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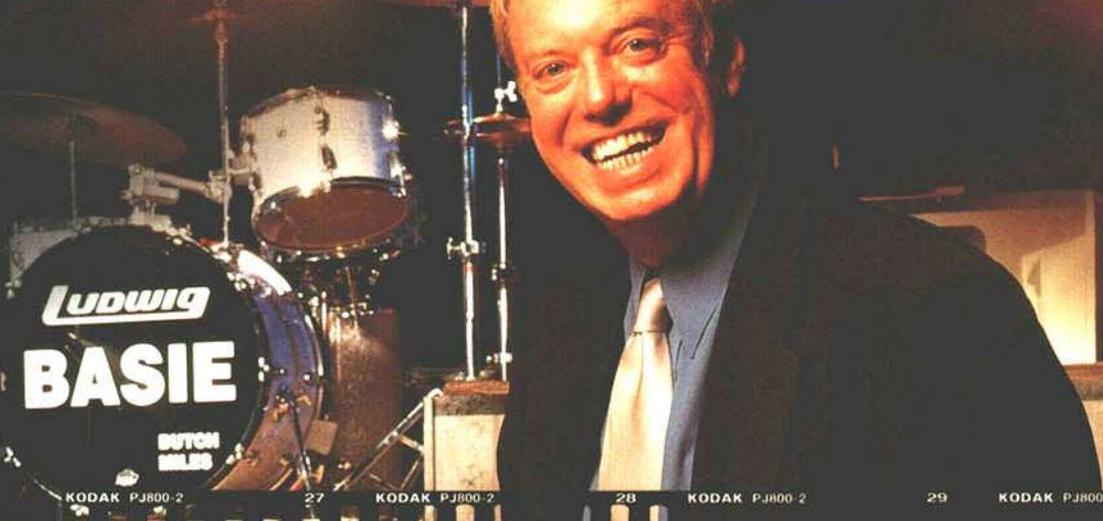
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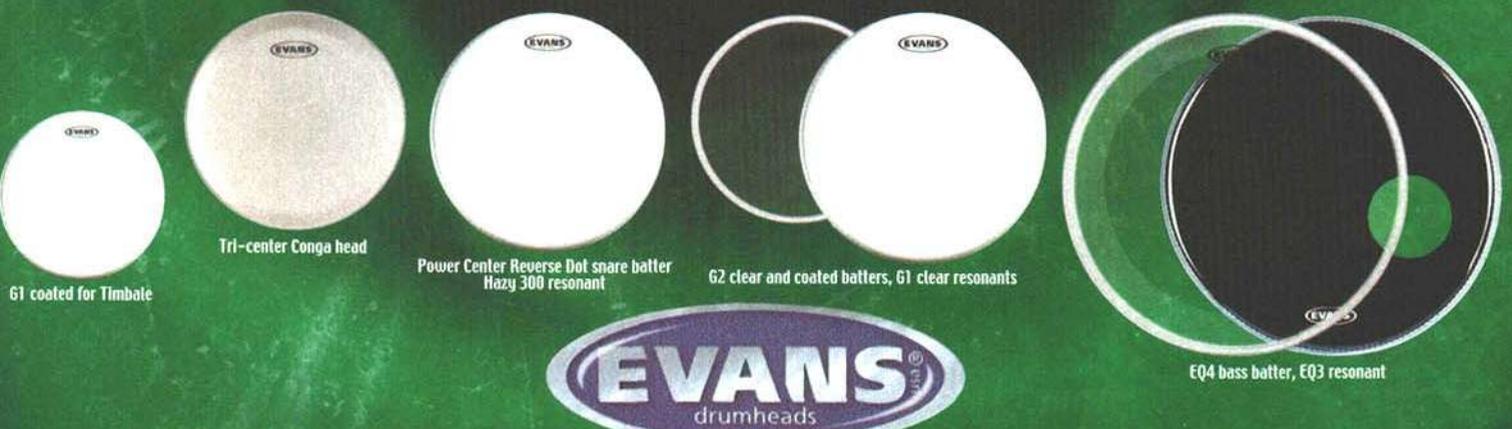
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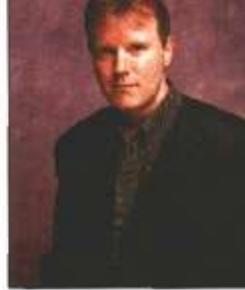
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Undiscovered Drummers Discovered!

Late last year *MD* editor/publisher Ron Spagnardi came up with the idea of holding an international drum contest—the first ever wholly sponsored by *Modern Drummer*. While recognizing the problems of a competition (choosing a "winner" for something as subjective as a drum performance), Ron's goal for the contest was simply to spotlight new, deserving talent. With that, *MD*'s first ever "Undiscovered Drummer" contest was born.

The ad announcing the contest appeared in our January 2000 issue. The requirements were simple: drummers had to perform a two-minute solo on either audio- or videotape. The solo could contain anything the drummer cared to play, from groove playing to all-out flailing. Well, a lot of drummers were interested, because by the time of the contest deadline, March 1, 2000, we'd received over 500 entries!

The screening process for these tapes involved two steps. First, the tapes were divided among all of the editors. From that

first batch, the six of us (Ron Spagnardi, Rick Van Horn, Adam Budofsky, Rich Watson, Billy Amendola, and I) individually chose the best candidates from among the two age groups (18 or younger, 19 or older). The forty or so tapes that made the first cut were then judged by all of the editors. We spent the better part of a day together in the *MD* library listening to these top contenders, giving each a number ranking. Those votes were tabulated—and unanimous winners for each age group were "discovered."

And the winners are...**Mike D'Angelo** of Charlotte, North Carolina (in the 18 or younger category) and **Tony Medeiros** of Indianapolis, Indiana. D'Angelo impressed us with his flowing style, solid technique, and ability to solo over an odd meter. He also had some slick moves, including cross-sticking and double-pedal licks—all particularly impressive when you consider Mike is only twelve years old. As for Medeiros, this thirty-year old's ability is tremendous. Tony

played a stunning solo over left-foot clave. He upped the ante by also soloing over left-foot cascara! In addition to this, Tony had a beautiful touch on the instrument.

Both Mike and Tony received a \$500 cash prize, a plaque commemorating their victory, a selection of *MD* Drummerware and books, and a fully paid trip to our Drum Festival Weekend this past May. In fact, both drummers performed brief solos at the Festival, *wowing* the thousands of drummers in attendance. We certainly expect to hear more from both of these fine players in the future. (To read more about Mike and Tony, see their profiles in next month's issue.)

Finally, we'd like to thank all of you who entered our first "Undiscovered Drummer" contest. We were very impressed with the overall talent level we witnessed on those tapes. You all can play! It made us feel very good about the future of drumming.

Bill Miller

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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Robyn Flans, Burt Korall, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Mark Parsons, Matt Peiken, Robin Tolleson, Lauren Vogel Weiss, T. Bruce Wittet.

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BILL STEVENSON



It's been some time since I read your magazine. I got tired of reading about yet another virtuoso. I always wanted to read more about guys who I thought were great, like John

Wright from NoMeansNo, or The Descendents' Bill Stevenson—who both have been a huge influence on me for more than ten years. When I found out *you* finally had an article with Bill Stevenson in your June issue, I ran right out and bought it.

Although the article was only a relative-

ly small *Update* piece, I thank you! Bill has been around for a long time, and he's never received the credit he deserves. In an era where rock music seems to be in disarray, it's nice to see a drummer who is still doing it consistently in the name of *all*. Now you just need to do an article on John Wright. Thanks, and keep it up.

Jay Clements
Bellevue, WA

JAZZ BASICS

I've been playing drums for quite a few years now, and my desire to learn more about jazz is on the increase. Mike De Simone's recent series of articles on jazz basics has really helped me get started. Thanks for being sensitive to the needs of *all* drummers, whether they are just

starting out or are professionals.

Brad C.
Rome, GA

Hats off to Mike De Simone for his "Learning To Play Jazz" series. Too often we find drummers with fabulous technique and fine time, but a lack of knowledge of song form and structure. What distinguishes the experienced players from the amateurs is a sense of support and development that comes from knowing one's place within the form at all times. Listen to Jack DeJohnette for an excellent example of how to build exciting phrases that support one's bandmates while reinforcing the underlying framework of the song itself.

However, having played the tune many times myself, I must contend that "All Of

DEALING WITH SMALL BANDSTANDS

I enjoyed Larry Kennedy's June article about setting up gear on small stages. Tubular stands, booms, etc. are all very cool suggestions, but one point left out was to take nothing but a kick, snare, hat, and (if you're feeling wild) a ride cymbal. You'd be amazed how much you can learn by just laying down a groove all night.

kmhall@ashland.com
via Internet

As an extremely busy clubdate drummer in New York, I get shoved into my share of tight areas in hotels, on ships, in halls, etc. But regardless of the real estate, I must perform to the leaders' expectations, not only in terms of actual performance, but sound as well. To my mind, today's "compact" or scaled-down kits just don't cut it. Their 16" kicks don't have enough bottom for the pop and dance styles very much in demand even at the smallest of gigs. Besides, even the miniaturized kits are misleading in terms of spatial economy. Unless you are using a particularly shallow kick drum, the area occupied by a "standard" four-piece kit (which I regard as the minimum necessary to reproduce most musical styles) remains pretty constant.

I've found that the real space-eaters are cymbals. To that end my compact cymbal setup consists of an 18" crash/ride, a 14" crash, and 13" hi-hats. (You really don't need any more than this.) These sizes allow me to a) pull the stands in closer, minimizing my surrounding floor clutter, and b) keep the cymbal

volume to a manageable level, even in full flight. I return to my normal 21"/18"/14" cymbal setup for larger venues.

To save stand space, replace your ride cymbal stand with a shell- or hoop-mount cymbal holder. The crash cymbal can go on a flat-based stand. The new DW 6710 flat-based stands are a must for the traveling drummer. Double-braced stands really have no place on the clubdate stage. And after the gig, your back will love you, since you'll be carrying a lighter stand case.

The key to getting a big sound out of a small drumset is head selection. Two-ply tom and kick batters afford a deep tuning. And a dotted head (!) on the resonant side drops the fundamental pitch of the drum, moving a 14" floor tom into the 16" zip code. This also cuts the overring and projection of the drums slightly—which may not please us drummers, but is a nod to the comfort of the rest of the band.

On the majority of gigs I do, the drums are miked. If you are also miked most of the time, do yourself a favor and get your own set of clip-on drum mic's, along with an internal mic' for the kick. You'll save quite a bit of real estate on stage, and you'll get a more consistent sound. You'll also earn smiles from the sound company, who won't have to think of creative ways to set up stands around you.

Nobody ever said that clubdates were easy. But by making some adjustments and some careful purchases, you can have *your* drums and play them too!

John R. Frondelli

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Me" is in the ABAC form, rather than AABA as stated by Mr. De Simone in your June issue. In ABAC form, the third eight-bar section is the same as the first. The second and fourth eight-bar sections might be considered a "question" and "answer" respectively, interspersed with the initial motif as stated in the A sections. I feel it is important that this be understood by students who may seek out this song for study.

Forest Muther
via Internet

Editor's note: Mike De Simone replies: "Several readers caught my error in using 'All Of Me' to illustrate the AABA form. They are correct in stating that it actually is in the ABAC form. Drummers seeking an example of the AABA form can refer to Billy Strayhorn's classic 'Take The A Train,' made famous by Duke Ellington. I apologize for any confusion."

THE IMPORTANCE OF TIMEKEEPING

About a year ago I decided to do something to improve my timekeeping. By practicing timekeeping almost exclusively—

and especially by counting out loud when practicing—my time has gotten better. But I've always been amazed at the lack of teaching materials on the market that specifically address the subject of timekeeping. Over the years I've managed to find a few articles in some *MD* back issues, and some helpful comments in various interviews, but that was about all. In light of that, I really appreciated Ron Spagnardi's editorial on the subject of timekeeping in the June issue. I've already purchased Lome Entress's *Time And Drumming* after seeing his articles in previous *MD* issues, and I just ordered Ken Meyers' *The Solid Time Toolkit*. I'm looking forward to working with it.

Thanks very much for giving attention to what is probably the most important issue in drumming—and yet the issue having the least amount of study materials.

Dennis Gurgul
Newton, MA

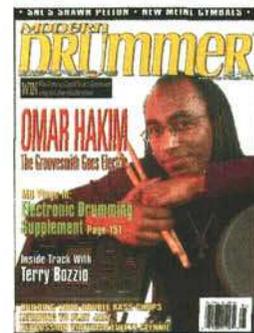
ON THE MOVE CORRECTION

I'm thrilled to have been included in the June *On The Move* department. However,

the item included one error regarding the *Sea Glass* CD. Although John Patitucci did play on that recording, it was not John's album, but Ken Volpe's. I just want to make sure credit is given where it's due.

Carter McLean
via Internet

ELECTRONIC SUPPLEMENT



It was great to read your May 2000 electronic drumming supplement. Finally people are noticing that electronic drums are as good as the acoustic stuff—sometimes even better! I own

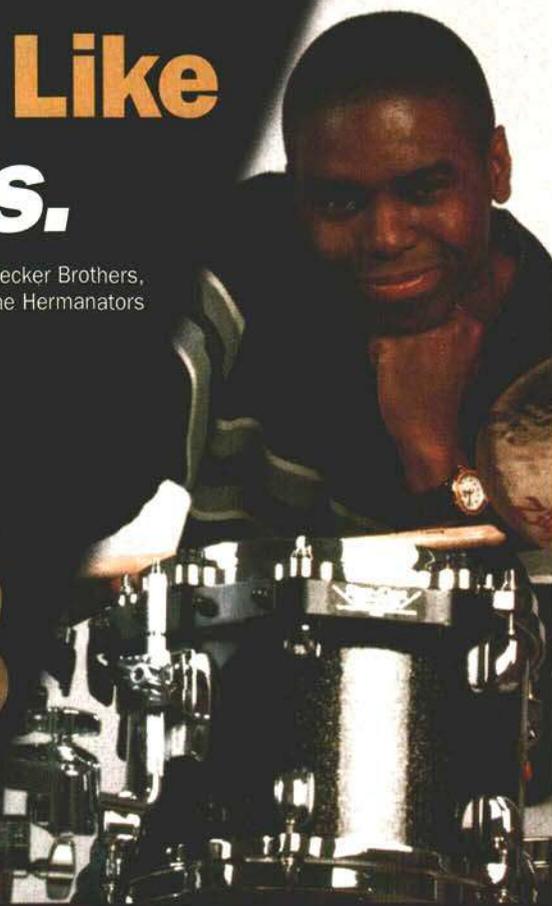
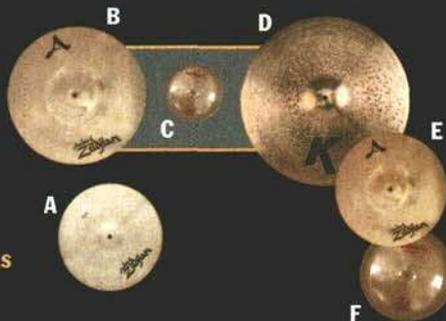
a set of Roland V-Drums, and I'm really excited about them. I can finally practice at home without disturbing the neighbors, plus I get as many different sounds as I want! It would be nice to read more about electronic drums in future articles.

