; Section Four with 16th notes. Each section begins with preliminary pages on which the author presents four-measure exercises consisting of the same rhythm, written in different ways, by using rests, ties, and syncopated notation. After the preliminary section, which will help the student to recognize rhythmic patterns and to hear four-bar phrases, the book moves to 32, 16, and 12 bar exercises. In the bar exercise section, each measure changes rhythmic structure, thereby making it a very practical reading study. The fact that the exercises are written in song form will help the student feel and hear commonly used musical forms. The book uses 3/4, 4/4 and 5/4 time signatures. The notation is very clear and readable; bass drum notes are written in, as well as hi-hat possibilities. The author gives 16 ways of interpreting the rhythms on drumset, giving the book added value, and providing the student with many hours of enjoyable and worthwhile study.

This book is reminiscent of Ted Reed's *Syncopation* book, taken a step further, by the use of 3/4 and 5/4 times and the expanded rhythms. Because of the limitless possibilities of this book, it can be used by beginners through advanced players and is recommended by this reviewer.

Glenn Weber

TRAPS: A RUDIMENTARY APPROACH

by Sal Sofia

Publ: Sal Sofia

6 Avenue J

Brooklyn, NY 11230

Price: \$19.95

MD readers may recall Sal Sofia as the author of *The Omni of Drum Technique*, an exhaustive study painstakingly done in a hefty, durable hardcover volume.

Traps is an equally painstaking, tossed-salad approach to the 26 rudiments. In the author's words: "*Traps* offers a vocabulary builder of modern drum sounds for all styles, and demonstrates how the drummer can create sounds that reflect his own personality, style and intellect. The 26 American rudiments . . . in *Traps* . . . form the beats, the groove and the solo that allows you to say what you want in any style through your drums."

The book also has sections on timekeeping through metronome monitoring, ear training to new sounds, linear coordination, reading drumset music and the basic fundamentals of drumset playing.

MD readers who've woodshedded Sal's *Rock 'N' Jazz Clinic* columns will have an idea of his approach to drumming. People who aren't familiar with Sal Sofia's work are in for a surprise.

Scott K. Fish

TWO AND FOUR Mallet EXERCISES ON VIBRAPHONE AND MARIMBA FOR THE ADVANCED PLAYER

by Emil Richards

Publ: Underdog Publications

2100 Canyon Drive

Hollywood, CA 90068

Price: \$15.00

This is a carefully constructed book of 500 exercises in a wide range of rhythmic configurations for both two and four mallets. The majority of the exercises are single line as opposed to chordal. The value of this book is that the exercises are designed for "mind over matter" as opposed to "chops building"; an emphasis on reading as well as harmonic cycles, relationships and structures that help sight reading and comprehension.

Although everything is laid out in a logical fashion, it would be helpful if there were short explanations of the theory ideas behind each exercise. Also, the lack of pedal indications for vibraphone means that pedaling decisions are left to the imagination of the player.

The dedication in the front of the book reads: "to mallet heads everywhere!" All serious "mallet heads" will benefit a great deal from this book.

Donald Knaack

A MUSICAL APPROACH TO FOUR Mallet TECHNIQUE FOR VIBRAPHONE

Volume I

by David Samuels

Publ: Theodore Presser Co.

Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

Price: \$14.95

Dave Samuels has written an extremely thorough coverage of basic four-mallet vibraphone technique from a Burton-type approach. The book covers all aspects, from grip—complete with numerous detailed illustrations—to sticking, pedaling and dampening. Everything is presented in a clear manner along with constant encouragement for the students to develop their own exercises and compositions. The attitude of freedom of self-expression that Samuels encourages is one of the main elements in the makeup of a good musician, yet most books ignore it. Although this book deals with the basic techniques of playing the vibraphone, some of the exercises jump to a music level above a beginning or Volume I level. This book should be a part of any vibraphone student's working library, and will be of special value for the sticking, pedaling and dampening areas.

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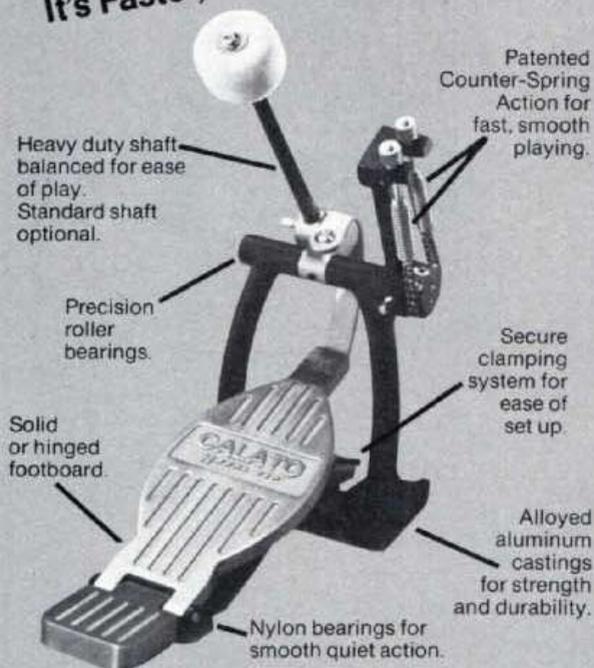
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Beard continued from page 29

would walk out and join us for these three songs.

SA: That sounds like a lot of hard work. Have you ever had an urge to play some more, now that you've picked up a little bit of the saxophone?

FB: Yeah, I'd love to be able to play the saxophone and I still honk on it. I can make some of the world's ungodliest sounds come out of that thing. But, it's so frustrating when you're proficient on one thing and try to start on another that's so totally different.

We know that if we ever write another song that needs the horns, we'll go in there and we'll learn the part. But I don't think that the real great players of the world have anything to worry about from the Lone Wolf Horns right now.

SA: Do you play any other instruments?

FB: Oh, I play at guitar and play at piano, and that kind of thing, but proficiently, no. You know, just get enough to entertain myself and maybe to find out something.

SA: You were mentioning that you'd taken off three years. What brought that about?

FB: Well, we just got through with the World Wide Texas Tour, and it was such an undertaking that when we got through, we decided we were going to take about six months off. One thing led to another and we just kind of let our hair down and left the country for a while. It just stretched out to be that length of time.

It didn't start out to be that way, but it ended up working out well for us. Our management was able to negotiate us into a new contract with Warner Brothers from London and we were able to pick up some new influences; pick up some new ideas; get away from and back off from it all for a while and then come back with a new perspective. So, it worked out real nice for us.

SA: Was that hard? Did you get a lot of flack from your management and your record company and all that about taking so much time?

FB: Yeah. They definitely were getting a little antsy about it.

SA: I can imagine. It had to be good, though. That Texas tour was really pretty much of an extravaganza as far as a lot of equipment, a lot of personnel, and a lot of everything. That must have been something.

FB: Uh huh. We like to give back a little bit, you know.

SA: Really. It's been the three of you for quite a few years. How have you managed to keep it going like that? That's so unusual, in rock especially.

FB: Well, I don't know. We seem to have developed a mutual admiration society. You know, I can't imagine ever playing with anyone else.

SA: It sounds like a very comfortable situation.

FB: Yeah, I really think it just comes down to a little musical respect of each other's playing. And when we're off the road, we each go our separate ways pretty much. We have separate influences and separate likes and dislikes. So, we've managed to avoid the pitfalls that befall so many bands.

SA: That's great. Who are some of your favorite drummers?

FB: Oh, I like them all. It's real hard to say. I mean, how can you rate, say, a country drummer with a rock 'n' roll drummer? Because the country drummer, his format only allows for so much. But, he's in there doing it. I mean, he's doing exactly what the song calls for. And the jazz drummer, and the rock drummer; they're all doing it. So, anyone that's doing it, I appreciate.

I really admire the great studio cats—the Steve Gadds and the Hal Blaines and the Jim Keltners. Those cats that have to change and fit in so well with whatever they're doing. I really greatly admire them. But, just any drummer that's doing it, because if he wasn't, he wouldn't be there.

SA: That's very true. What type of music do you like to listen to?
FB: Oh, I like it all. Ah, I'm not too wild about country and western, but I can listen to Emmylou Harris all day. I like the new wave. I like the rock 'n' roll. I like it all.

SA: In the beginning, you had problems with people thinking that you were a country band as opposed to a rock band.

FB: The worst occasion of that was when we opened for the Stones in Hawaii in '72. We were virtually unknown over there, and the curtain rose and we were standing out there and Billy and Dusty had on boots and cowboy hats and this veil of horror fell over the audience. But, we ripped right into "Thunderbird," which is a rock 'n' roll standard, and changed their minds in about 15 seconds. I think that, now, people know ZZ songs before they hear who it is.