Jan
from Europe, via Internet

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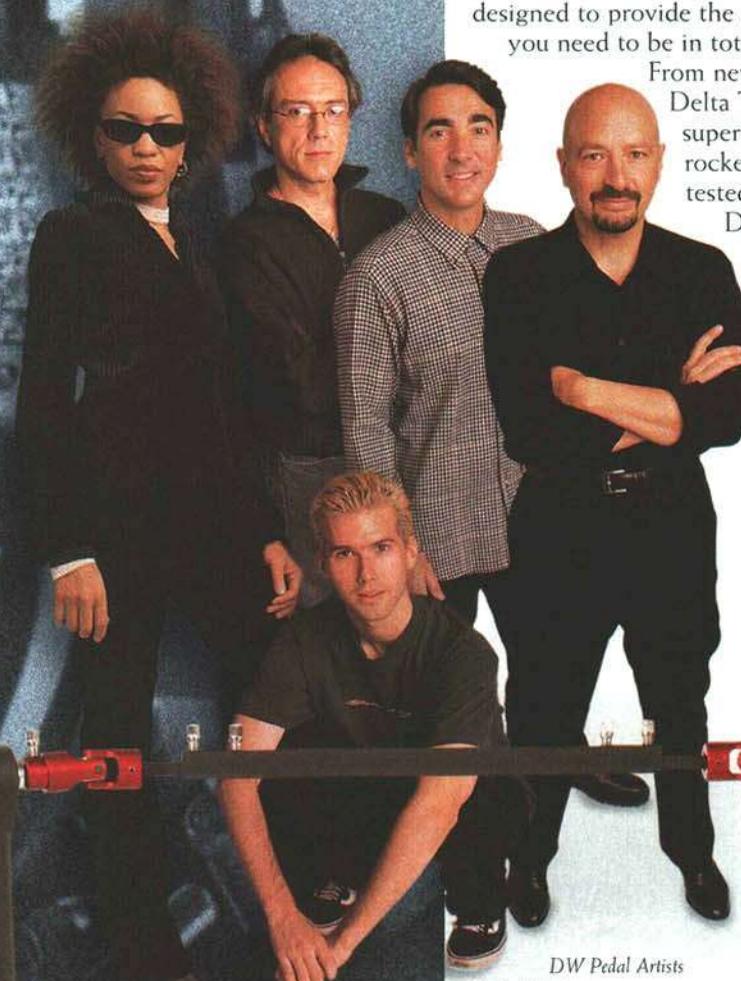
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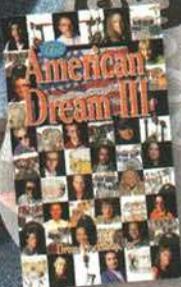
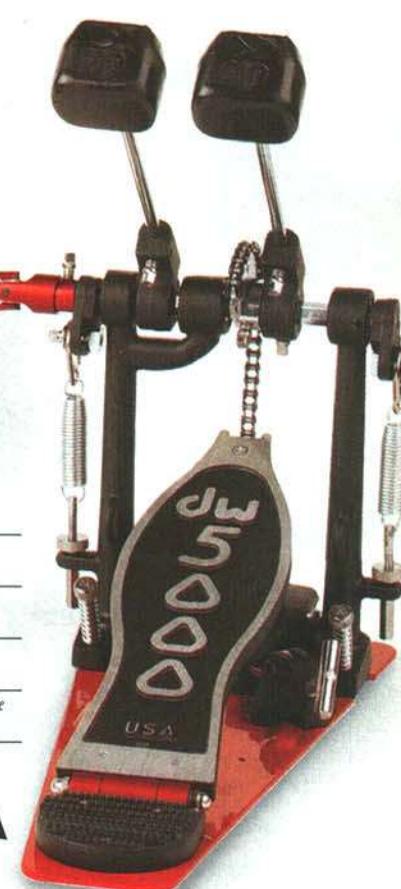


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MANU'S BRUSHES



On page sixty-four of your April 2000 issue, Manu Katche is asked about the "brush sound" he got on a song called "Back Then" on a Zildjian promotional CD. Manu

replies, "Those are rods I'm using, but they are different rods. There's a French drum store, la Baguetterie, that has new [dowel sticks] made by an African guy. They're much thinner and more fragile. After using them on a few songs, though, you just say good-bye. They're finer than the red ones we have here with fewer dowels."

First, the name of the brushes is Akangatide brushes. Second, we have five different models. We don't know which model Manu is talking about. Third, our brushes are not made to play loud. You cannot play hard rock with jazz brushes. Or

that is, you *can*, but you're then likely to give the same answer that Manu did concerning our products.

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THANKS TO EDDIE

In the brotherhood of the drumming world, I'd like to tell you about a brother who stands out of the crowd.

My nephew Jason was born with cerebral palsy. After numerous operations he still can't stand up straight. A while ago I brought him a drumset that he loves to play. But since Jason lives in Cincinnati and I live in Chicago, it was impossible for me to instruct him.

Fortunately, through a string of circumstances, my brother befriended the band Blessid Union Of Souls. After meeting Jason, their drummer, Eddie Hedges, start-

ed giving him drum lessons! I can't tell you what an inspiration it has been for Jason. This display of compassion is rarely found today. As anyone would find from reading *Modern Drummer*, this is the kind of attitude that makes a person a true professional!

Michael Waugh
Orland Park, IL

GOOD MEDICINE

I recently had a kit made for me by Medicine Man Custom Drums. Dana Chaney, MM's owner and drum builder, went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure I got what I wanted. All through the construction process he would call or email me, asking questions and going over details. He helped me choose the drum sizes and styles, based on what I liked and disliked about other high-end drumkits. You don't get this kind of personal customer service from a big-name company (unless you're a big-name player). My drums rock! Thanks, Dana.

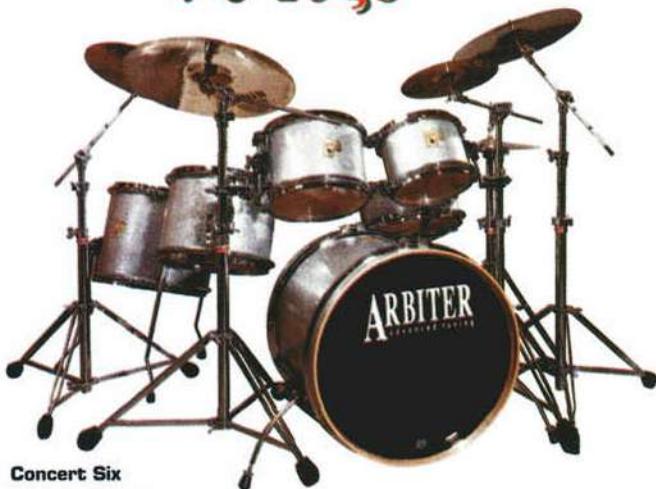
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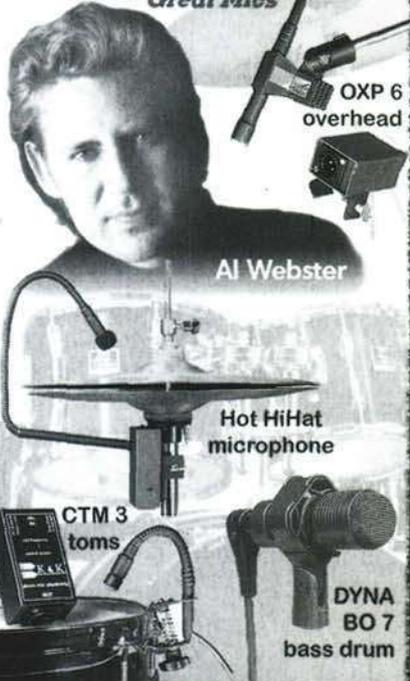
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I'm a twenty-two-year-old amateur drummer from Belgium. I discovered your magazine two years ago. I've never taken any lessons, but thanks to *Modern Drummer* I've learned to read drum tabs, I've improved my technique, and I've learned about other points of view on drums. I've learned about grooving, playing for the song, and playing a solid backbeat. I've also learned some amazing patterns and techniques—like cross-sticking, and how to train my left foot on the double bass.

Your great reviews on equipment have helped me buy consciously, not blindly. You keep me up-to-date with the newest stuff on the market. But most importantly I've discovered amazing drummers like

Buddy Rich, Art Blakey, John Bonham, Keith Moon, Billy Cobham...too many to name. They've opened my eyes to different styles and genres. Thanks to *MD*, I have grown as a drummer.

Stephan Verbeurgt
via Internet

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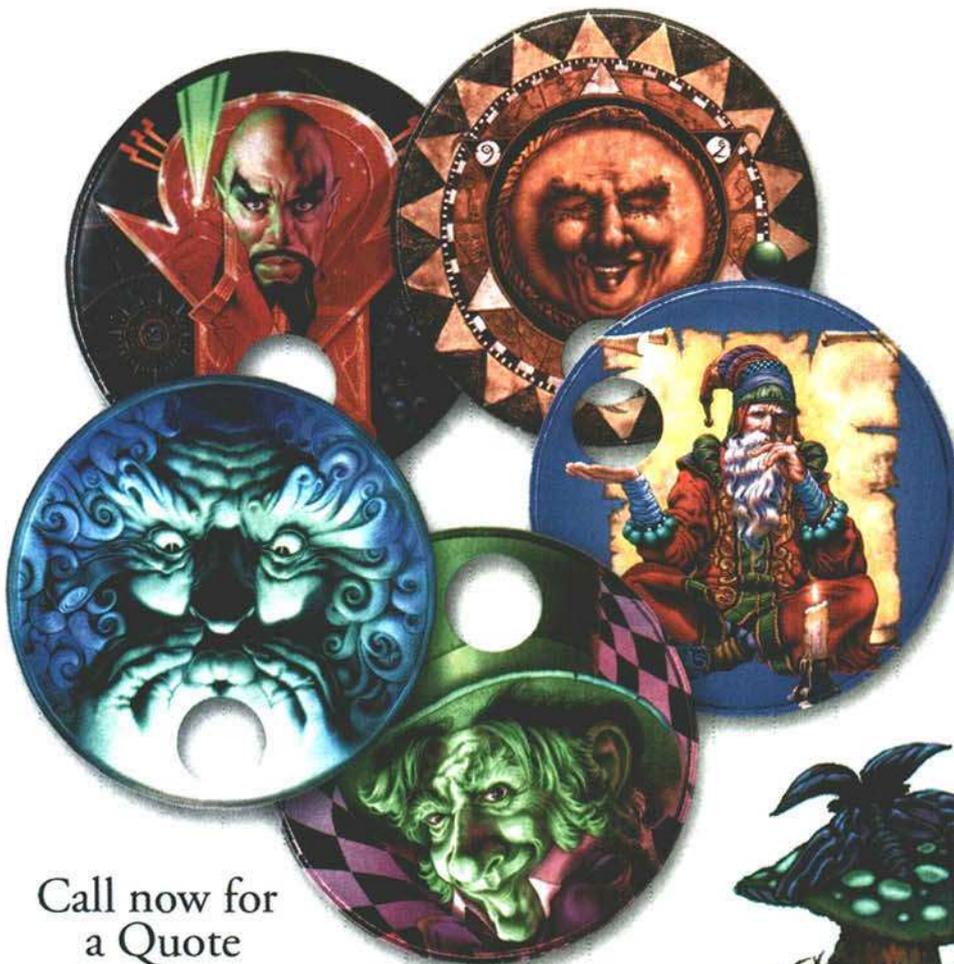
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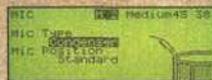
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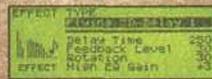
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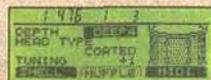
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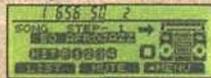
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Bill Bruford Sets Up

Q Through the past several years you've been one of the drummers who have inspired me to keep playing and writing my own music. I've had the good fortune to see you perform live on three occasions. The first time was on the B.L.U.E. tour. I'd like to know when you started using the setup you're currently playing, and what prompted you to position the drums in such an uncommon way.

Thanks for being such a great influence on musicians worldwide.

Jose Duque
via Internet

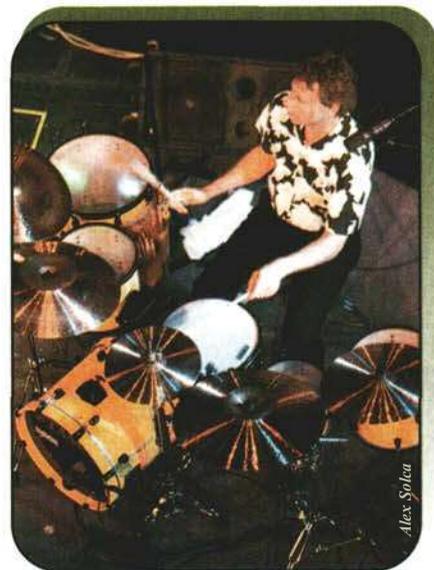
A Thanks for your encouragement. I started using my current setup with the second edition of *Earthworks*, after King Crimson, in about 1997. Broadly speaking it's a symmetrical, or ambidextrous kit. (I'd give my right arm to be ambidex-

trous!) The two cymbals and two toms on the right are mirrored by two cymbals and two toms on the left, around a pivotal central hi-hat.

I arrange the drums flat on the same plane, like a timpanist with five timpani. Personally I find moving the left stick a few inches to the left (to reach the high tom) easier than moving it up and forward, as on a "traditional" kit.

The drums are also arranged in a "broken" pitch order to avoid the common descending roll of drums from high to low. The setup also avoids the now unnecessary problem of the right hand playing the hi-hat on the left side, which I always found a bit strange. I sometimes practice without the right-hand side of the kit set up at all, in order to get the left (my weaker) side working a bit harder.

Thanks again for your interest. For more



information on all things Bruford, may I direct you to my personal Web site, www.billbruford.co.uk.

John Riley On Playing In The Cracks

Q First of all, thanks for all the great articles and exercises you have written for *Modern Drummer*. I have found them inspiring, challenging, and very useful.

Many drummers—including yourself—have mentioned the feel of playing between straight 8th notes and swung 8th notes. In your December 1999 "Second Line Applications" article, you mentioned about playing "in the cracks." Could you elaborate on this feel? Could you suggest some exercises that would help to develop this feel? Also, could you suggest some records and/or songs that are good examples of this feel?

Ryan Sapp
via Internet

A Thanks for your kind words. I'm glad my columns are of value to you. I write them to stimulate my own growth, too.

To develop that "in the cracks" feel, first play the shuffle rhythm on the ride cymbal. Then, at the same tempo, play straight 8th notes. Now go back to the shuffle and

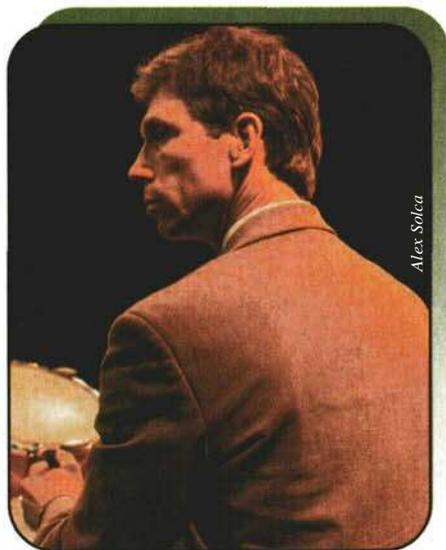
gradually flatten it out so that it approaches the straight-8th-note feel. This flat shuffle or wobbly 8th-note phrasing is "in the crack" between swung and straight—New Orleans style.

It may be helpful to play the cymbal using more arm motion, less wrist, and very little bounce from the stick—more from the elbow. Some people achieve the feel if they imagine that they are playing the cymbal with a broken wrist in a cast! Once you get the proper spacing on the cymbal, work on transferring that feel to "second line" grooves between the snare drum and bass drum.

A great recording of this type of playing is Professor Longhair's *Crawfish Festival*, featuring Johnny Vidacovich on drums. If you want to check out the "street" origins of the feel, look for recordings by the Olympia Brass Band. A recent book called *BackBeat—The Earl Palmer Story* by Tony Scherman also sheds light on the evolution of the feel. Earl—who is from New Orleans—is one of the first and most-recorded studio drummers. In the book he

discusses how the shuffle morphed to become the rock beat. Good luck!

Editor's note: For more tips on playing "in the cracks," as well as further recordings with this feel, check out the feature story on Stanton Moore in the August 2000 issue of MD.



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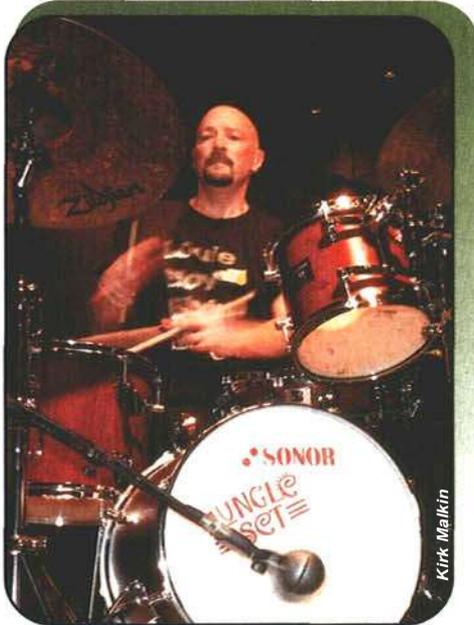
JOEL STEVENETT

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In The Jungle With **Steve Smith**



Q On page 160 of the April 1999 issue of *Modern Drummer* you were shown performing at the 1998 Percussive Arts Society convention on a set of Sonor Jungle Drums. I noticed that you weren't using the ride-cymbal bass drum mount, but rather a straight cymbal stand. Also, you didn't have a cymbal on the same stand the high tom was on. Why is that? I'm considering buying this kit, and I'd like your input based on your experience with it.

Erik Hallmark
West Seneca, NY

A The Jungle Kit has a great sound and feel to it. I enjoy using it at my clinics and at some local gigs in the San Francisco area.

I don't have the ride cymbal on the bass

drum mount because I find it easier to position the cymbal on a straight stand. It also feels more solid on a real cymbal stand versus the bass drum mount. As far as the cymbal on the tom stand, that would be okay if I were using a small crash cymbal on that side. But I set up a second ride cymbal that is 20" or 22", so it would actually cover the drum unless I put it on a separate stand.

My only other comments about the "stock" Jungle Kit pertain to the little tambourine snare drum. I don't use that; I prefer a real snare drum. As far as heads go, white or clear Remo Ambassadors sound great on the toms, and a clear Emperor on the batter side of the 16" bass drum sounds great with no muffling at all. More than anything, these drums are totally *fun* to play. Enjoy!

Submit questions for your favorite drummer to Ask A Pro, *Modern Drummer*, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Or you may email rvh@moderndrummer.com. We will do our best to pursue every inquiry. However, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to reach every artist or that any given artist will respond. Also, due to MD's publication schedule, artists' touring schedules, and other considerations, it sometimes takes several months before an inquiry and reply can be published.

Repeat Bar

A Classic Quote
From MD's Past

"I never really told myself that I had to keep practicing over and over to get good. I just wanted to jam. But that's how you get comfortable, more natural. When that happens, you can start being really creative and develop your own thing."

David Silveria, March '99 MD

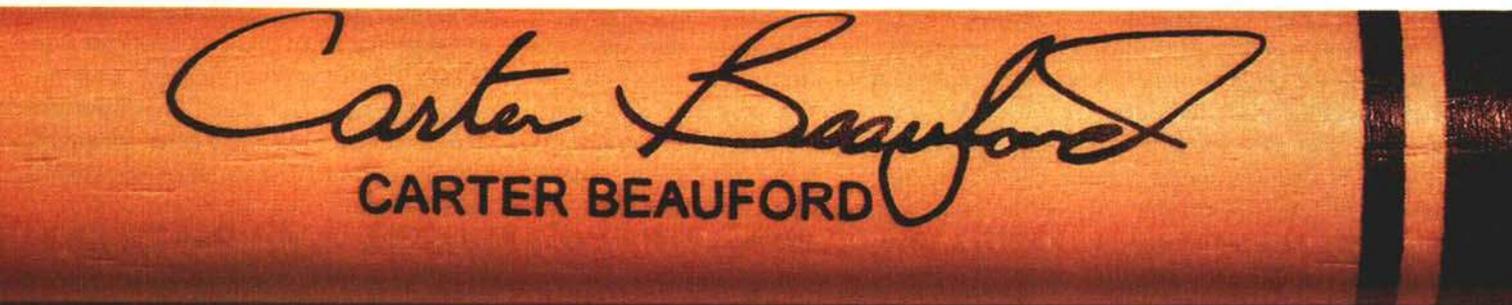


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Premier Olympics

Q I own a Premier Olympic four-piece kit that was new in the early to mid-1970s, according to the original owner of drums. The set includes a 20" bass drum, a 14" snare, a 12" rack tom, and a 16" floor tom. I know this is a student-model drumkit, but it has a really nice sound, and it makes a great jazz kit. Did Premier make a 14" floor tom in the Olympic series back in those days? If so, can you advise me where I might be able to obtain one? Also, were the shells made of mahogany then as they are now?

Kenny Probst
Williamsport, PA

A MD's resident drum historian, Harry Cangany, replies, "Premier's Olympic drums were distributed in the mid-1970s by Selmer Musical Instruments. (Selmer later bought Ludwig and dropped the Premier line.) The shells were mahogany. It sounds like you have the PD65 outfit: 20" bass, 12" and 16" toms, with a matching 5 1/2x14 snare. Premier did little things to cut corners on the Olympics, like put six lugs on the bass drum instead of eight or ten.

"The Olympic line did include a 14x14 tom, so you might be able to obtain one. I suggest putting a 'wanted' ad in the classified section of *Modern Drummer*, along with advertising in vintage publications like *Not So Modern Drummer* and on Internet sites like Drummer's Web and the Forum at www.drumcenter.com. Good luck in your search."

Replacement Snares For Dyna-Sonics

Q I own two old Rogers snare drums, and I have been having trouble replacing the actual wire snares. I bought two sets of Pearl snares but when I tried to attach them to the Rogers' snare assembly, one of the screws that is supposed to fasten the snares to the assembly was too big to fit through the pre-drilled holes on my new Pearl snares. If you could provide me with any information on how to replace the snare assembly on my vintage Rogers drums, it would be greatly appreciated.

KiNgSk8r@aol.com
via Internet

A It sounds as though you have vintage Rogers Dyna-Sonic snare drums. Up until recently it's been very difficult to find replacement snares for these drums. However, you can now obtain dedicated snare sets from Pure Sound Percussion. They list for \$57 per set. Have your dealer contact the company (or do so yourself) at (310) 441-2976, or check their Web site at www.puresoundpercussion.com.

Playing Simply And Tuning For Echo

Q I'm currently in a rock/punk/pop band that sounds similar to Blink 182. I have a few questions on the drumming styles that should be used. The drummer in Blink 182 has some really nice drumbeats to make his band's music more interesting. But in my band, it seems that unless I keep the basic "boom chick boom chick" beat going, the music sounds bad (at least to me). When I try to do some interesting beats (not tom fills) to spice things up, it tends to clash with the band, and I don't feel the solid rock beat. Yet my other two bandmembers always say, "Play more fills; you're too straight and boring."

I think the music moves better when I just play what's called for and don't try to make it into a solo. But I have to admit, even *I* become bored with simple rock beats played over and over again. Will playing what the music calls for make me sound better to the audience? Will it make the band sound cleaner—or just boring?

I have some other questions about fine-tuning the sound of my drums and of the band as a whole. We play in an ice rink, on the ice. The rink is a sort of dome, and there's an echo that you wouldn't believe. Should I use any kind of muffling on the drums because of this? Or should I perhaps tune the drums higher in pitch? How should we set the high, middle, and low frequencies for the vocals on our PA? Is there a way not to have the clarity of our sound destroyed by the echo of the rink?

Matt Brody
Clifton, NJ

A There's no magic solution to determining how much to play in a given song. (It's rare, though, to hear of bandmembers

telling the drummer to play *more*.) Generally speaking, rock music—unless we're talking about "progressive" rock like Dream Theater or Rush—usually calls for straight, simple drumming. The faster the music, the less room there is for additional fills or intricate patterns. True, the simple patterns can begin to sound the same, but just throwing in changes for changes' sake isn't the answer.

The trick is to add something different, without it being a *noticeable* addition. It should be a seamless part of the song—not something "tacked on" to make the drum part interesting. For example, if you're playing a simple "boom, chick, boom boom chick" part between the bass and snare, try putting that second "boom" on the rack and floor toms instead of the bass drum. The *part* remains the same, but the *sound* becomes different. The major problem with adding actual beats (or notes) to a part is that they can conflict with what the other instruments are doing. This interferes with the movement of the song. Just moving the *sounds* around keeps the rhythmic structure the same, but adds acoustic interest.

An exception to the above is the "doubling" technique. (But you have to be careful with this one.) It's especially effective during choruses or bridges, where you want to create a feeling of increased excitement and energy. Take the basic pattern you've been playing (let's use boom, chick, boom boom, chick again) and simply double-time it: boom-boom, chick-chick, boom-boom-boom-boom, chick-chick. (It might require a double pedal to do the second set of booms. If you don't have one, you just stay with the original "boom boom" in that section.) Again, you're filling the same space with essentially the same rhythmic structure, but the doubling creates a feeling of increased speed and excitement. The bottom line is: When it comes to varying your drum parts, think in terms of varied sounds and patterns, without actually varying the rhythmic structure more than necessary.

Also consider the use of dynamics. You can vary the volume level of what you play without varying the actual pattern. This can add drama to the music without adding complexity.

As far as playing in the ice rink goes,

muffling your drums a lot isn't the solution, because your drums aren't what's creating the echo. It's the hall itself. All you'll achieve by muffling will be to get an echo of flat, muffled drums. So muffling alone isn't the answer.

Ringy, echoey halls tend to promote low frequencies, making your drums (and the music in general) sound muddy and poorly defined. We'd go along with the idea of raising the pitches on your drums a little higher than usual, to help them cut through. A little muffling, just to keep the attack distinct, would also be a good idea.

For overall band clarity, the P.A. should probably stress high-mids and highs a little more than usual. (You don't want it to sound tinny or thin, either.) If you're miking the drums, make sure that the kick drum has plenty of attack (higher EQ) and not too much bottom. Too much kick drum will swamp the rest of the band's sound. (Likewise for the bass guitar.)



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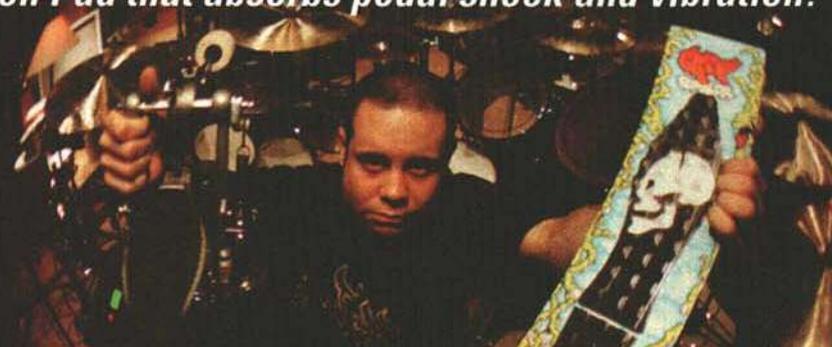
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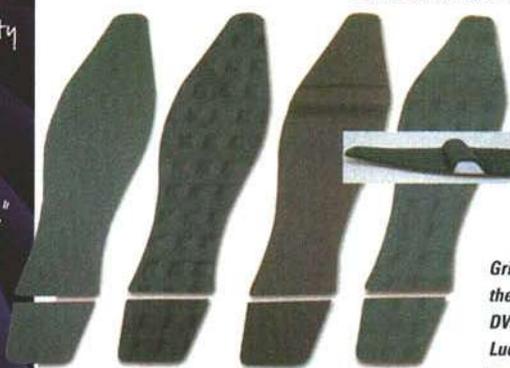
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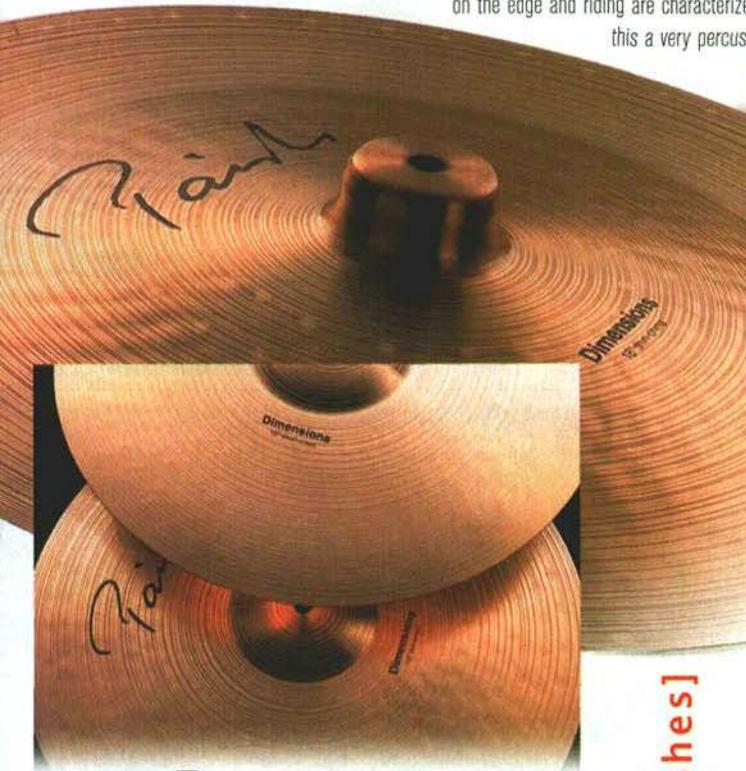
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Paiste Dimensions

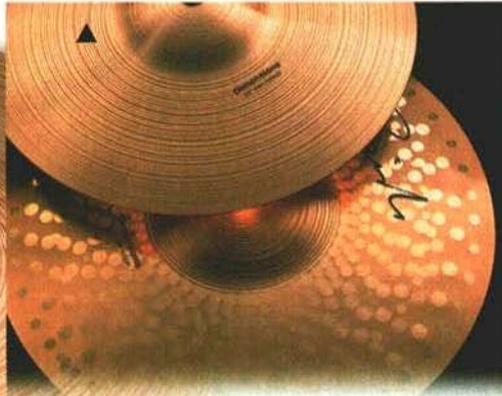
In the creation of "Dimensions", the experience and knowledge gained in the development of the Paiste "Signature" and "Traditionals" series were applied to the proprietary Paiste CuSn8 bronze, also known as "2002 Alloy". As a result, "Dimensions" offer an extremely wide range of sound and function. They fully satisfy the top professional needs of contemporary drummers. These brand new cymbals feature unique, very modern sound character that's fresh and unusual - along with great traditional sounds. Moreover, many of the models in Paiste "Dimensions" offer sound character that traditionally would not be associated with Paiste sound. They feature a variety of surface textures, hammering and lathing patterns, as well as elegant, classic logo and model silk screening. The manufacturing methods used include hand hammering, hand lathing, and sand blasting. Due to the wide range of combinations in weight, size, and tailored-manufacturing techniques, the application range is extremely wide, covering virtually all music styles from acoustic jazz to extreme rock. Special attention was paid to creating cymbals with expanded functionality so that all models are extremely flexible: the medium weight cymbals are all very versatile and the lighter and heavier weight cymbals are still usable in situations where you might not normally use them.