SA: What are your future plans with the band?

FB: Oh, we're just going to keep on doing more of the same. Hopefully, we can make each album be a little better than the last. Each show a little better than the last. Just keep on doing what we like to do. We really enjoy playing rock 'n' roll. Maybe we'll play a little golf here and there.

SA: Do you ever get involved in any outside projects?

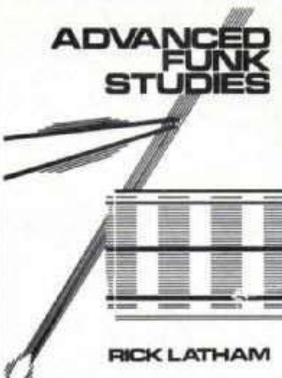
FB: Only things that are partially profitable to me, like I was telling you about in my studio. Just things that would maybe enhance ZZ. That's a big enough ball of wax for me right there.

SA: Do you have any things that you haven't had a chance to do yet? Any dreams for something that you'd still like to do?

FB: Oh, I don't know. We've pretty well been able to do just about what we wanted to do all along. It would be nice to have a gold single one of these days. We've always been an album band. A gold single would be nice.



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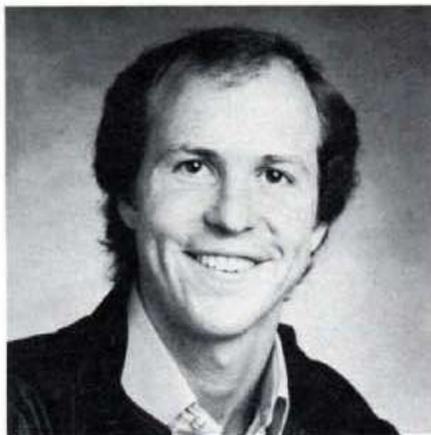
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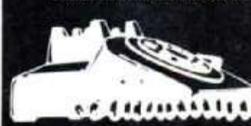


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R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

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

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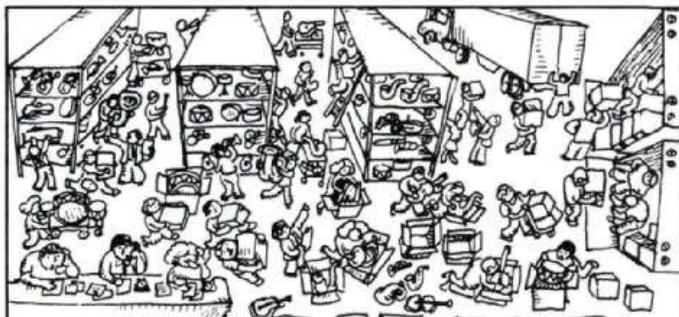
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8 L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R L R R R

9 R L L L L L L L R L L L L R L L L L L L L L L L

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If you read such an assertion in print you may feel some scepticism. The reason for that has nothing to do with my assertion, but rather it has to do with your belief that your drumming is just fine. Yes, a few things have to be polished here and adjusted there, but you know, (or do you believe) that you will be getting better. You know what you have to accomplish for the improvement, and that you will take or are now involved in an approach that will lead you to your goal. But of one thing you are certain: to get to that goal is going to take TIME. And now a strange drum teacher is telling you that it does not take time. One of us has to be off-the-wall and it certainly cannot be you.

I think the first thing we must discuss is what do we mean by time? The problem is that there are three different kinds of time and I'm operating in one kind of time and you are operating in, of course, correct time. Let's look into it.

The first kind of time is mechanical time. That is measured by the clock. The day is divided into twenty-four parts called hours and each hour is divided into sixty parts called minutes. You look at the clock and in all seriousness call it real time. I look at it and call it mechanical time.

The second kind of time is psychological time. Psychological time is when you and I think about what we should have done yesterday and what we're going to do tomorrow. Today we do nothing because all we are interested in doing is sitting around and thinking of the past and the future. When we sit around and think about what we should have done and what we are going to do we believe and identify with these thoughts as if we were actually living them now. We call that kind of imagining real life. When I get involved in this kind of psychological "living" I catch on faster than most that I am involved in it and I know what to do to stop the nonsense.

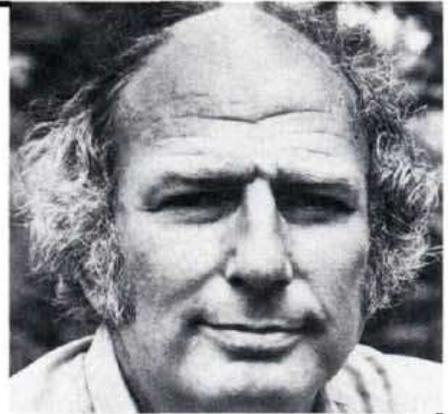
The third kind of time is real or actual time. When we watch the sun set, when we play games, when we play our music or listen to music, when we are in a relationship with a friend, we are in real time. In real time, clock or mechanical time and psychological time immediately and completely come to a stop. In real time there is no awareness of time. This is not profound philosophy. All I'm describing is what we all have experienced.

You are sceptical about what I say in respect to obtaining results in six weeks because you absolutely believe that it is necessary to first go through mechanical time and psychological time in order to get to real time. I say that I have the educational trip to get you into real time immediately. Now, if you say that mechanical time and psychological time are absolutely necessary in learning music and life, and wish to pursue that, I will not stop or try to influence you. After all, it's your life and not mine.

A drum authority was asked how long it takes to become a really good drummer. His answer: "This is an easy one. All your life." His problem is that he views drumming as a skill based upon knowledge and experience. I see drumming as a state of being based upon talent and the capacity of the individual to stay with that talent. The drum authority expects that, with skill, knowledge, and experience developed in the present, one may expect to unexpectedly bump into this state of being in the future without looking. "Look Ma, I'm playing the drums with no hands." My position is that if you approach drumming as skill, knowledge, and experience, it is something you will not learn in this life time and you will not learn it in ten life times or 1,000 reincarnations. Please take note that the drum authority has no difficulty himself in taking a shortcut through time to tell you it is really all about a longcut—namely, all your life.

The drum authority is actually stuck in mechanical time (in more ways than one) when he tells you it takes all your life. It is the evidence that one can never get to real time if you begin with the belief that it is necessary to first pass through mechanical time and psychological time. When he tells you that it takes a life time he feels that he is expressing modesty and humility. When I hear what he is saying, I can only tell him he is confused, frustrated and bored.

The drum authority has not presented any evidence to a grand jury that a crime has been committed, nor has anyone been asked to stand trial before a judge and jury of one's peers. But our splendid drum authority has given you and me a life sentence of hard labor getting our rocks off in mechanical and psychological time. The



actual crime, of course, is when an individual is born with talent. Talent is the capacity to play the drums right from the beginning without instruction or time, and to attract the attention of one's peers and be invited to play with them.

The assertion that drumming takes one's entire life to learn is also illogical. How can a drum authority know it takes his entire life when he is only a man in his late forties. He has yet to live his life. But yet he informs us that he "knows" it is going to take you all your life to learn. All he is telling us is the way he feels about himself. He has elected to believe that he must move through mechanical and psychological time as a ritual of passage to get to what he hopes will be real time. But is he not in the position of the bicyclist on the stationary bike in the gym? He is so convinced daily practice and effort on it will help him win the race, he brings the stationary bike to the contest on the day of the race. His cardiovascular system will certainly be in a race for better health. Can it be that the drummers of the world are at the start of the race on the stationary bike? Then a weird drum teacher comes along and points out to the fraternity that they are indeed firmly seated on the stationary bike of mechanical and psychological time. Moreover, when you enter real time there is no race.

Warning: It has been determined that this material is thought provoking.