Thin China (16", 18", 20")

Volume: soft to medium. This china offers a full, explosive china sound. Its personality is dark, smoky, and complex. Large crashes on the edge and riding are characterized by a deep, trashy wash. Its attack is immediate while its decay is fairly short, which makes this a very percussive china well suited for fast playing and exotic accents. Also works well for hand playing.



[crashes]



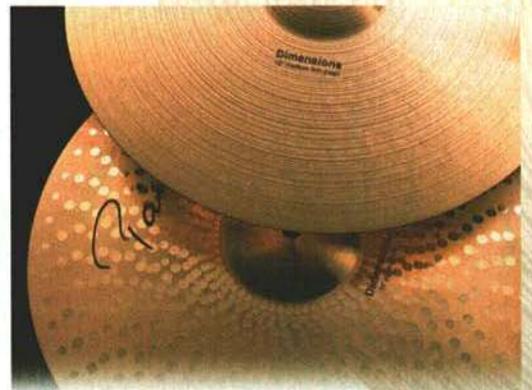
[effects]

Thin Splash (8", 9", 10", 11")

Volume: soft to medium. A lively, quick splash featuring full, warm, and somewhat dark sound. With its quick attack and short decay, this cymbal reacts fast and is well suited for softer situations. Also works well for hand playing.

Power Splash (10", 11")

Volume: medium to loud. A clean, lively, powerful splash featuring bright sound with a wide frequency range. It has a fast response with a longer sustain and is well suited for situations demanding a splash with presence.



Thin Crash (14", 15", 16", 17", 18")

Volume: soft to medium. This is a beautifully full sounding crash with a warm dark body. The frequency mix is tight. It features a fast, soft response, a gentle attack with medium sustain, great for fast playing and pointed accents.

Short Crash (14", 16")

Volume: soft to medium. This is a quite dark crash cymbal with an over all warm and mellow sound. It is very fast in response and features a rapid cutoff. A very percussive cymbal sound for quick, fast accents. Also works well for hand playing.

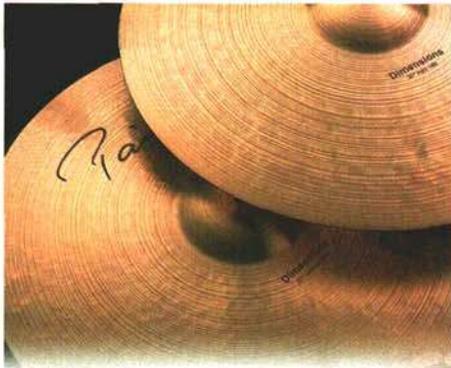
Medium Thin Crash

(15", 16", 17", 18", 20")

Volume: soft to loud. This crash cymbal is bright and full, yet still full of warm and dark sound qualities. It is a medium light cymbal with a very versatile overall character. It features a fast response and a medium sustain. A very flexible cymbal that works well in almost all situations.

Power Crash (16", 17", 18", 20")

Volume: medium to very loud. A cutting, bright and powerful crash cymbal. It features a full sound spectrum that even includes a slightly darker, complex side. It has great projection with an explosive attack and medium sustain and is well suited where strength and energy are required.



Dry Ride (20")

Volume: soft to loud. This ride has a decidedly dry sound that still possesses a wide frequency range and a complex, dark and even smoky body. The stick attack is extremely separated from the overall cymbal sound, as is the bell, resulting in extreme control and stick definition. Due to the combination of these features, the Dry Ride has a very wide application range.

Light Ride (18", 20")

Volume: soft to medium. This ride features a mellow, lively sound and a wide frequency range. It is clearly soft and dark, with a sweet ping that doesn't get lost in its decidedly smoky and washy character. The soft bell is nicely integrated in the overall sound. A medium-light ride with a great buttery feeling.

Medium Ride (18", 20", 22")

Volume: soft to loud. This ride features lively, full bodied, and bright sound. The clean, articulate ping rides over a warm, somewhat dark cushion. The bell is evenly integrated into the overall sound. Due to its medium weight, great controllability and full frequency range, this makes a well rounded, all purpose ride cymbal.

[rides]

Power Ride (20", 22")

Volume: medium to very loud. This ride offers a full-bodied, bright and powerful sound with great projection. The loud and clean yet sweet ping is well defined over the slightly breathy, somewhat dark ride sound. The pronounced, strong bell is evenly integrated into the overall sound. Its heavy weight and strength makes it an obvious choice for loud situations or for all-purpose use where volume is of the essence.

Power Bell Ride (20", 22")

Volume: loud to very loud. Features very powerful, cutting, and bright ride sound. An extremely strong ping rides over a full yet compact frequency range. The stick definition is quite "meaty" with lots of mass. The very large bell produces a clear, big and penetrating full bell sound. Excellent for loud to very loud situations, the Power Bell Ride is able to dominate in just about any setting.

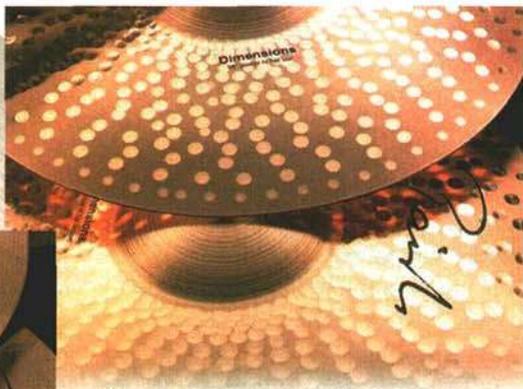
Light Hi-Hat (13", 14")

Volume: soft to medium. The frequency mix is delicate with a rather dark sound atmosphere. Its weight is light with a soft, mellow, yet tight and pronounced chick sound. A fast reacting, very complex and sensitive hi-hat that allows defined stick work over a fairly washy open-closed sound.

[hi-hats]

Thin / Heavy Hi-Hat (13", 14", 15")

Volume: soft to loud. The overall sound is full and bright yet dark and warm. The combination of the thin top and medium heavy bottom produce a wide, rich frequency range. They feature a beautiful definite chick sound, a very direct hi-hat with pronounced stick definition.



Power Hi-Hat (14", 15")

Volume: medium to very loud. Clear, bright, and cutting hi-hat with a heavy feel, but still very playable at moderate volume. Features raw, aggressive sound with great projection. The heavy weight produces a sharp chick sound and strong stick definition.

AC/DC's Phil Rudd

Maintaining The Weight



Tina Spinnelle

Perhaps one of the most damned and praised drummers ever, AC/DC's Phil Rudd can speak for hours about perfection of groove and the importance of patience. "You can give people the wrong impression when your music is not in machine time," says Rudd, while promoting AC/DC's latest release, *Stiff Upper Lip*.

"The excitement is natural," Phil explains, "but there's a certain amount of pregnant pause involved that adds so much to the music. When you play an accent, if you play it in a hurry, it doesn't have any weight. The band likes it that I don't play on top of things. They like it laid back, not on top. If you get in front of

the beat, then all the weight goes out of it. You gotta maintain the weight."

On such classic AC/DC tracks as "Highway To Hell," "Dirty Deeds," and "For Those About To Rock," Rudd delivered a titanic groove of bombing bass and snare drum pillage, the perfect fit to the brutal blues riffs of guitarists Malcolm and Angus Young. But after some thirty years in show biz, one wonders if Rudd's ears are as healthy as his eternal drumming spirit.

"My ears are surprisingly good after all these years," replies Rudd. "But I take care of them." Phil maintains a full set of custom-fitted earplugs that allow him to adjust his hearing to each venue

AC/DC plays.

"It's like a hearing aid," Rudd explains. "I have plugs that attenuate different volume levels, like 10 dB and 25 dB, which lets me select the best reduction for the sound of the hall. Every stage sounds different. If I need to hear something more clearly, like at the end of 'Let Baby Rock,' I can change plugs for the right frequency. It gives me more control over the sound so I can separate and hear the key parts."

And why do they call him Phil "Left Hook" Rudd? "I knocked a guy out one night in a bar when he was kicking Angus in the head. I couldn't have that."

Ken Micallef

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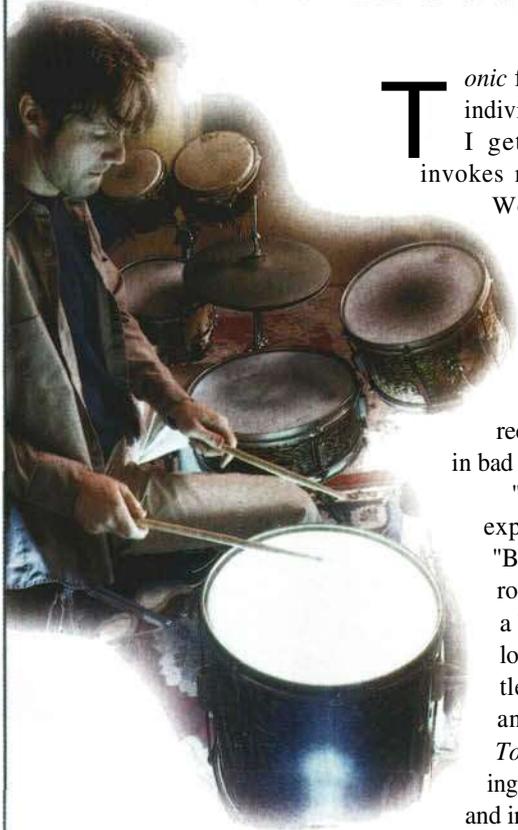
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MMW's Billy Martin Tonic Talk



Tonic features some of Billy Martin's best individual and ensemble work—"Finally I get some solos," he jokes—and invokes memories of Medeski, Martin & Wood's early days as a piano trio.

Their 1992 debut, *Notes From The Underground*, was also acoustic.

"When Chris, John, and I first got together, it was a piano trio for about a year, until we did a little bit of touring," the drummer recalls. "A lot of the club pianos were in bad shape, so John switched to organ.

"We're basically the same guys just expressing ourselves," Billy offers.

"But in this case we're playing the room that we're in and trying to keep a balance dynamically. It doesn't get loud too often, so there's a lot of subtlety. There's a little more soloing and trading going on too. I think *Tonic* is just a more intimate recording. We get into a different repertoire, and in some ways it can be more dramatic. It's just using different tools and colors."

"Invocation" starts with a complete improvisation. "Buster Rides Again" rises up from

the ashes of their tune "Rise Up," with Martin using all parts of the kit—shells, rims, percussion, every inch of the heads. The thirty-six-year-old drummer shows nice brush chops on "Hey Joe," and "Thaw" gets into a free-form, Ornette-ish, late Coltrane vibe. "We're flowing, undulating with rhythm," he says of that track. "We're each playing a groove that wraps around the others' grooves.

"I grew up playing rock 'n' roll just as much as anything else," Billy admits. "But when I play funk, my funk crosses over into the jazz thing in a kind of New Orleans or hip-hop way. The bridge that I make is the subtlety in which I play a groove. I don't have to hit the snare really loud. To me a funky backbeat is something that is subtler, and there's more rhythm going on. So with the piano trio I can actually play jazz funk beats, and in some ways it's easier. I like playing soft."

Besides his full MMW schedule (the trio will be releasing a new organ-trio studio album in the fall), Martin is also heading up Amulet Records, his own label that recently released *Percussion Duets* featuring Martin and drummer G. Calvin Weston. Amulet has also reissued two Bob Moses albums for the first time on CD.

Robin Tolleson

Goldfinger's Darrin Pfeiffer Standing His Ground

When we caught up with Darrin Pfeiffer to talk about Goldfinger's new record, *Stomping Ground*, he was on tour in Barcelona, Spain with the band. "The fun thing about making this record was that we got to work with producer Tim Palmer," Pfeiffer says. "Tim did a lot of stuff with Bowie, Tin Machine, and Pearl Jam, and he really knew how to get us to gel as a band. The reason I particularly like him is because whenever there was an argument with the other guys about a drum part—"Darrin, we don't really think it goes with the song"—Tim would go, 'I think it goes great!'"

Pfeiffer says that *Stomping Ground* shows



the band's heavier side. "This record is definitely a rock record," he insists. "In a way it goes back to our first record, which was about power. Our last record [*Hang Ups*] focused more on ska and reggae. It's not that we didn't write any of those kinds of songs for this record, because we wrote about twenty-eight tunes to pick from. But at the end of the day, when we all sat down to decide what material we'd use for the record, the ska songs just didn't make the cut."

Prior to this record, the band released an EP called *Darrin's Coconut Ass, Live From Omaha*. "The band always makes fun of my hairy behind—and we've wanted to call a record that for years," Pfeiffer says. "We did

a broad spectrum of cover tunes ranging from The Police, Joe Jackson, and The Smiths to Peter Tosh. We had no new songs at the time, so we decided to record covers."

Pfeiffer also did his own solo record, *The Revenge Of Chicken McNuggets*, during breaks in Goldfinger's schedule the last couple of years. About the record (available through the band's Web site, www.goldfingermusic.com), Darrin says, "I wrote a lot of songs and presented them to the band, but they said, 'No, we can't use 'em.' After a while these songs started piling up, so I decided I'd record something myself.

"They're just thirty of the stupidest songs you'll ever hear," Darrin says with a laugh. "But what I like about the record is it's all me. I wrote it, produced it, recorded the drums, bass, and guitar, and sang. I mixed it, too. I can't wait to do another one."

Robyn Flans

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Matt Walker Front Pumpkins To Cupcakes



Though he's played drums for over two decades, Matt Walker is perhaps best known as "That guy who replaced Jimmy Chamberlin in Smashing Pumpkins." Walker was touring with Filter in support of that band's debut, *Short Bus*, when they opened a few dates for Smashing Pumpkins in Europe. It just happened that a couple of months later The Pumpkins needed a new drummer to replace the booted Chamberlin. The day after the Filter tour ended, Walker auditioned for—and got—the Pumpkins gig.

Chamberlin eventually re-joined the band, but the experience left Walker with techniques he continues to incorporate into his playing style. "Touring with Filter," he recalls, "the entire set was played to a click track. I had to be locked but still make the music feel like it was moving forward. I couldn't be too much on top of it. But with The Pumpkins, Billy [Corgan] always wanted the music to be propelling forward tempo-wise, literally speeding up and *launching* choruses and bridges.