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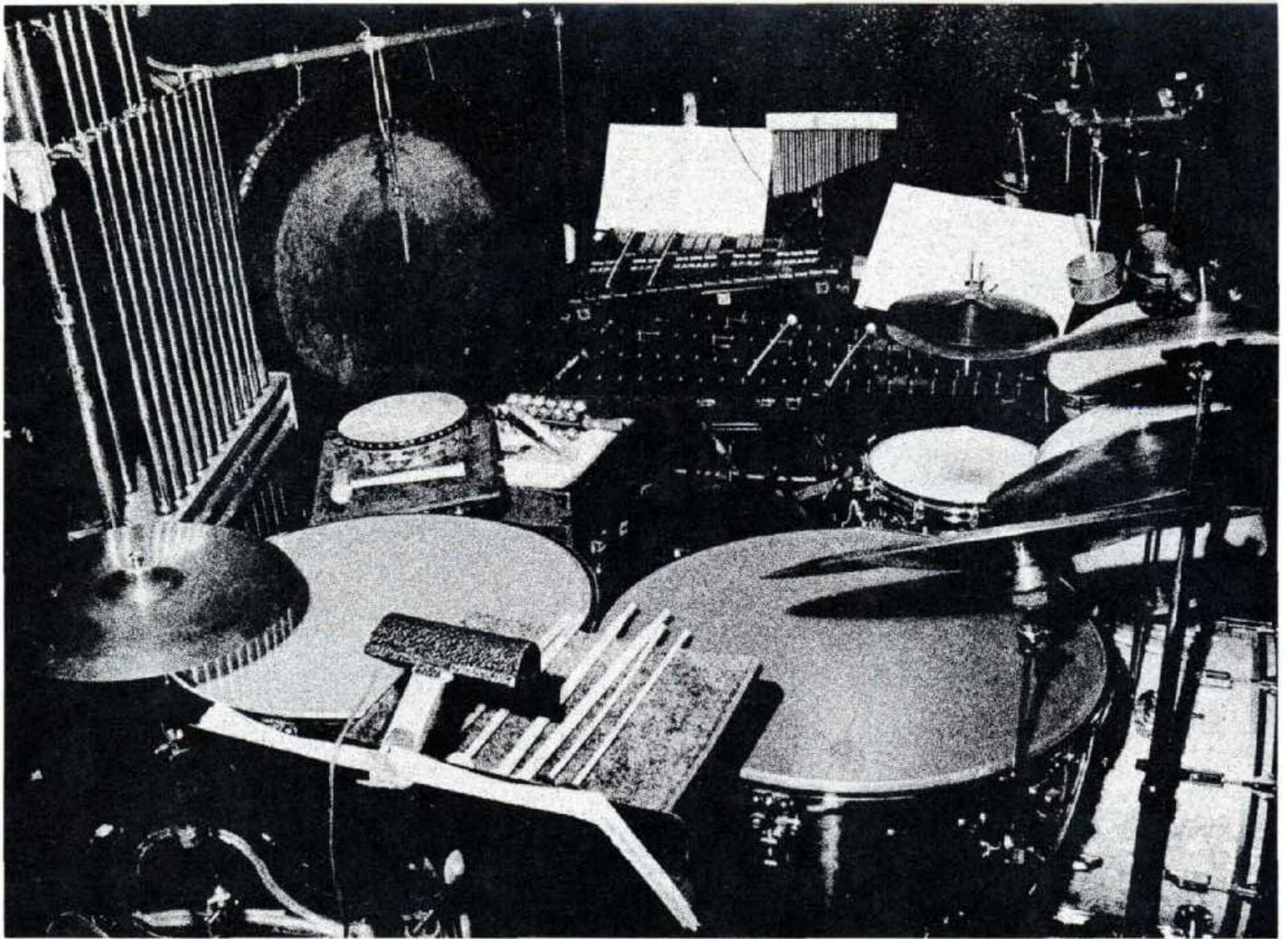
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cont. on page 106



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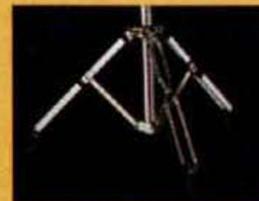
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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

by Michael Epstein

Q. I'll be a high school sophomore next year (my sixth as a drummer) and I feel that after high school an endorsement might help me out. How does a drummer receive an endorsement from a manufacturer? What are they looking for?

J.V.

Houston, TX

A. *There are different levels of endorsement offered by drum and cymbal manufacturers based on the "two-way street" principle—"what we can do for each other." All manufacturers have slightly different criteria for endorsees, but Bill Reim of Tama and Rab Zildjian of the Zildjian Company gave us typical considerations for associations with manufacturers. "First we like to get background information on a player," Rab told us. "Things like who he's played with, who he's currently playing with, and we like to meet the person. If he's a well-known drummer the resume is less important. But the association involves a personal relationship, not just playing the product. Most drummers start out as an associate of the company before becoming full-fledged endorsers. We're looking for drummers who've been on records and with whom we could exchange benefits as to what we each get out of the situation. Most people come into the program on the level of professional discount. Tony Williams, for instance, gets the product at no charge and we work with him on ads. There's the trade-off. We don't want to have more endorsers than we can handle. A lot depends on what kind of exposure a player can get for us. The Boston Garden or MTV is better than a club, say, and this helps determine the level of involvement in the program. We ask the endorsers to put in a word for us when they can, in interviews and so on. Unfortunately, just being a great player is not enough. This is delicate so we keep a potential endorser list for future consideration and we attempt to follow the careers of people as they progress."*

Tama's Bill Reim says his company looks for those really accomplished in the field. "Can they provide insight to the company as to what a drummer needs in a drumset? The more diversified a player is, the more weight they'll carry as an endorser. We need someone who is recognizable to the consumer and who has credibility. Those who endorse for us, generally, have come to us and asked for it. There are different kinds of endorsements. Billy Cobham has been with us all along, working on developing products, so he usually gets his drums provided by us. Others, depending on level of involvement in clinics and product development, get discounted rates."

Our suggestion would be to make contact with manufacturers when you're on the road in the towns in which they're located and develop a relationship with them. Also, continue to make yourself the most accomplished and versatile player you can be.

Q. I have a Paiste cymbal that says "Made In Germany" on it. I bought this cymbal with a Ludwig Standard drumset along with a set of Paiste hi-hats which also say "Made In Germany." Above the logo it says Ludwig Standard and the date of manufacture of the drumset is February 5, 1968. I thought Paistes were made in Switzerland.

J.C.

Lewisville, TX

A. *Some of Paiste's lower priced models are made in Germany, along with the line of Paiste gongs. Roy Burns has had a long association with Paiste, and he explained: "In Switzerland, they make the top of the line 2002, 602, and Sound Creation. Paiste in Germany used to make the Standard for Ludwig and they also made the Dixie and the Constantinople and things like that. They have since developed those into their line of 404s and 505s, upgrading and re-naming them."*

Q. Recently my wife returned from the local music store with a pair of Vic Firth SD4's. Upon close examination, besides finding the logo changed, the sticks were much bigger than the original pair she had gone to the store to replace. They were longer, thicker and had a bigger bead. After reviewing Vic's brochure, I'm of the opinion that somehow a batch of his 3A's got SD4 logos on them. Is this correct or has Vic changed the size of the SD4 sticks?

H.B.

Tulsa, OK

A. *The stick has been changed as you perceived. Vic decided, as this was a very thin stick, that it would have more appeal beefed up ever so slightly. It isn't close to a 3A at all really, the diameter only having been thickened by 1/32" and lengthened by 1/8". "Ninety-nine out of a hundred were delighted with the versatility offered by giving that stick a little more weight," said Vic. "I did have a few die-hards who wondered how they were going to live without that stick, so I kept a couple of boxes just for them. This change took place about two years ago, so maybe this says something for the quality and longevity of the original pair of sticks. The logo was changed between three to five years ago. We now do the logo wrap-around in a less expensive, one-step process. The guy must be serious about the stick to feel the difference, and I think that's commendable."*

Q. I noticed that in the Simmons ads, Bill Bruford's pads are attached to Pearl tom-tom stands. Is there some advantage to using these stands as opposed to Simmons stands?

E.M.

Barstow, CA

A. *The only advantage to using Pearl's is that there are no Simmons stands manufactured. Glyn Thomas of Simmons explains that, "I wish we could have our own hardware, but Japanese manufacturers make most of the hardware for American companies under license. Metal work can't be done in either England or America for the price it's done in Japan and still provide the same quality without adding 25% more to the price. When we made the drums we couldn't set up a hardware company as well, costs being prohibitive. We examined what the best tom-tom holder on the market was at that time and came up with Pearl as the cheapest and most adaptable. All of our pads, except the bass drum which is freestanding with its own spurs, have holders with a pipe diameter that fits the Pearl stands. Lately CB-700 and LP have designed double tom holders which fit our drums. Also, if you put plastic bushings that divide the three sections of a cymbal stand into the bore of the tom-tom tube, the Simmons pads will fit Sonor and Tama. This was discovered by a user. The next step for us is to develop a factory fitting of our own to go into the bore of the tom mounts, making them more adaptable to other stands. If you have any questions about set-ups or need any help with adaptations, please feel free to call and speak to me at (213) 884-2653 during normal business hours."*

Q. The drummer for Cheap Trick, Bun E. Carlos, has some kind of gold texture on his drums. Did they come this way or did he fix them himself?

W.D.

Des Moines, IA

A. *Neither. This was done by Patrick Foley in L.A. It was a very thick lacquer finish with actual pieces of ground brass in it. It is similar in look to a Les Paul gold top guitar finish. It began with a clear lacquer on the shells with the brass sprinkled on and then covered with another clear lacquer coat to simulate a dipped-in-gold finish.*



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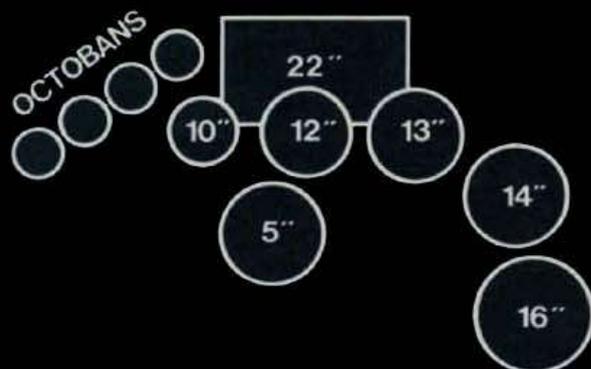


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UPDATE

Since my interview with **Mick Fleetwood**, which appeared exactly three years ago, Mick has kept very busy. Aside from band responsibilities including an album (*Mirage*) and touring, Fleetwood released his first solo project in 1981. *The Visitor* was recorded in Africa, something Mick longed to do for quite some time, and consists of a combination of tracks, some utilizing the residents and some with the project's unit of bassist George Hawkins and guitarist Todd Sharp. "It worked really well and there weren't any musical problems at all. Even the older, more classically oriented musicians (who lived there)—which sounds far too grand and snobby for what it is—didn't find it difficult. We ended up using the kids a lot more just because it's easier to play with them *because* they were kids. They are totally open." Did the project meet his expectations? "It was just something I wanted to do. There was no way of knowing what would happen apart from one thing that I just *did* know—that it wouldn't be the same as doing it here. I didn't have many preconceived ideas of what would or wouldn't happen. I just thought, for instance, it would be great to do a Buddy Holly song ["Not Fade Away"] with an obvious rhythm from where it came from in the first place. There were three or four songs which the bands over there wrote themselves, but really we were just trying to make a rock 'n' roll album. The album didn't sell very well at all. I think people thought it was a lot more artsy-craftsy than it actually was, but I was really pleased with the way it came out. And the whole experience was great. We were involved with it for a six-month period, seven weeks of which were spent there, and it's something that all of us who went over there will never, ever forget."

Originally he had planned to record his next solo venture in Brazil, but when logistics and finances caused him to forfeit the

Ed Cassidy, formerly of Spirit, has formed the Urge. Because of Christine McVie's solo album postponement, **Tris Imboden** was unable to record McVie's LP (as previously reported) due to Loggins obligations. Instead, Steve **Ferrone** is working with McVie while Tris is currently in the studio with Kenny Loggins. You can also hear Tris on Rick Roberts' upcoming Atlantic release. Last month, a live Doors album was released on which **John Densmore** (of course) played, and the film he was in, *Get Crazy*, was released late in the summer. Most recently, he's been performing a one-man play in the L.A. area. **Larry Carter** in the studio with Romeo Void. **David Robinson** in the studio with the Cars. Supertramp's **Roger Hodgson** played drums himself on his upcoming

idea, his current *I'm Not Me* was recorded at his home. "That was a whole story unto itself, which will remain untold," he laughs. "It was months of lunacy. It was good lunacy, but the house became Motel Hell. It's *still* in a shambles. I would sort of crawl down to my bedroom and everyone would crawl away, but we had a lot of fun. I'm very pleased with how it turned out and I think the sounds hold up really well. It doesn't sound like a home recording at all. It sounds as good as the state-of-the-art nonsense people talk about all the time." Mick's objective for this album, in contrast to *The Visitor*, was to create a band situation. The Cholos (George Hawkins, Steve Ross, Billy Burnette, Ron Thompson) is just that, and Mick plans on taking the band on the road as well, finding it a very renewing feeling working with other musicians. "I feel real lucky that I'm a drummer. It's different from what, say, Lindsay is doing, or Christine or Stevie. Stevie goes out on the road with basically a bunch of session players and I don't mean that derogatorily, but it's not a band. I'm loving what I'm doing. It wouldn't be quite so appealing to me if I happened to be Stevie because I wouldn't consider that a highly personal experience. I'm sure it's fine, but it's not the same thing as being with people and working as part of an entity. They're the people I want to be with, whether it's in that studio doing something or on a camping holiday and that's the difference. That's how Fleetwood Mac was pulled together. It was always pulled together as people."

And sometime in the near future, Mick will have to begin work on a new Fleetwood Mac album because—pay no attention to speculation—they have *not* broken up. "If Fleetwood Mac were recording or working, then that's where I would be, but that's just not happening at the moment. Everyone is off doing what he wants to do and I'm doing what I enjoy."

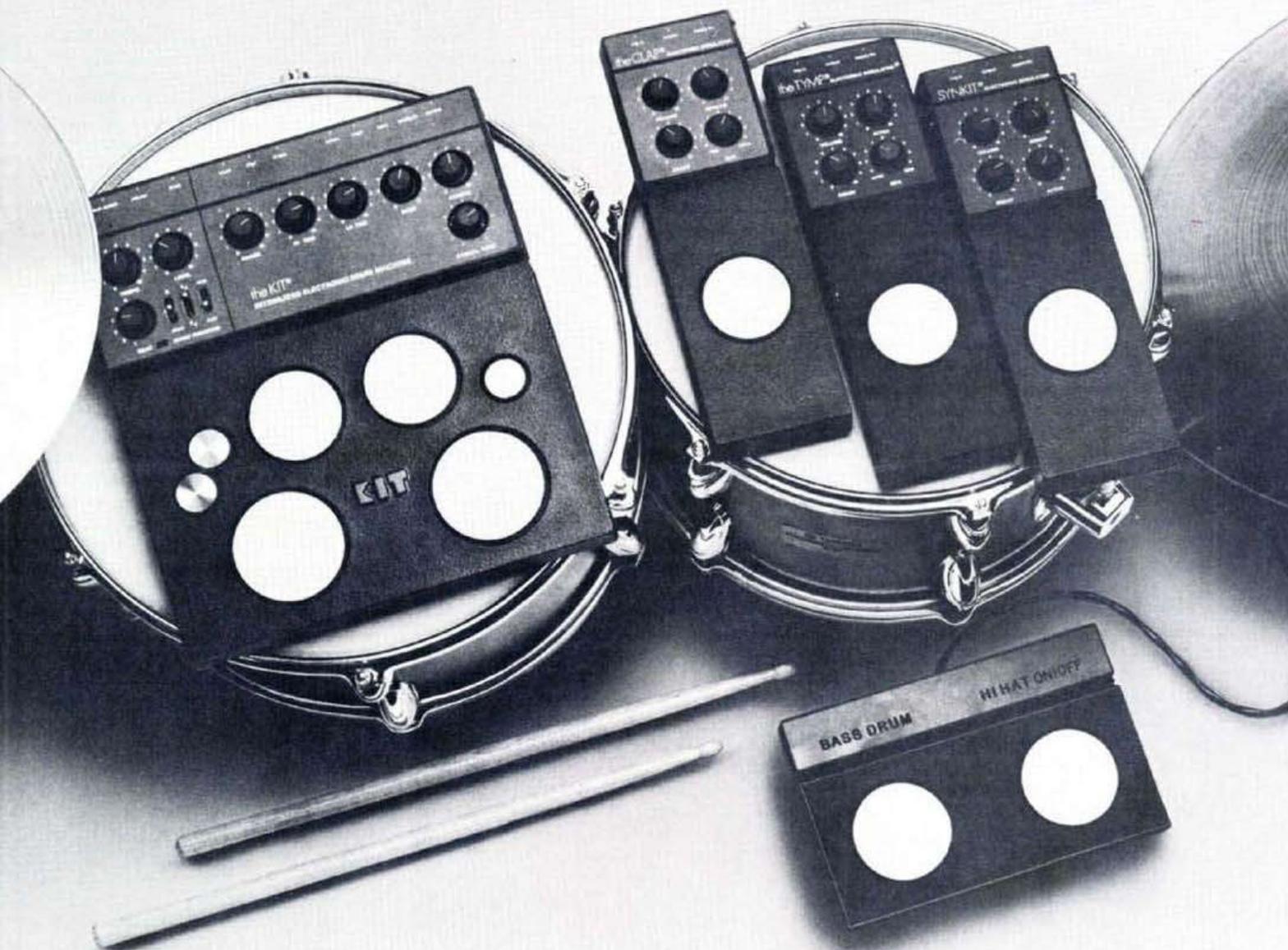
first solo album. **Stephen Price** on upcoming Pablo Cruise album. **Sue Hadjopolous** and **Larry Tolfree** worked on Joe Jackson's soundtrack for *Mike's Murder*. Although Bad Company is still in existence, drummer **Simon Kirke** has joined Wildlife since he misses touring. Yes folks, that was **Levon Helm** playing the lead role opposite Jane Fonda in last month's ABC TV movie, *The Dollmaker*. **Don Henley** is working on his second solo venture. The Psychedelic Furs decided **Phil Calvert** was not quite what they wanted in a drummer, so he rejoined Birthday Party. **Jerry Marolta** on T-Bone Burnett's current album. **Larrie Londin** winding two-month tour with Adrian Belew. **Derek Pellicci** is on tour with the Little River Band. **Scott Columbus** is the new drummer with