"Rushing like that was really difficult at first," Walker admits, "because I'd spent my entire life practicing to be steady and consistent. Suddenly, I had to make this emotive, natural transition." As a result, Matt says he's learned to approach his playing more emotionally and less technically. "Even if I am playing to a click, I find a way to propel the arrangement from section to section."

Walker is currently on the road promoting the self-titled debut by his new group, a modern-pop quartet called Cupcakes. The band's buoyant new wave meets industrial pop finds Walker incorporating a variety of different drum feels on the record—bossa nova, industrial, new wave—but he claims he wasn't consciously trying to vary his

style. "The essence of Cupcakes is pretty haphazard, in that all of those things happened really unintentionally," he explains. "It's such an accidental band. Everybody plays the way they play, and that's how it comes out."

One thing that's no accident is the music's old-school, electro-pop sound. "We're all fans of the new wave artists of the '80s, like The Cars. Those singles are so identifiable, even from the drum parts. That part is as essential to the song as the guitar riff or the melody. You know what song it is the second it comes on the radio." Ensuring that each Cupcakes song has its individual identity, says Walker, "is probably the one thing that we are very conscious of."

Gail Worley

Brant Bjork Fu Manchu Rocks

Let's put it this way: Brant Bjork's parents were all for him playing the drums. He got a snare and a hi-hat for his eleventh birthday, and his folks eventually bought him an entire kit—but they weren't about to give it to him gratis. "They wanted me to work in the yard for each drum," he recalls. "So I had to do a month's worth of work to get the bass drum, then another month's work to get the floor tom, and on and on 'til I had the full thing."

Once Bjork finally had the full kit, he was off playing in a number of California desert punk and rock bands, including the

underground wunderkids Kyuss. Brant first met up with Fu Manchu ten years ago, and eventually produced their 1994 debut, *No One Rides For Free*. After the band's original drummer was asked to leave, Bjork got the call.

Though he was a fan of the band's sound, Bjork admits that switching bands was a tad difficult. "It's always a change when you start playing with other musicians," he says. "Musically, Fu Manchu *rocks*. In my other bands the guys used to do a lot of improvising and a lot of free jams. We do a little bit of that in Fu Manchu, but the band is a little more

straight-forward. It's all rock."

While Bjork joined the band in time to work on their break-out *The Action Is Go*, his playing has flourished after a number of tours and another album, *King Of The Road*. And as he has grown as a player, Bjork has seen Fu Manchu grow as well. Indeed, he's excited about the band's future. "I'd like to think that our formula of rock music will make some kind of impact again," he says. "I don't mind some of the music that's popular these days, but I think there's room for just some good old-fashioned, in-your-face rock."

David John Farinella

Paul Goldberg has recently recorded tracks on *The Nutty Professor II* soundtrack (featuring Eddie Murphy on vocals) and *The Drew Carey Show*. He's also recording with The Manhattans and The Edwin Hawkins Singers.

After returning from a tour of Greece with The Blue Note Late Nite Band, **Steve Hass** was featured on two recording sessions with jazz violinist Miri Ben-Ari. Steve is also performing in the orchestra pit of the off-Broadway hit *Inappropriate*. Steve will take a break from the show to tour the Midwest and the East Coast with Ravi Coltrane.

Steve Di Stanislao is working with Joe Walsh. Steve is also working on a new album with CPR, featuring David Crosby.

Journeyman drummer **Bill Lordan** (Robin Trower, Sly & The Family Stone) has released a solo record, *Emotional Blackmail*. For more information check out his Web site at www.billlordan.com.

Kenny Aronoff recently played the Equality Rocks concert in Washington, DC with some headline performers—and did a drum solo accompanied by Tipper Gore on congas. Kenny has also been recording with Andy Griggs, Billy Dean, Confederate Railroad, a new group called Pete, Japanese artist Kadomatsu, and Earl Scraggs. Kenny is also going on tour with John Fogerty in July, opening for Tina Turner. (In August he'll be back on the road with Melissa Etheridge.)

Leading San Francisco Bay Area jazz drummer/composer/educator **Eddie Marshall** has been named to the San Francisco Arts Commission.

Between appearances with Corey Glover, **Nathaniel Townsley** has been gigging and recording with Joe Zawinul.

Gerald Cleaver is on Matthew Shipp's *Pastoral Composure*.

Steve Kroon's *In My Path* also features **Ivan Hampden, Portinho, and Vince Cherico**.

Scott Neuman is on Ken & Harry Watters' *Brothers, Free Range Rat* by Carlson/Hipp/McGloin/Neuman, and the soundtrack to the Broadway show *Swing*.

Leo Ciesa is on Iconoclast's *Paradise*.

Jean Philippe Fanfant, Luis Conte, Mark Walker, Jesus Diaz, and Paul Van Wageningen are on steel-drum star **Andy Narell's** *Fire In The Engine Room*.

Billy Drummond is on Andrew Hill's *Dusk*.

Shannon Powell is on Dr. Michael White's *A Song For George Lewis*.

Peter Turre, Jack DeJohnette, and Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez are on Steve Turre's *In The Spur Of The Moment*.

Brian Blade is on *Riddle Of The Sphinx* by Mark Gross.

Pitamaha, a collection of music from Bali, has been recently released on **Billy Martin's** Amulet label.

Steve Wacholz is on Savatage's *Ghost In The Ruins*.

Bobby Rondinelli is on ex-Marilyn Manson bassist Gidget Gein's *Confessions Of A Spooky Kid*.

Calep Emphrey Jr. is on B.B. King's *Makin' Love Is Good For You*.

Billy Cobham's *Total Eclipse and Shabazz* are out on CD for the first time (Wounded Bird Records).

The late **Eric Carr**, a member of KISS for eleven years, has a solo recording out of never-before-released songs recorded during his years with the band. Carr's family, along with friend and former bandmate Bruce Kulick (who plays all guitars on the disk), together with Spitfire Records/Hard Rock, have all worked together to make this CD a lasting tribute.

John "C-Bone" Seastrand is playing drums with American Trashed.

Greg Potter is recording with Pivot Man. He's also doing live shows with Epic recording artist The Boyzz.

Ex-Blind Melon members guitarist Christopher Thorn and bassist Brad Smith, as well as **Dave Krusen** (Pearl Jam's drummer on *Teri*), re-emerge on the music scene as Unified Theory. Their self-titled debut album will be released in August.

Pete Thomas and Joey Waronker are on Elliott Smith's *Figure 8*.

Matt Chamberlain is on Chantal Kreviazuk's *Colour Moving And Still*.

Dave LaChance is on *A Place In The Sun*, the latest from Friends Of Dean Martinez.

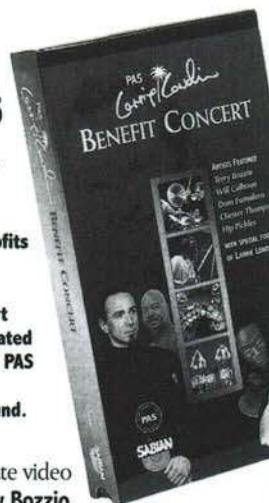
Randy Ciarlante and Dean Sharp on the late Rick Danko's *Live On Breeze Hill*.

The Les DeMerle Transfusion's *Transfusion One* is a new disc featuring the band's first recording from 1976, which was never released.

"Wild" Mick Brown is on Dokken's

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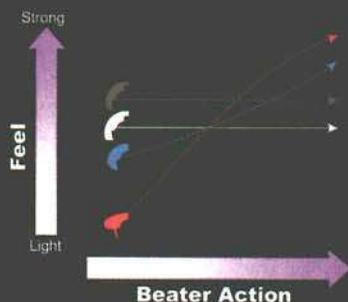


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news continued

new one, *Live From The Sun*.

Cecil Brooks III and Wade Barnes are on Linda Presgrave's *In Your Eyes*.

Chad Taylor is on Chicago Underground Duo's *Synesthesia*.

Kenny Wollesen is on Junk Genius's *Ghost Of Electricity*.

Jota Morelli is on the road with Al Jarreau.

Jerry Gaskill is on King's X's new CD, *Please Come Home...Mr. Bulbous*.

Dennis Wolfe is on tour with Crush, supporting their debut self-titled LP.

Pat Mastelotto is on King Crimson's latest, *ConstruKction Of Light*.

Drummer/programmer **Mike Wengren** is on tour with Disturbed.

Preston Nash is on the road with Dope in support of their recently released *Felons And Revolutionaries*.

Graham Broad is touring with Roger Waters.

Guy Hoffman and The Violent Femmes have recently wrapped up a tour featuring material from their live CD, *Viva Wisconsin*, as well as their latest studio LP, *Freak Magnet*.

Keith Brogdon is recording with Bobby Bare Jr. in a configuration known as Bare Jr.

Brian Reitzell is on Air's score to *The Virgin Suicides*, and is music director of the film's soundtrack. Brian has also completed the "soundtrack" to the sequel of *Logan's Run*, *Logan's Sanctuary*, with Roger Joseph Manning Jr.

Paul Deakin, drummer for The Mavericks, is doing very well following heart valve replacement surgery in April. He is expected to make a full recovery.

drum dates

This month's important events in drumming history.

Buddy Rich was born on September 30, 1917.

Original Average White Band drummer **Robbie McIntosh** died on September 23, 1974.

John Bonham died on September 25, 1980.

Shelly Manne died on September 26, 1984.

Philly Joe Jones died in September of 1985.

On September 29, 1967, **Mickey Hart** joins The Grateful Dead, sharing double-drumming duties with **Bill Kreutzmann**. Also in September, but twenty-three years later in 1990, Hart signs a deal with Harper & Row to publish his first book, *Drumming At The Edge Of Magic*.

Seemingly always making history, The Beatles and **Ringo Starr** release their first single from their own Apple label. "Hey Jude" enters the charts at number 10 on September 14, 1968. It hits number 1 on September 28, 1968 and stays there for nine weeks, longer than any other Beatle chart-topper. Clocking in at seven minutes and eleven seconds, it also becomes the longest song to hit number 1.

Pressed on golden vinyl, **Don Brewer** writes, sings lead, and plays drums on

Grand Funk Railroad's first number 1 hit, "We're An American Band." It hits number 1 on September 29, 1973.

Steven Adler is fired from Guns N' Roses in September of 1990.

Billy Joel, along with long-time friend and drummer **Liberty DeVitto**, releases *Greatest Hits Vol. III* on September 6, 1996. Two days later, on September 8, *Greatest Hits Vol. I* and *II* are certified eighteen times platinum by the RIAA.

In September of 1998, **Joey Kramer** and Aerosmith make history when Aerosmith becomes the only rock group to enter the US singles charts at number 1 with "I Don't Want To Miss A Thing," the Diane Warren-penned song from the blockbuster movie *Armageddon*.

Birthdates

- Elvin Jones** (September 9, 1927)
- Horace Arnold** (September 25, 1935)
- Ron Bushy** (September 23, 1945)
- Don Brewer** (September 3, 1948)
- Neil Peart** (September 12, 1952)
- Ginger Fish** (September 28, 1965)
- Robin Goodridge** (September 10, 1966)
- Steven Perkins** (September 13, 1967)
- Tyler Stewart** (September 21, 1967)
- Brad Wilk** (September 5, 1968)



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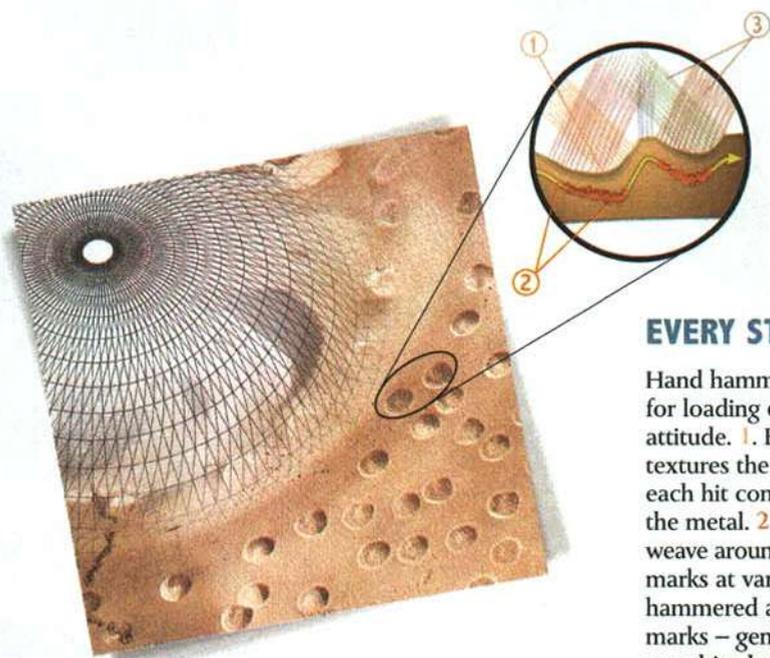
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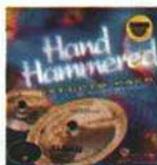
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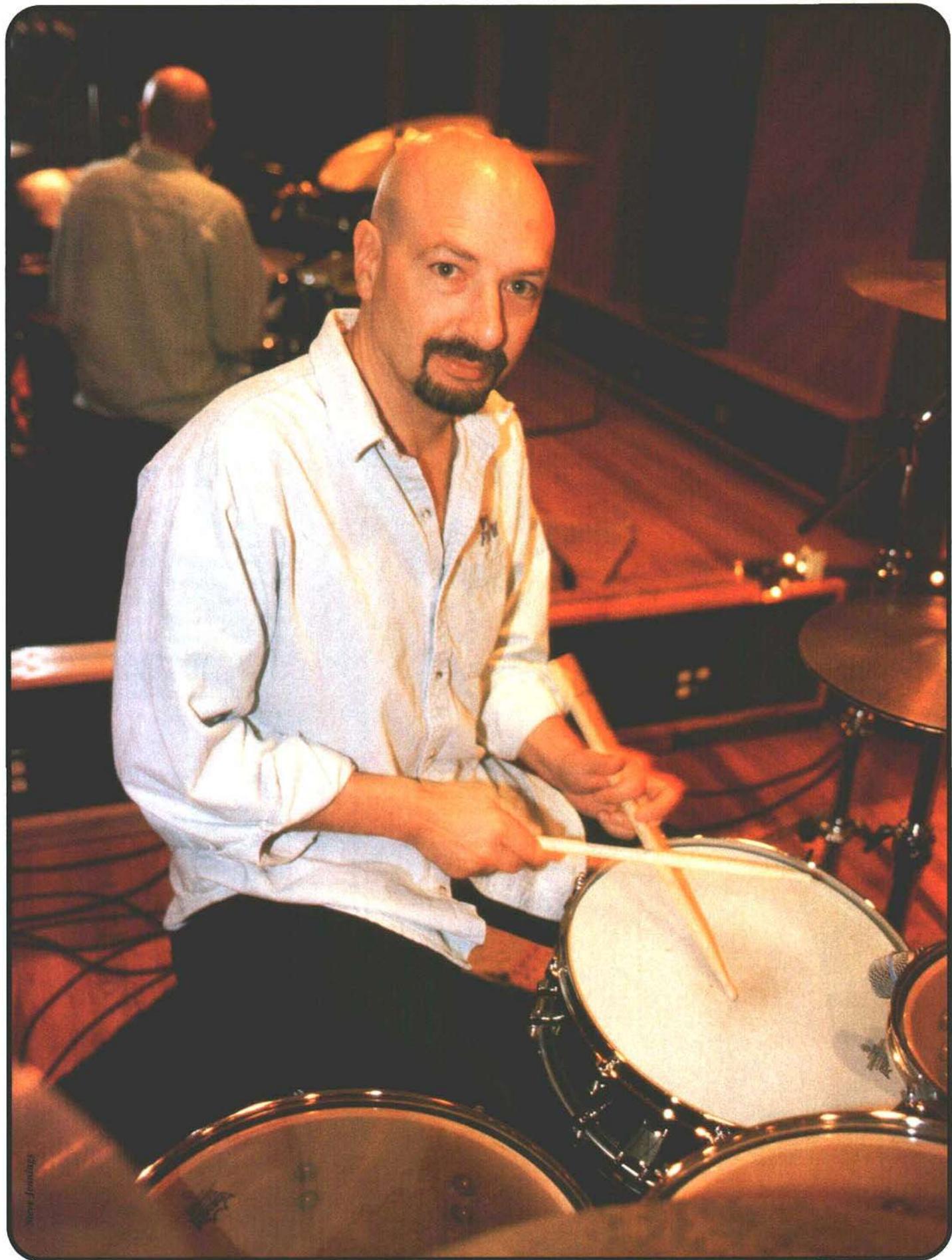
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in the **studio**



steve smith

In 1996, Steve Smith put his personal projects on the back burner to work with Journey on a reunion that was to include a record and a tour. It took a year to negotiate, write, rehearse, record, and mix *Trial By Fire*. The following year was spent waiting for Steve Perry to decide *not* to tour. When it became clear to Smith that Perry was not going to follow through with the reunion, Steve knew he had to move on and focus on his own music as bandleader, player, organizer, and producer.

As a result, the last couple of years have been prolific ones for Smith. In 1998 his band Vital Information released *Where We Come From*, which won the Indie Award for Contemporary Jazz Record Of The Year. Vital Tech Tones—Smith, Scott Henderson, and Victor Wooten—released their self-titled debut CD. *Show Me What You Can Do* was launched by the trio Smith works in alongside Frank Gambale and Stuart Hamm. Yet another trio, with Larry Coryell, Tom Coster, and Smith, released *Cause And Effect*.

Nineteen-ninety-nine saw the release of *The Stranger's Hand* with Jerry Goodman, Howard Levy, Oteil Burbridge, and Smith, in addition to a project called *Steve Smith And Buddy's Buddies Featuring Buddy Rich Alumni: Steve Marcus, Andy Fusco, Lee Musiker, And Anthony Jackson*. Smith toured with this band last year and will play some gigs with the "Buddies" again this year.

Currently Smith can be heard on three tracks on the new Savage Garden record, *Affirmation*, which he describes as "straight-ahead Australian pop" and on which he played along with computers and loops. Smith says another recording project, *Staring At The Sun* with guitarist Neil Zaza, reminded him of an instrumental Journey record—especially since Ross Valory played bass on it. Steve played on the debut recording of San Francisco bass heavyweight Peter Barshay, *Pit Of Fashion*, which features Larry Goldings on B-3 and Mike Stern on guitar. A key player in the San Francisco jazz scene is saxophonist Michael Zilber, with whom Smith recorded *Jazz Standards: Deconstructed, Reconstructed Vol. 1*. He is playing and recording with

Wadada Leo Smith and Henry Kaiser's Yo Miles! project. EastWest has released a CD of Steve's drum loops and samples called *Rhythmic Journey*. Steve even recorded his first country record—with the legendary Ray Price—when Gregg Bissonette couldn't make the date and asked him to sub.

"I had to do a cram course on country," Smith admits. "First of all, I bought Ray Price's *Greatest Hits* record. Then I bought country packages of greatest hits from particular time periods, like the '50s and '60s, just to get the feel of the roots of country when they first started using drummers. Buddy Harman was on almost everything. I realized that, like all US music in its original form, country is based on the blues and on the swing rhythm. Then I had to address how they played it. It was mainly with this thing they called the Ray Price shuffle, with a brush in the right hand and the cross-stick in the left hand.

"It was a live recording session," Steve continues, "with a full rhythm section featuring slide guitar, vibes, piano, and bass, plus a string section and a horn section. They also had real nice charts. It was a fantastic experience, very much like a Phil Spector date."

Primarily, however, Smith has been spending his time on three projects: Vital Information, Vital Tech Tones, and the Gambale, Hamm, and Smith trio. So those projects are the focus of this article. From these configurations, four CDs are coming out within a few months. The first one is a double live Vital Information CD recorded during various concerts in 1999. The album comprises a lot of material from *Where We Come From*, in addition to some Vital Information classics like "Europa," "The Perfect Date," and "Over And Out." There are two bonus studio tracks as well: "It's A Jungle Out There" and "Soulful Drums." The latter is a remake of a 1963 recording by Jack McDuff, whose drummer was Joe Dukes. Vital Tech Tones has released VTT2, and *The Light Beyond* by the Gambale, Hamm, and Smith trio is just now available. With all this activity, it seemed like a good time to catch up with Steve to talk about his recent studio experiences.

"In all these situations, I am the organizer. I'm the guy who calls and emails everyone and coordinates the project."

MD: Tell us about the approach on *Show 'Em Where You Live*, and how it was different from other Vital Information albums.

Steve: I completely reinvented the Vital Information concept with *Where We Come From*. We stopped using synthesizers, and Tom Coster focused on his main instrument, the Hammond B-3. That alone radically changed the sound of the group. Then we wrote music that really worked with the Hammond B-3—much more blues-based. That instrument sounds right when you play it very bluesy, so the music is a combination of blues, straight-ahead jazz, and some R&B grooves. We were all very influenced by The Meters and Booker T. & The MG's, as well as by Miles Davis's fusion period of the early '70s, so we brought those influences out.

We also have a new bass player, Baron Browne, who is very funky and a really strong groove player. When we went on the road to promote *Where We Come*

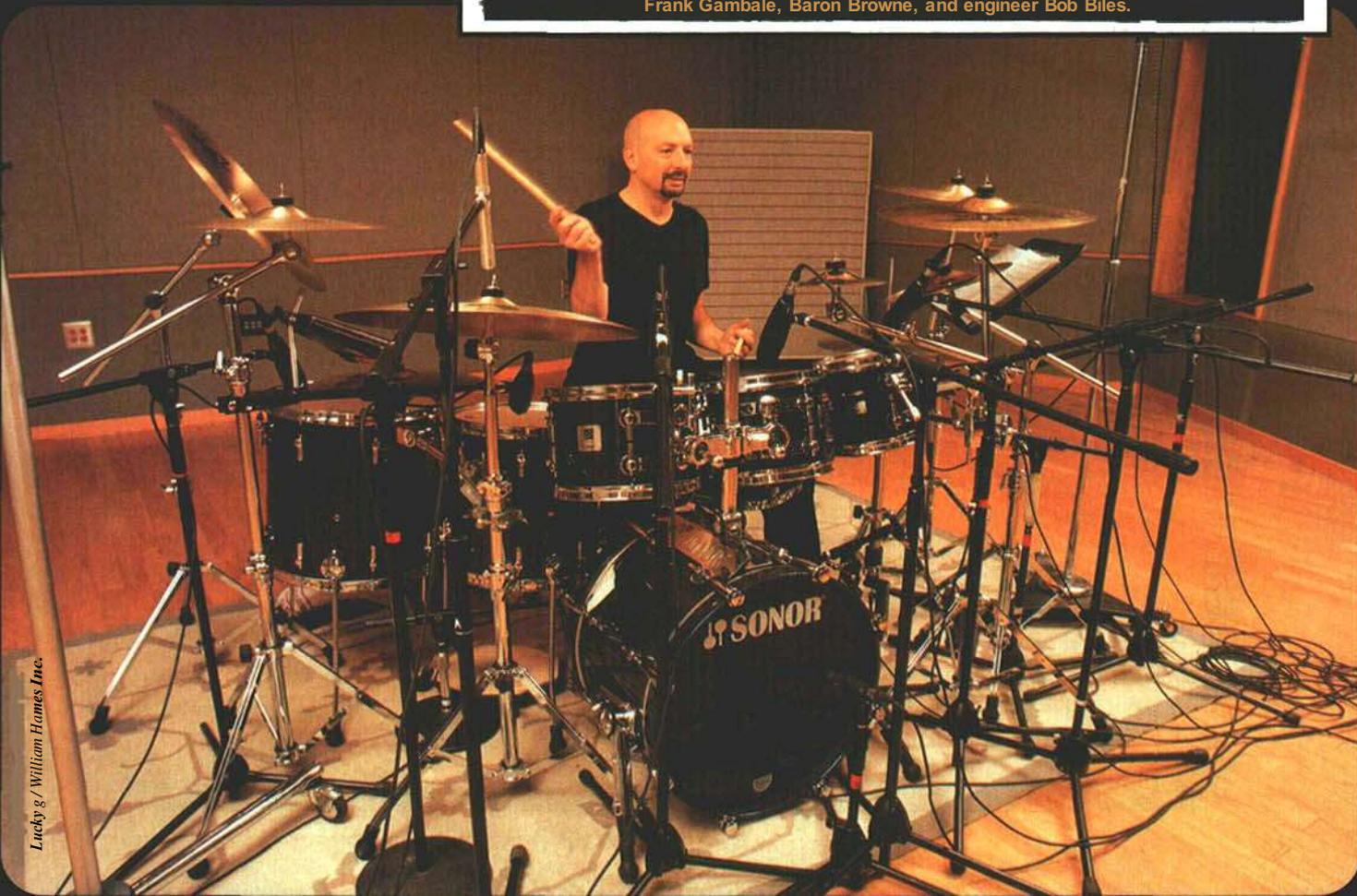
From, Baron went on tour instead of Jeff Andrews. He brought another level of groove to the band. Frank Gambale has been playing with the band for about twelve years. To help create the soul/jazz vibe, he now plays a hollow-body guitar, like a George Benson model. He doesn't

use distortion and that type of rock guitar sound with us. When we went on tour, the music really developed, which is what convinced us to record the live record.

We recorded a concert in Amsterdam, a concert in Chicago, another in Toronto, and two in Sydney, Australia. The music



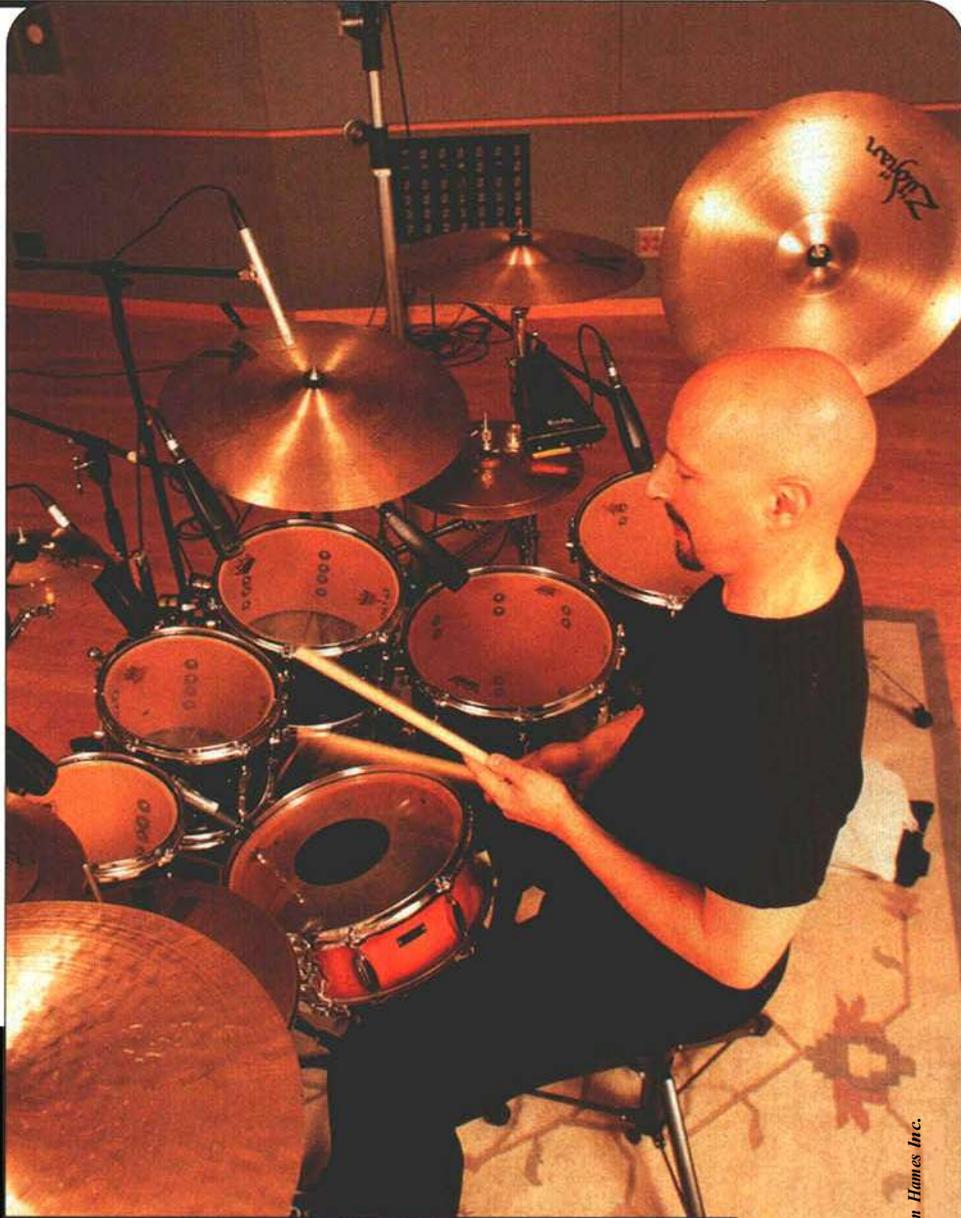
Vital record making: (left to right) Tom Coster, Steve, Frank Gambale, Baron Browne, and engineer Bob Biles.