by Robyn Flans

Tom Brechtlein has been enjoying playing with Chick Corea for the last five years. He's recorded three records (*Secret Agent*, *Tap Step* and *Again and Again*) and he's done some heavy world touring with him. Most likely, as this goes to press, Tom will once again be on the road with Chick. "It's remarkable. Every time we go out on tour, it's like a whole different kind of music. Just when you think you've got the first music nailed, the next tour comes along and a totally different kind of thing happens. With Chick, you give 150%. He's really, really easy to work with and he opens up different areas for you. He'll just say one thing and it'll make you think and it'll just come out. It's never, 'I want this, I want that.' He gives you a lot of room to breathe and if something is not clicking together right, he'll just suggest one thing and it'll open up different avenues of playing. I've come up with different philosophies about playing just from Chick. We always talk about blend and sound and I came up with the idea that I also say in clinics that the band is one instrument. It's not the drummer, the guitar player, the bass player, the piano player or the horn player; it's one instrument. Say the drummer could be the low keys on a saxophone and the bass is the middle keys and the trumpets are the high keys and when you blow into it, it makes one sound and that's music. Chick really brings out the best in a musician. When you get off the road and play with other people, it shows. It really does. It's so much easier to play." In '82, while off the road, Tom worked with Alien Vizzutti recording *Red Metal* and playing some gigs. "When I get off the road, my project is to play on more funk and rock kinds of things. If you play with Chick, sometimes you're labeled as a jazz player and in a lot of people's cases, as well as my own, that just isn't the case."

Manowar. **Jaimoe Johnson** is accepting a limited number of drum students. You can write to him in care of MD. **Abbey Rader** spent last month doing a series of clinics in Germany for Tosco cymbals. Craig **Krampf** recently on albums with Hank Williams, Jr. and Dwight Twilley. Craig is currently writing and recording with Journey's Steve Perry for Perry's solo project. If you thought you saw **Airto** playing with Simon & Garfunkle on their recent tour, you were right. The drummer was **Dave Weckl**. Those in the Hempstead, New York area can catch **Charlie Perry**, **Joey Ascione** and **Tony Drago** in clinic at the Sam Ash store on October 5. Texas drummer **Ron Thompson** now with English group Savoy Brown. **Tony Coleman** on the road with Bobby "Blue" Bland. 🎸

For those drummers who would rather play a drum machine than program it.



The sounds of electronic percussion machines are fast becoming a standard in contemporary music, both on stage and in the studio. But for those drummers who've spent years developing their own distinctive touch, technique and coordination, these new devices might seem cold, mechanical and lifeless.

The **Kit** is an electronic percussion instrument, not a computer. You play it—it doesn't play you.

Designed and built in England, the **Kit** is not a substitute for drummers, but an instrument to enhance their creativity. It's intimate and expressive because you're *not* pushing buttons or accessing memory. It has a human feel because you actually *play* it, either with sticks or your hands (and your feet can trigger the bass drum with our optional foot pedal).

Touch-sensitive pads of tough ABS plastic respond instantly to your attack without sacrificing dynamics. The harder you strike them, the louder they sound.

The **Kit** not only has the feel of real drumming, but the sound as well—Fat, live tom toms and bass drum sounds, crackling snare, a sizzling ride or crash cymbal and crisp open or closed hi-hat accents. And all of these

sounds feature individual level controls with decay and sensitivity adjustments. Plus a master mix and separate outputs to facilitate signal processing, recording and amplification.

The **Kit's** automatic hi-hat rhythms with fully variable tempo control allow you to choose from up to 36 different variations. This makes it ideal for click tracks or as a metronome for practicing.

All of this comes powered by a nine volt battery or an AC adaptor in a compact and portable package that fits comfortably into a briefcase or cymbal bag. And the **Kit's** trigger-pulse outputs allow it to interface with our evolving series of creative add-on options like **Tymp**, the **Synkit** and the **Clap**, which may also be played separately.

So now drummers can join the electronic revolution without sacrificing their sound or technique—just by tapping onto the **Kit**.

For more information send \$1.00 for the **Kit** Brochure. Exclusive U.S. distribution by On-Site Energy Music Group,

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THE Kit

INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS

JO JONES BENEFIT

by Chip Stern



Papa Jo held the check out in his right hand, the aged arm that had driven so many great musical ensembles now stiff and frail. His pinball machine face—upon which one might read all of his emotions at a glance, from tilt to paternal pride—lit up gently, as if a ray of sunshine had passed through a sky of clouds, and for a moment he radiated serenity. For what seemed like minutes he stared through the check, counting both his blessings and his memories, then finally spoke up to say, "When you find yourself down and out, that's when you discover who your friends are."

Robert Zildjian of Sabian Ltd. made a visit to Jones some weeks later, dropping in to present Papa Jo with a set of cymbals. "Get well and play them, Jo," he smiled. "That can be your present to me."

A sentiment shared by countless others to be sure. Back in the spring one of Papa Jo's "little kids," Jack DeJohnette, dropped by Jo's apartment along with Danny Gottlieb and

Rick Mattingly, bringing him food, furniture, a set of drums and a checker board, the latter of particular pleasure to him: "You know about that, huh?" he chuckled. "They used to call me 'Checkers' Jones."

Such is the way it goes, or rather, the way it comes to Papa Jo Jones. Known as much for his generosity as his legendary irascibility, Papa Jo's compassion extends as great an influence as his drumming, and all through the spring when I visited him, you could feel his loneliness for his "children" compound his bad health. By early June he'd been convinced he should check into the hospital.

Now back at home with his eldest daughter Joanna looking after him, Jones is back on the track, putting on weight, eating well, walking around and basking in the adulation of his drumming "children" as epitomized by the beautiful *Tribute To Papa Jo* held in his honor at Swing Plaza on June 18. Organized in a flurry of phone calls by Max Roach and Swing Plaza's Sandy Borcum, this tribute produced a memorable evening of music, much-needed funds and a videotape/audiotape of the affair to be presented to Mr. Jones for his viewing pleasure.

Those in attendance were treated to a neat historical cavalcade of drum stylings, from the days of Jo's youth up through each succeeding decade.

First up, hailing from Florida, was Savoy Sultan Panama

Francis, who together with Ram "Lover Man" Ramariez and tenorist Percy Francis, worked the backwaters of ballads and blues that formed Jo Jones' music.

Next came an all-star quintet chaired by Mel Lewis, who rekindled the cruising spirit of Count Basie's rhythm section, playing closest in spirit to the smooth, hi-hat inflected groove of Mr. Jones himself, as Gerry Mulligan roared like an uncaged lion while trumpeter Joe Newman (who Jo Jones brought into the Count Basie band in 1943) blew pungent spikes of melody over Lewis, pianist Albert Dailey, and bassist George Duvivier.

Bob Moses brought all of his swing, bop and extraterrestrial influences to bear with his percussion ensemble, Drummingbirds, which went to the bush of Africa and South America and back again (via a New Orleans second-line). Dealing in colors, dynamics, contrasts and dancing exchanges, Moses, Danny Gottlieb, Jean Lee and Co. conversed amiably before giving way to the cubist counterpoint of pianist Connie Corruthers and drummer Carol Tristano, the last wife and daughter respectively of the late pianist-composer Lennie Tristano.

Michael Carvin began the next set alone in an affectionate solo collage, punctuated by the drummer's shouts of "tradition"—and so it was. Interspersing his own melodious, polyrhythmic inventions with

the trademark breaks of Jo Jones, Chick Webb, Sid Catlett, Art Blakey and Max Roach, Carvin created an escalating intensity that hinted at the ever-present connections between all American music—and the role the drummer has had in teeing them all off. World Saxophone Quartet kingpin Julius Hemphill entered next, engaging Carvin in a journey through the lazy, hazy melodies and simmering swing of Mexico and Texas in "Border Town" before engaging the great pianist John Hicks in jousting, open-ended versions of "All Blues" and "Autumn Leaves," converting the changes and melodies like rogue missionaries until they seemed to be playing '30s, '40s, '50s, '60s and '70s sensibilities all at once.

The last set I saw (later, master drummers Joe Chambers, Andrew Cyrille and Billy Higgins came around) featured a powerhouse quintet of Walter Davis Jr. on piano, bassist Larry Ridley, tenorists George Coleman and Archie Shepp, and the aristocratic juggler of the drums, Mr. Philly Joe Jones. Mr. Jones pulled one rabbit out of his hat after another in a flabbergasting display of how to play with a band, and against its grain. Only Mr. Max Roach himself could possibly top that with his rendition of "Papa Jo" on solo sock cymbals, finishing with a triple-timed samurai flourish every bit as alive as Jonathon David Samuel Jones himself.

ZILDJIAN DAY IN BOSTON

The Avedis Zildjian Company will bring its 360th Anniversary celebration to an exciting conclusion with a two part percussion festival to be held at the Berklee College of Music's Performance Center, October 9.

Zildjian Day in Boston will include performances by Steve

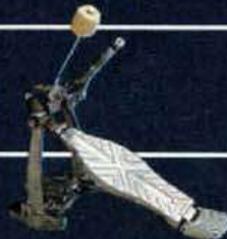
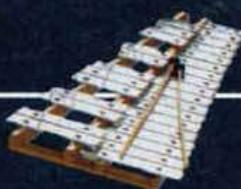
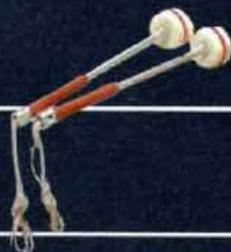
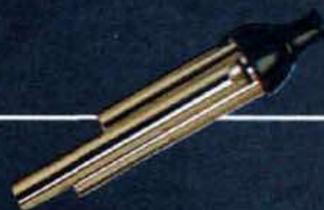
Gadd and Ralph MacDonald, Larrie Londin, Peter Erskine, Steve Smith and Vince Colaiuta. Zildjian Day will continue with a separate evening concert featuring Erskine with an ensemble of New York musicians, and Smith's group, Vital Information.

The Boston event is the third

in a series, following successful Zildjian Days in L.A. and Chicago this year. Rab Zildjian, vice president sales/North America, said, "Zildjian Days create a great deal of enthusiasm for percussion and music, and we plan to continue the series next year in a new set of cities."

Free commemorative t-shirts will be available for ticket-holders. Tickets for both performances will be available at Boston-area music stores, or by writing the Avedis Zildjian Company, Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA 02061. For more information, contact Zildjian at (617) 871-2200.

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JUST DRUMS

Percussion ' 83

DRUMS



TROPICAL MUSIC—Montego Joe was on hand again this year to demonstrate Afro-sound congas and Juggs drums.



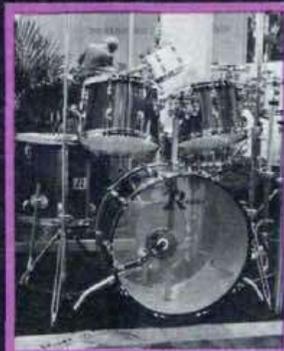
CB-700—This company is getting serious about quality, as demonstrated by their new floating-shell snare drum, with three interchangeable shells.



SLINGERLAND—The *Black Gold* drumset was featured at this year's show. Carmine Appice was also present, and was kept busy signing autographs.



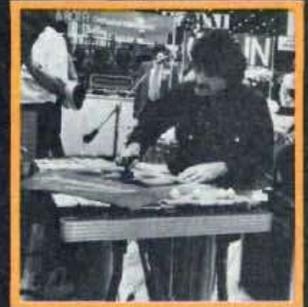
TAMA—The *Artstar* series was designed in cooperation with Neil Peart, and features thinner shells for added resonance.



ROGERS—The *XP-8* shells were featured.



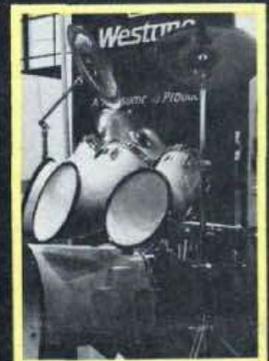
REMO—A new miniature series of *PTS* drumsets was featured, for the very young players.



SONOR—Bernard Purdie drew a crowd whenever he sat down at Sonor's new *Lite* drumset. After the crowd left, we got a look at the set itself.



CORDER—A large set with deep-shell toms was featured this year.



NORTH—Even in the midst of a NAMM show, these distinctive drums stand out.



GRETSCH—Celebrating their 100th year, Gretsch is producing the *Centennial Series*, a limited edition of 100 drumsets with special finishes, and gold hardware and heads. Karl Dustman and Charlie Roy are shown with set #1.



MD visits NAMM in Chicago

by Rick Mattingly



PREMIER—The *Black Shadow* drumset was featured.



YAMAHA—A Steve Gadd model drumset was on display, and Yamaha has also introduced their Cherrywood finish to the U.S.



LUDWIG—Bill Ludwig III shows the new Modular Stands, which can be put together in almost unlimited shapes and combinations.



GON-BOPS—A wide variety of Latin hand drums was featured.



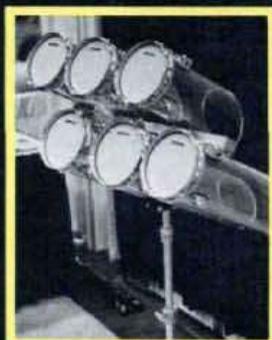
SHOCK—New at this year's show, distributed by the Chang Chung Shian Co.



CANNON—Complete drumsets were featured by this company, which started out just making toms.



LATIN PERCUSSION—Galaxy congas were displayed, along with many new variations on LP's various top-quality Latin instruments.



DRAGON—Dragon Drums are now part of Duraline/Syndrum.



COSMIC PERCUSSION—The new *Ascend* drumset was on display.



MID-EAST MFG.—Ceramic drums were featured, as well as finger cymbals.



PEARL—A number of top artists were on hand to play and discuss the Pearl line. Ted and Rhoda Reed stopped by to hear Louie Bellson's performance, and Bernard Purdie and Paul Jamieson caught Larrie Londin's demonstration.



SOTA—These new snare drum shells were certainly eye-catching, and they are made a completely new way.

ELECTRONICS



SYNDRUM—On display was the *Quad* model, featuring the 478 Control Console.



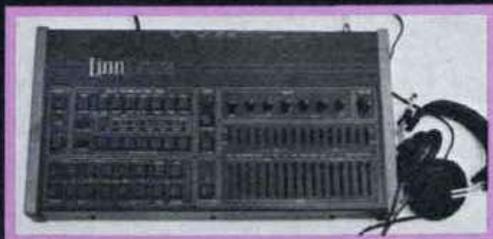
MAY-EA—For those wishing to see the internal miking system, a headless drum was on display; if you wanted to hear it, there was a special room provided to prevent the extra sound from overwhelming the surrounding booths.



MATTEL—A new, smaller version of the *Synsonics* drums was on display.



SIMMONS—No less than Bill Bruford was on hand to demonstrate these popular electronic drums and answer questions about them.



LINN—The *LinnDrum* was receiving a lot of attention, and the company was handing out these attractive buttons.



AQUARIAN—Roy Burns proudly introduced his company's new miking system.



MXR—There seemed to always be a crowd of people around this display, indicating the popularity of the digital drum machines.



THE KIT—Touch-sensitive pads trigger *The Kit* and *The Tym*.

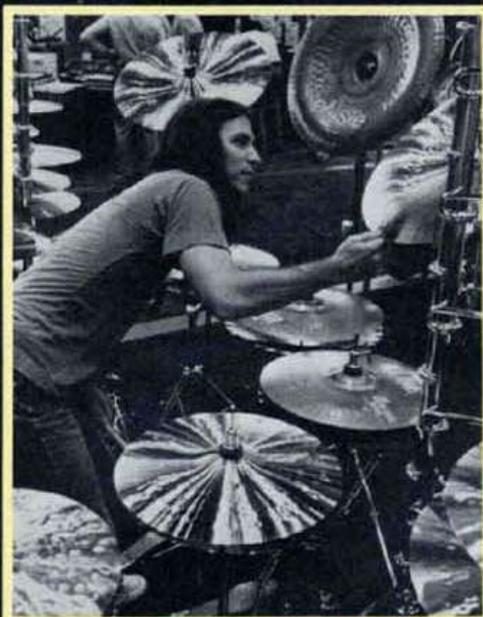


E-MU—The *Drumulator* is a digital drum machine which boasts a lower price than its competitors.