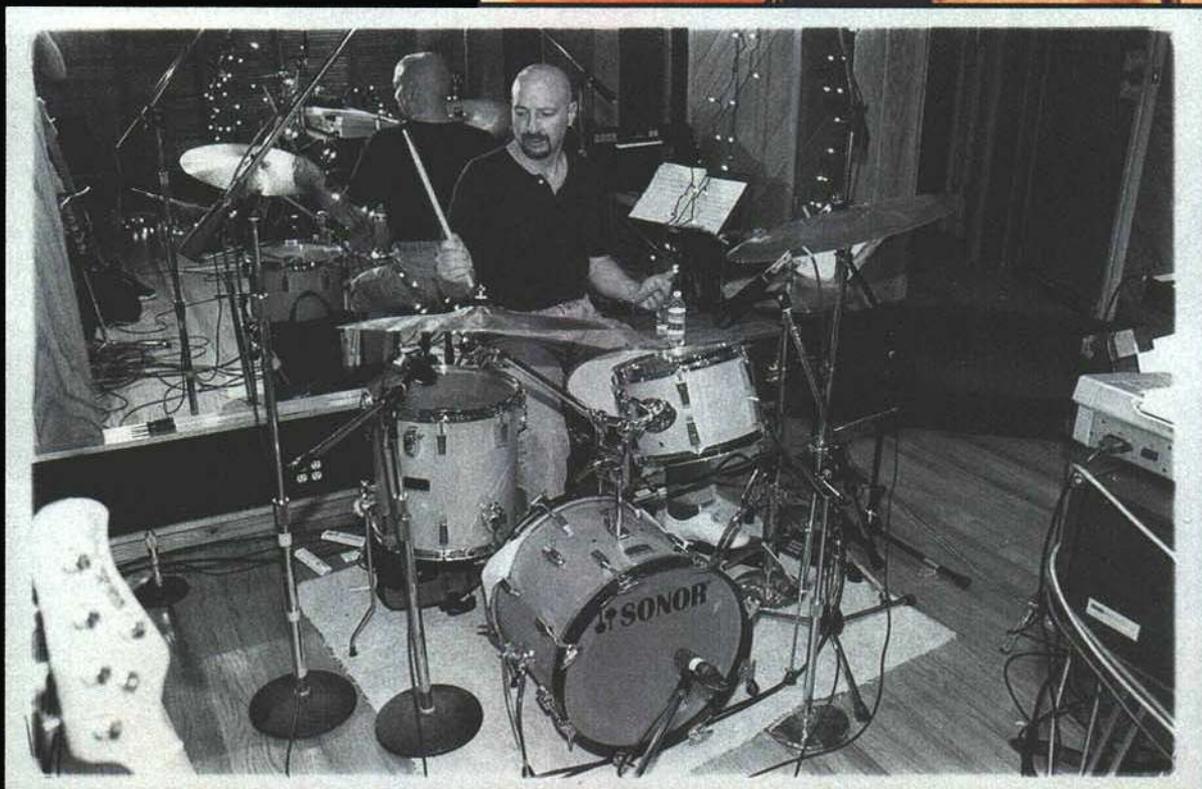
progressed and the band really grew. A lot of times we make records and don't get to tour, so this really made a big difference. By the time we got back from the tour, we had developed a great feel for playing with each other. As I say in the liner notes, each night it was a little looser, but a little tighter. When the time came last fall to go into the studio to record *Show 'Em Where You Live*, we had a lot going for us.

The process we used on this record was similar to the one we used on the last couple of Vital Information records. I came up with some grooves ahead of time and thought of some different feels I'd like to play and write with. Tom Coster came in with some pretty finished tunes this time, but the other guys came in pretty open or with fragments of ideas. We got together and jammed for a week to come up with ideas.

We recorded the jams and started to work with the ideas. Sometimes we were able to complete the song within a couple of hours, and then we'd continue on to another idea. Then we set aside about ten days to record. During that process we still continued to write and jam. Sometimes we'd jam for ten or fifteen minutes and out



Lucky g/William Hammes Inc.



what

POWERMAN 5000

AL3

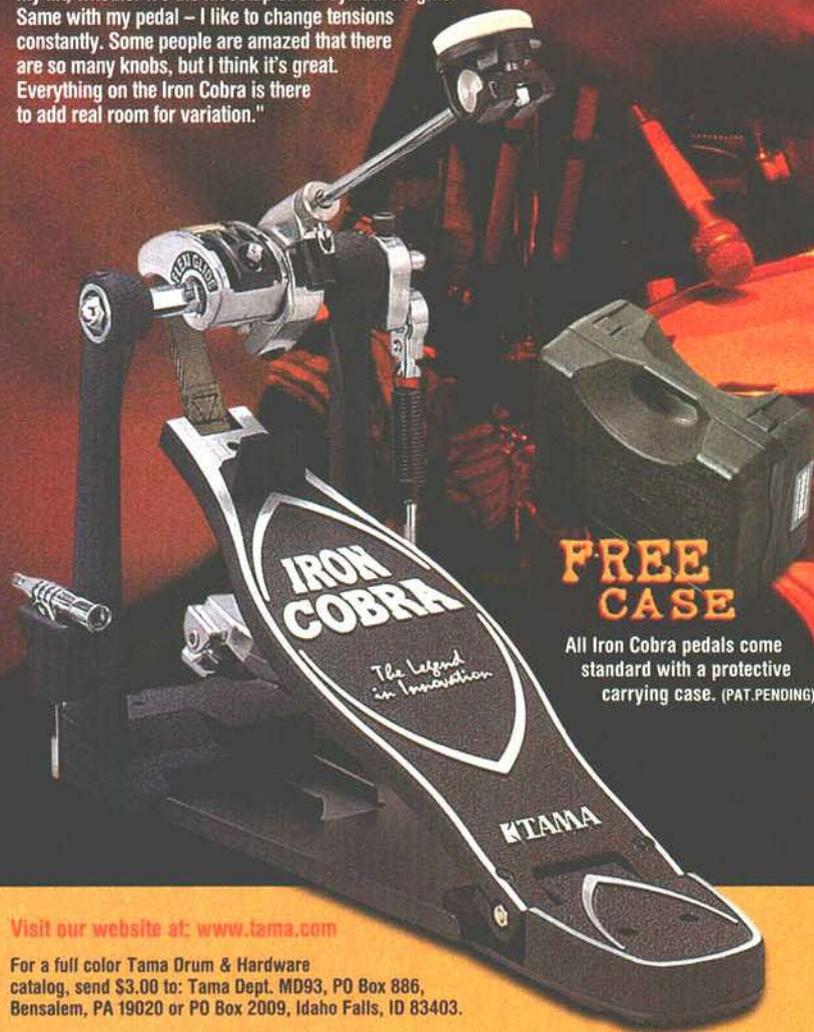
Why do so many heavy rockers like Powerman 5000's AL3 play Iron Cobra? For the same reasons so many jazzers, r&b artists and players of every other genre play Iron Cobra: Smoothness, Durability, Adjustability. But don't take our word for it, here's what AL3 says about his bass pedals...

"First of all, the Iron Cobra's smooth. And I definitely like the fact that there's a strap version, because I'm not into chains. The Flexi-Glide strap drive is much more compatible with my style.

"Second of all, it's durable. I wear huge boots when I play, and I've actually broken footboards in half. But I beat the &^%\$ out of the Iron Cobra night after night and I've had no problems at all.

"Third, I can change it all around. I'm constantly changing every aspect of my kit, whether it's the kit setup or the cymbal heights. Same with my pedal - I like to change tensions constantly. Some people are amazed that there are so many knobs, but I think it's great. Everything on the Iron Cobra is there to add real room for variation."

digs about his Iron Cobra...



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Steve Smith

of that we'd use one or two minutes, or a couple of one-minute segments. Since I have a home studio, we can do all that without having to worry about the clock.

On this record, we wanted to go beyond *Where We Come From*, and this one does feel looser. We did a fair amount of experimenting with some of my implied metric modulation ideas. For instance, "Sideways Blues" is based on the idea that a dotted-quarter-note figure played through a twelve-bar blues comes out even. So I play a rhythm based on that, which makes it sound like the tempo of the tune is different from the actual tempo we're playing it in. It tricks your ear. When it switches back and forth between the two, you can hear what's going on.

Other times we'd just write a tune around a funky groove or a straight-ahead feel. There's one tune called "The Blackhawk" that's based on the "Sidewinder" drum feel. "Sidewinder" was a tune written by Lee Morgan in the early '60s, and it's a slow blues, in between a straight 8th and a shuffle feel. We just explored our creativity and pushed ourselves beyond where we had been before. And I really pushed myself drumming-wise. Sometimes with the Vital Information projects, I don't play as aggressively as I do on other projects, but I really did on this.

Also, I played a different drumset this time. The set I've been using can make the music feel like fusion from the '70s—a la Billy Cobham and Lenny White. But with Vital Information becoming more and more roots-oriented, I went back and played the music as the very early fusion music was played. So I used the type of drumset that Tony Williams used on *Emergency!* and *Turn It Over* and that Jack DeJohnette played on *Bitches Brew* and those early records. I used a Sonor kit that I've had since the early '70s, with all traditional sizes: a 14x18 bass drum, an 8x12 rack tom, a 14x14 floor tom, an old Ludwig Black Beauty snare drum, two 22" ride cymbals, and a set of 14" hi-hats. I used the new K Constantinople hi-hats and switched between my old K rides and the new K Constantinoples.

Changing to the smaller setup helped me play differently from how I've been playing on the bigger drumset. I grew up playing a little set like that, so it felt very com-

fortable and it gave me a different slant on the music. I had slowly been going there. On the record before, I used a smaller bass drum than what I had been using—a 20" versus a 22"—and I used my older Sonor kit that had traditional-sized toms, not power toms. On this one I went a step further, like Tom going back to the B-3 and Frank going to the hollow-bodied guitar. I joined them in that place of going to the roots.

MD: Can you detail the recording process?

Steve: We play everything live. There are virtually no overdubs on the recording. That doesn't mean there aren't some fixes, but there's no layering. We set the band up so we all play together. I'm in the studio with Tom and Baron. Frank likes to sit in the control room, but we set it up in a way that we all have eye contact. And then we play. For the most part we don't use a click track, and we stopped using computers years ago. Occasionally we'll use a click if the tune isn't quite settled at first.

MD: Any first takes?

Steve: There are a lot of first takes as well as third- and fourth-take tunes. We still record analog, and on a couple of the tunes we would do three or four takes, save a couple, and splice them together, which is a nice way of doing it.

MD: What was the biggest challenge on this record?

Steve: When we write the tunes, we really capture the energy of them in the initial composing and playing. Sometimes a song would feel better in rehearsal than when we started playing it in the studio. That's very common. It was hard, sometimes, to get the initial feeling back.

I don't encounter that difficulty with my other projects because we write and record all at once. With Vital Tech Tones and Gambale, Hamm, Smith, we set aside ten days without writing beforehand. We try to write and record a tune a day. I walked into the Vital Tech Tones sessions at Musician's Institute in Hollywood with a lot of grooves on a CD I burned. I'd play them for Scott and Victor and they'd say, "Yeah, let's go for that." I'd go out in the studio and play, Victor would jam the bass part, and Scott would come up with some chords. Usually a melody emerged from that. Then we'd write and flesh out the tune.

With these records we're focusing on

virtuosity and trying to push ourselves to play to our highest level. So sometimes we'd write music that would be almost too hard for us to play—or I should say very hard for us to get to the point where we'd feel great about it.

The tunes sometimes take a long time to get because we're actually writing them, learning them, and recording them. And sometimes while we're recording, we'll realize that the song isn't even done being written. For instance, the first tune we recorded was called "Who Knew." It was a vamp that Victor Wooten brought in, and it was very tricky: a bar of three, a bar of two, and a bar of three. And at the end of every bar there was an upbeat accent. So it was a very unfamiliar groove. It took one day to write that tune, and to get a great take took another day.

Then the next day we did "SubZero," which also went through a lot of rhythmic changes. It was based in 6/8, but with upbeat accents at the end of the bar and a couple of changes of feel. That took a day to write and another day to record. By that time we were starting to feel that it was going to take twenty days instead of ten, so we decided to just jam. In three minutes we had another song and were able to catch up.

Then there's a suite called "Chakmool-Ti," which took about two days to write because it has a lot of pieces. That took a day to get a great take on because it's over eleven minutes long.

MD: In the liner notes of the Vital Tech Tones CD, you say that sometimes there are musical disagreements. How are they generally resolved?

Steve: They get resolved just like most situations. You try out all the ideas, and the best idea becomes apparent to everybody—usually. If it isn't, then the bossiest guy gets his way. [laughs] That can shift, depending on how passionate the person feels about the idea.

MD: I assume that when choosing musicians to play with, you're going to have a lot of common ground in the first place.

Steve: True. But then it's different enough to be interesting too. Scott Henderson, for example, is very well educated in jazz harmony, so in that project he takes on the role of being the composer who makes sure the chord progressions really work. With the Gambale, Hamm, Smith project, Frank

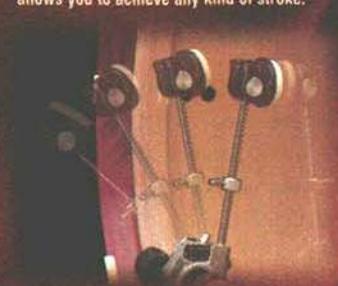
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Steve Smith

takes on that same role. For *VTT2*, we all came in with real strong grooves and ideas for songs. The project with Frank and Stu differed a lot from *VTT2* in that Frank and Stu both brought in a lot of songs that were completed or close to it. So there's more composition in that recording, versus more looseness and improvising in *VTT2*. On the first Gambale, Hamm, Smith project we didn't have *any* tunes walking in; we wrote them on the spot. We still stretched the written tunes out and improvised on this new recording, but they were more composed in the beginning.

MD: Can you describe your role in each situation?

Steve: In all these situations, I am the organizer. I'm the guy who calls and emails everyone and coordinates the entire project, from finding out when everyone is free, to booking plane flights and accommodations. With Vital Information I do that pretty much on my own because the record company is based in Europe. With the Tone Center records, I have the help of the owner, Mike Varney, and the staff at the company, Mike Jarrold and Tim Olayos. With Vital Information, I'm more clearly designated the producer. We do work together as a band, and everyone has input, but I have the final say.

I have a very clear picture of what the direction is, so sometimes it can be a struggle when someone may not hear the concept quite the way I do. I try to keep it close to the blues. Frank Gambale grew up in Australia, so that is not 100% a natural

part of him, and at times I have to keep him focused. When recording with Scott and Victor, I don't have as clear a picture of what it is, nor am I the sole producer. We work together and produce it together. Even though I have the organizational role in the beginning, once we get into the studio, I become an equal third. I'd say it's the same thing with Frank and Stu, although the challenge with that project is to make sure it's not too rock—because Stu is more of a rock musician than a jazz musician. So when Stu comes in with an idea, the objective is for Frank to do enough to it harmonically to make it less rock 'n' roll. Stu wrote a lot of great music on the CD, but some of it needed a little work to make it more our style. I'm more the person who keeps the view of that.

MD: Now define the role you play musically as drummer.

Steve: With Vital Information, *Show 'Em Where You Live* is the concept I feel the closest to. I do consider myself more of a jazz drummer than anything else, so it's a jazz approach, but it brings in R&B, funk, and fusion grooves, with a lot of improvising. That feels like a very close personal expression.

With the Vital Tech Tones and Gambale, Hamm, Smith, I approach the drums with a little more rock-fusion, a la Tony Williams' Lifetime of the mid-'70s, Billy Cobham, and Lenny White in Return To Forever. I'm thinking more along those lines. Again, it's very natural for me, but it's a slight shift—with which changing the

drumset helps. In both those musical situations, I'm using a bigger drumset, with three rack toms, two floor toms, and a lot more cymbals. With Vital Tech Tones, the 20" bass drum gives it a certain feeling toward funky rock fusion. With Gambale and Hamm, I use the 22" bass drum. Stu has a little more of a rock feeling, so I lean just slightly more to that side.

Interestingly, even though Stu Hamm is known as a rock bass player, he did go to Berklee, so he's very harmonically informed. This was evident when Frank came in with some tunes that had a lot of chord changes. When we put the chart in front of Stu, we weren't sure he could even read music. But on the tune called "Yin" he played the melody and a great solo over the changes—on the first take.