OBERHEIM—A new, lower-line model drum computer has been introduced, the *DX*.

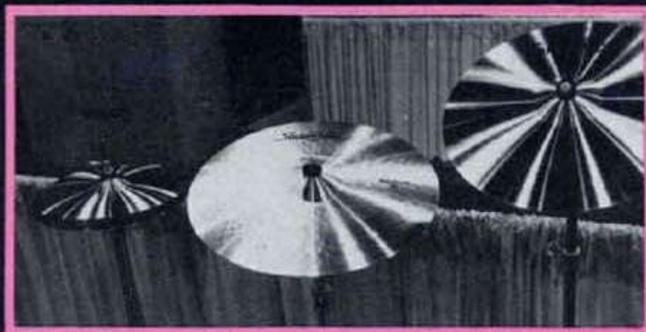
CYMBALS



PAISTE—Rod Morganstein was one of many who checked out Paiste's new *Novo China* cymbal. Paiste also featured new *Rude Sound-Edge* hi-hats and China cymbals, and lighter weight *Sound Creation* cymbals.



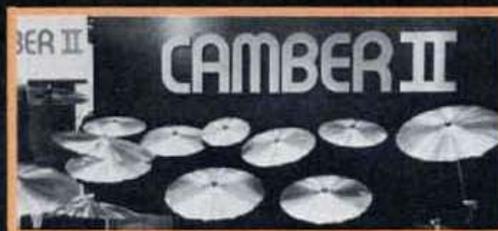
MEINL—From West Germany come *Laser* cymbals.



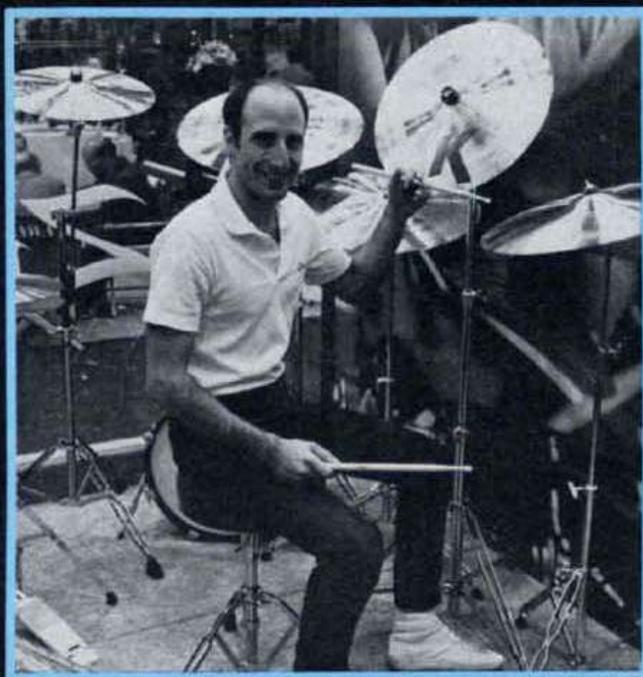
NUVADER—New from this company is a higher grade cymbal called *SoundVader*.



SABIAN—Making their American debut at the NAMM summer show, Sabian proudly showed their *AA* and *HH* models. On hand to answer any questions were Roy Edmunds, Bill Zildjian and Robert Zildjian.



AMBICO—The *Camber II* cymbals were displayed, as well as the new *Avanti* cymbals, one of which was hooked up to a computer which gave a visual display of the sound of a cymbal.



ZILDJIAN—Kenny Aronoff was spotted at the Zildjian booth, trying out some of the new *K's*.

ACCESSORIES



DEAN MARKLEY—Sticks were displayed amidst guitar accessories.



PER-DEL—Who says a triangle has to look like a triangle? Not this company, who offers many different shapes and sounds.



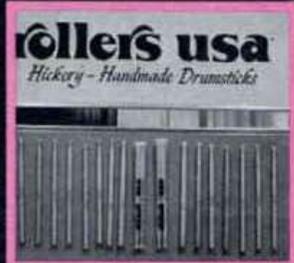
NAIL ROAD—Chime trees of every shape and size were on display.



PRO-CADDY RAX—This popular accessory was shown mounted on a snare drum stand.



GATO—A variety of these modern versions of log drums was featured by this company.



ROLLERS U.S.A.—A complete selection of hickory drumsticks was shown, in addition to a stick bag.



CASINO—This company is now distributing JOPA percussion, as well as the Cappelletti hi-hat pedal.



MIKE BALTER—In addition to his popular line of mallets, Balter now has a line of maple snare drum sticks.



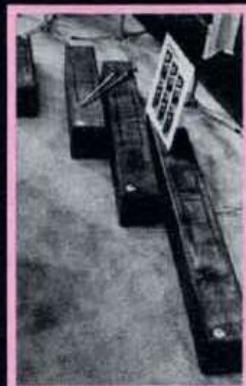
CALZONE—Different types of cases for different needs and budgets.



HUMES & BERG—Custom Built fiber cases were on display.



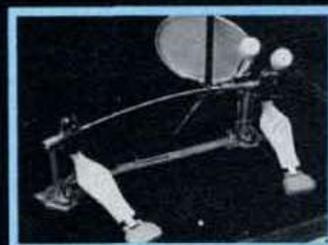
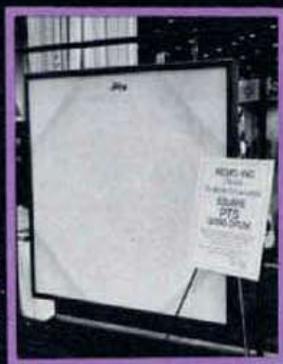
VIC FIRTH—Al Payson stopped by to say hello to Vic, who was featuring his new Steve Gadd model sticks.



CARROLL SOUND—New log drums were among the exotic instruments offered by this unique company.



REMO—A new drum muffling system was offered by Remo, who also had an enormous Pre-Tuned head mounted on a square frame, proving that anything is possible with these new PTS drumheads.



UNIVERSAL PERCUSSION—This company is now making available the Zalmer double pedal.



STAR CASE CO.—A good selection of fiber cases for drums was offered.



REUNION BLUES—This company again featured an attractive assortment of leather cymbal and stick bags.



REGAL TIP/CALATO—Celebrating the 25th anniversary of their invention of the nylon tip stick, the entire Calato family was on hand to demonstrate their products.



PEARL—*The Rack*, designed by Jeff Porcaro and Paul Jamieson, was receiving a lot of attention.



DURALINE—Three sets were displayed side by side for comparison of Duraline's *Studio*, *Concert* and *Magnum* drumheads.



AMBICO—Various types of woodblocks and jingle accessories were on display.



RUG CADDY—A new collection of drum and cymbal bags was featured.



SPECTRASOUND—New this year was the *Tuxedo* line of cymbal bags.



EVANS—The popular Evans-drumheads were prominently displayed.



KICKER—Sound Concepts had their popular *Kicker* set up so that people could try out this unique bass drum pedal attachment.



AQUARIAN—Bill Bruford was spotted checking out Aquarian's *X-10 Lite* sticks.



ANVIL—From fiber to ATA cases, Anvil provides top quality.

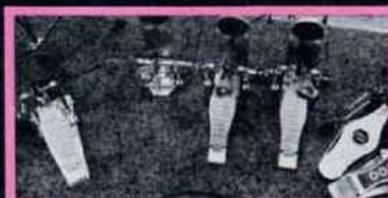


DCI VIDEO—Rob Willis and Paul Siegal were at the show, proudly displaying video tapes of such artists as Steve Gadd, Ed Thigpen and Lenny White.



PRO-MARK—White Oak and Golden Oak drumsticks were mounted in an attractive display.

DRUM WORKSHOP—D. W. 2000 pedals are a new, lower-cost addition to this popular line. Single and double pedals are available.



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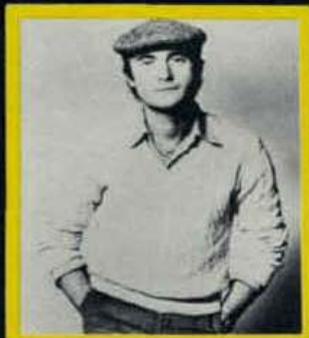
NOVEMBER'S MD

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Inside Sabian

Joe

La Barbera



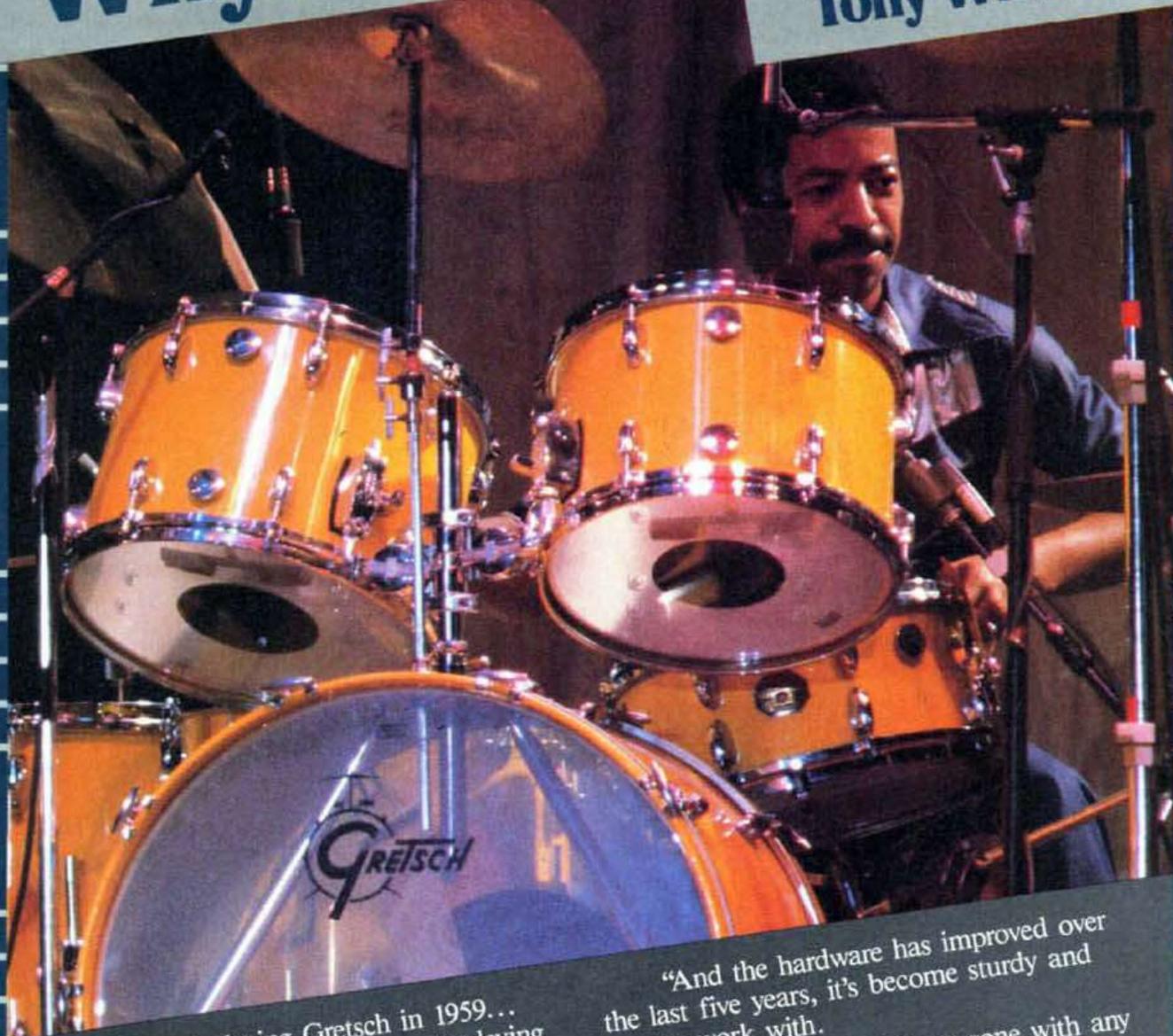
Phil Collins



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Why do I play Gretsch?

Tony Williams



"I started playing Gretsch in 1959... because *my* favorite drummers were playing Gretsch: Max Roach and Art Blakey.

"The idea Gretsch is just a jazz drummer's drum is silly. It's a lot more than that. You can change a Gretsch drum to sound different ways, and that's not necessarily true of other drums. That's one of the things I like about Gretsch drums.

"It's a very identifiable sound—very round, it carries alot of tone color.

"And the hardware has improved over the last five years, it's become sturdy and easy to work with.

"You know, I could have gone with any drum company over the years—but staying with Gretsch meant more to me than anything anyone else had to offer.

"The sound is there."



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WHEN STEVE SMITH RIDES HIS ZILDJIANS, YOU'RE IN FOR AN EXCITING JOURNEY.

Steve grew up just around the corner from The Zildjian factory. Of course, for the past few years he hasn't been around all that much, what with his touring with Jean Luc Ponty, Ronnie Montrose and of course the enormously successful group, Journey. However, recently Steve took a break in his wild schedule and had a chance to sit down and talk with us.

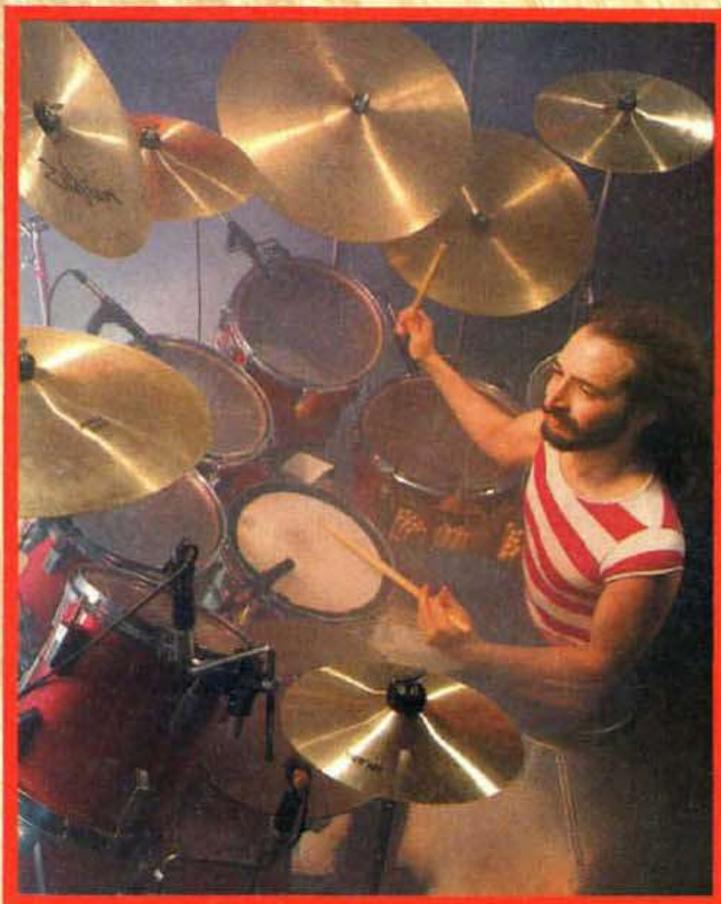
On Starting Out.

"I started out playing in the fourth grade when I was nine years old and had a really good teacher. When I was in high school I got serious about playing and I got a job as a paper boy to save money to buy cymbals. My teacher used to bring me to the Zildjian factory so I could go in and pick out my own set of cymbals."

On Rock and Roll. "After college I had a lot of experience playing jazz and fusion and I had virtually no experience playing rock and roll professionally except for some high school rock things. I really wanted to follow that direction, because

nowadays a drummer has to play rock and roll as well as jazz in order to be well-rounded as a musician."

On Zildjians. "The kind of music we play with Journey demands a lot of power. I've found that the cymbals in the Zildjian rock line are the only ones that can



Flying high with the success of Journey, Steve Smith is one of the most versatile and talented drummers in music today.

really do the job for me — that can carry the big halls and not sound thin. Zildjian cymbals have extraordinary projection but at the same time they have this wonderful, full musical tone. I also particularly like the Ping Ride — I got my first one back in the eighth grade and I've been playing one ever since."

On Career. "You know if you should get into music. It's something you can just feel. If you have to ask yourself the question, then don't bother. Being a musician isn't just a career it's a way of life.

"I find that most successful musicians don't think about success as much as they think about being a good player or songwriter.

To try to focus on success is a little too contrived and usually just doesn't work."

If you're a serious drummer, chances are overwhelming that you, like Steve, are already playing Zildjians. Zildjian: a line of cymbals played by drummers on six continents — a line of cymbal-makers that spans three centuries.



Look for Journey's new hit album "Frontiers" on Columbia Records.

For your copy of the Zildjian Cymbals and Accessories Catalog and a Zildjian T-Shirt, S, M, L, XL, send \$5.00 to Dept. 14
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