MD: What is the plan for the rest of the year?

Steve: There are some more Tone Center recordings in the planning stages. This year my focus will be touring with Vital Information, writing at least two books, and making at least two new videos. One book/video will be technique-oriented. The other book/video will trace the history and development of US music and the evolving role of the drums in that music.

For continual up-to-date information, surf to Steve's Web site at www.vitalinformation.com.



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Frankfurt Music Fair 2000

by Rick Van Horn

Modern Drummer's July issue included a major feature on new products available on the percussion market. However, that "market" was limited primarily to percussion gear manufactured or readily available in the US. There's also a thriving percussion-instrument industry *outside* our borders. Manufacturers from around the world currently offer an exciting variety of products to

an eager international market.

To get a clearer picture of this global percussion market, *MD* traveled to Frankfurt, Germany this past April to attend the world's largest music trade show: the Frankfurt Music Fair. Here are some highlights from that show. With a few exceptions, they feature products and companies not normally seen on our shores.

DRUMS



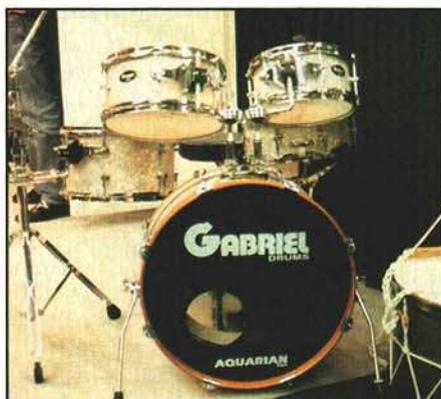
Looming large on their home turf, Germany's Sonor launched two new drumkit series: the S-Class Pro, and the Delite (shown here). The Delite kit features extra-thin maple shells, new low-mass fittings, and a ball-clamp tom holder. The new kits should be available in the US shortly.



Giannini Swiss Drums offers excellent traditional drumkits. But they've also taken a different slant on the concept of "compact and portable" with their Luggage Kit. Essentially, it's a drumkit built into a wooden flight case!



Block-construction shells (made of a variety of exotic woods), 30-ply wood hoops, and hand-made lugs and strainers are features of Hanus & Hert snare drums from the Czech Republic.



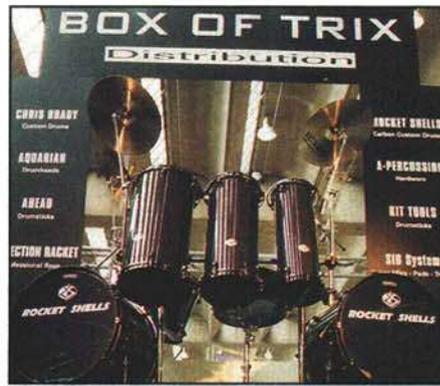
From Greece comes Gabriel Drums. Their Handy Drumset features a 9x20 bass drum, 5x10, 6x12, and 8x13 toms, and a 5x13 snare—all in 4-ply, 6 mm beech.



Classic Italian artistry meets modern drum technology to create this cocktail drumkit from Tamburo. The drums all feature colorful stave-construction shells.



The Western Hemisphere was well represented by Odery drums of Brazil. They're hand-made, using a close-grained white pine found in the southern part of the country.



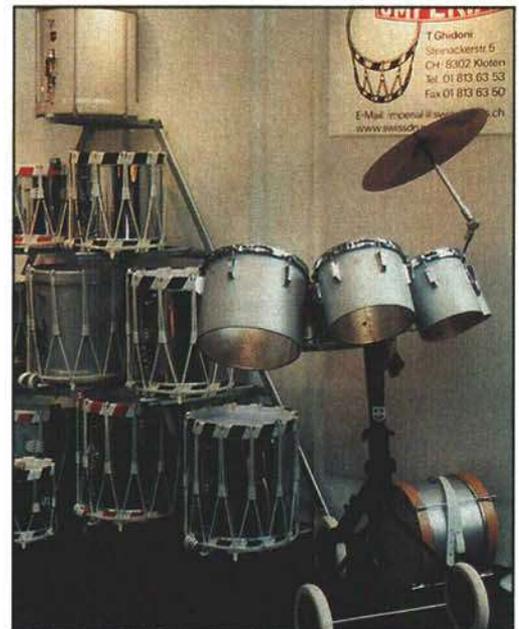
This custom-sized kit from California's Rocket Shells was a prominent feature in the booth of German distributor Box Of Trix.



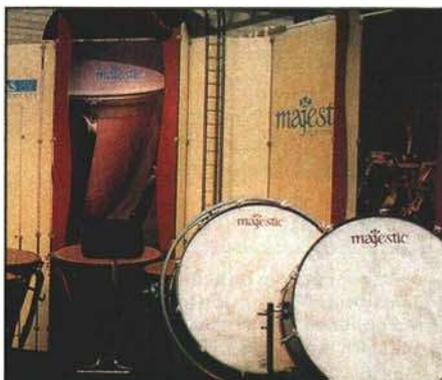
Spain's Gonalca specializes in traditional European concert and marching percussion, but also makes drumkits. These "concert" toms might as easily be found in a rock club as on a concert stage.



Brady Drums came all the way from "down under" to display drums with new finishes and clear Nickel Drumworks snare throw-offs (now standard).



Specializing in marching percussion, Switzerland's Imperial displayed traditional rope-tensioned drums alongside an innovative rolling multi-tom carrier.



Holland's Van Der Glas offers high-quality symphonic instruments, like these Majestic brand concert bass drums.



Marching drums of all forms—from traditional to high-tech—were displayed by Germany's Lefima.

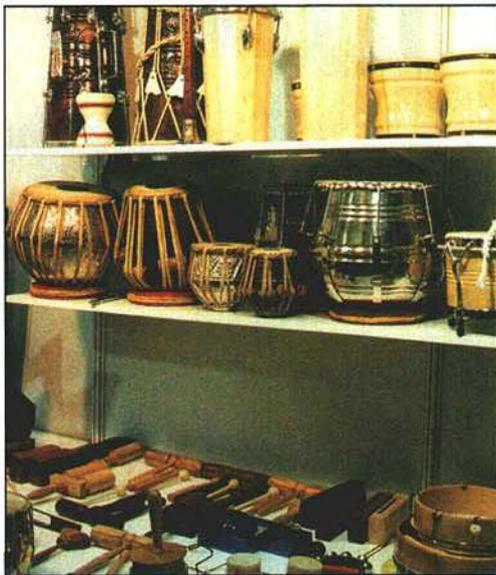


The Adams Percussion booth included a display showing various stages in the creation of timpani. Some of the Dutch company's products are distributed in the US by Pearl.



Holland's Vancore offers a complete line of drums, including custom drumkits, marching drums, and symphonic percussion. The snares shown here feature a "free-floating" shell design.

PERCUSSION



Pakistan's Halifax Ltd. offers a wide variety of ethnic percussion, including authentic Indian tablas (center).



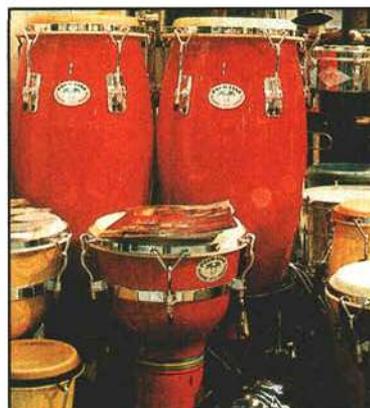
These djembes (and a variety of other drums) are molded of hempstone, a material created by blending hemp fibers, water, and natural pigments. They're made by Stone, of Austria.



Another "hometown hero," Germany's Meinl took the opportunity to display several new finishes in its Fibercraft percussion line. Shown here is the new iridescent blue sparkle.



Swiss cymbal alloy by Paiste and American craftsmanship by Jeff Ocheltree combine to create these Spirit of 2002 timbales.



Well known for their professional percussion instruments, PJ Drums & Percussion of Denmark also displayed their new Palm Line. It features less expensive instruments for hobbyists.



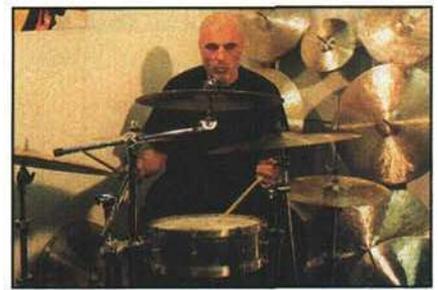
A cooperative project of Germany's Schlagwerk Percussion and Austria's AKG microphones, these specially designed udu drums are fitted with C-419 clip-on mini-mic for on-stage and recording use.



Kambala Percussion displayed a bevy of authentic African djembes from the Ivory Coast.

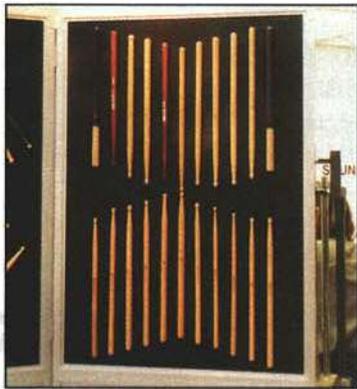


Asian Sound Koln is a German importer of authentic Asian gongs, cymbals, and other percussion.



Italian cymbalsmith Roberto Spizzichino demonstrated his hand-made traditional cymbal line by playing on his equally hand-made custom metal snare drum.

ACCESSORIES



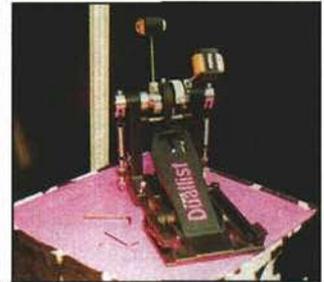
Switzerland's Agner Drumsticks promotes their line by saying, "as used by William Tell...possibly."



From the "why didn't somebody think of that before?" department: Clear plastic pockets inside this stick bag from England's Protection Racket make it easy to find your drumkey, car keys, or (in this case) cell phone.



France's Pro Orca introduced their Smash Series of French ash drumsticks. They're said to have resilience and density similar to that of US hickory, but at a lower price.



The Duallist double-action pedal hasn't been able to break the US market yet, but it's causing a stir in Europe. It's made by the MacRobert Corporation of Scotland.

Making Contact

ADAMS MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS*, Casino 28, 6017 BS Thorn, The Netherlands, tel: 011 31 (0) 475 560710, fax: 011 31 (0) 475 563328, sales@adams.nl, www.adams.nl. **AGNER DRUMSTICKS**, Switzerland, tel: 011 41 41 870 0005, fax: 011 41 41 870 1640, www.agner-sticks.com. **ASIAN SOUND KOLN**, Venloer Strasse 176, D-50823 Koln (Cologne), Germany, tel: 011 44 (0) 221 52 8775, fax: 011 44 (0) 221 52 6483. **BRADY DRUMS**, 17 Stone St., Armadale, 6112, Western Australia, tel: 011 61 8 4972212, fax: 011 61 8 4972242, cpbrady@merriweb.com.au, www.bradydrums.com. **GABRIEL DRUMS**, 42 Plapouta St., 135 62 AG. Anargiri Athens, Greece, tel: 011 30 (01) 232 0252, fax: 011 30 (01) 238 6041, www.gabrieldrums.com. **GIANNINI SWISS DRUMS**, Aegertenstrasse 8, CH-8003 Zurich, Switzerland, tel: 01141 1 461 7643, fax: 011 41 1 461 7478, giannini@swissonline.ch, www.giannini-drums.ch. **GONALCA PERCUSSION**, Poligono Industrial "La Cava," s/n, 46892 Montaverner (Valencia), Spain, tel: 011 34 96 229 77 14, fax 011 34 96 229 77 15. **HALIFAX & CO.**, Industrial Estate, PAK-Sialkot 51340, Pakistan, tel: 011 92 (0) 432 55 5343, fax: 011 92 (0) 432 55 38 81, halifax@brain.net.pk, www.HALIFAXCO.com. **HANUS & HERT DRUMS**, Dmova 23, Prague 6, 160 00 Czech Republic, tel: 011 42 (0) 603 411 839, fax: 011 42 (0) 2 301 45 50, hanushertdrums@volny.cz. **IMPERIAL**, T. Ghidoni, Steinackerstrasse 5, CH-8302 Klotten, Switzerland, tel: 011 41 (0) 1 813 6353, fax: 011 41 (0) 1 813 6350, imperial@swissdrums.ch, www.swissdrums.ch. **KAMBALA PERCUSSION**, 18 B.P. 1544 Abidjan 18, Rep. Of Ivory Coast, tel: 011 225 21 24 69 77, fax: 011 225 21 25 66 33, kambala@globeaccess.net. **LEFIMA PERCUSSION**, Barbaraweg 3, D-93413 Cham, Germany, tel: 011 49 (0) 9971 3 2081, fax: 011 49 (0) 9971 3 1122, aehnel@mail.teleconsult.de, www.lefima.com. **MacROBERT CORPORATION**, www.theduallist.com. **MEINL**, An den Herrenbergen 24, D-91413 Neustadt/Aisch, Germany, tel: 011 49 (0) 9161 7880,

fax: 011 49 (0) 9161 78 85 00, meinl@t-online.de. **ODERY DRUMS**, R. Leopoldo Amaral, 706 V. Marieta Campinas, Sao Paulo, Brazil CEP: 13042-210, tel/fax: 011 55 19 231-6420, falecom@odery.com.br, www.odery.com.br. **PJ DRUMS & PERCUSSION**, Frederiksberg Bredegade 1, DK 2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark, tel: 011 45 3810 5710, fax: 011 45 3833 2442, pjperc@image.dk, www.pjperc.dk. **PRO ORCA**, Avenue Paul Langevin, F-01200 Bellegarde, France, tel: 011 33 4 5048 6234, fax: 011 33 4 5056 0221, pro-orca.com, www.fjanin@pro-orca.com. **PROTECTION RACKET**, Bess Park Rd., Trenant Ind. Est., Wadebridge, Cornwall, PL27 6HB, England, tel: 011 44 (0) 1 208 815055, fax: 011 44 (0) 1 208 816011, pracket@aol.com. **ROCKET SHELLS**, 5431 Auburn Blvd., #346, Sacramento, CA 95841, tel: (916) 334-2234, fax: (916) 334-4310, paul@rocketshells.com, www.rocketshells.com. **SCHLAGWERK PERCUSSION**, Bahnhofstrasse 42, D-73333 Gingen/Fils, Germany, tel: 011 49 (0) 7162 60 66, fax: 011 49 (0) 7162 41 014, www.schlagwerk.de. **SONOR***, Zum Heilbach 5, D-57319 Bad Berleburg Aue, Germany, tel: 011 49 (0) 2759 7 9100, fax: 011 49 (0) 2759 7 91 00, info@sonor.de, www.sonor.de. **SPIZZICHINO**, Via Comunale Vai di Torbola 24/B, 51010 S. Quirico Pescia (PT), Italy, tel: 011 39 (0) 572 40 0045, fax: 011 39 (0) 572 40 0285. **STONE**, Steinriegelstrasse 59, A-3400 Klosterneuburg, Austria, tel: 011 43 (0) 664 5447 282, fax: 011 43 (0) 224 337 005, hempound.com, www.hempound.com. **VANCORE PERCUSSION**, Tolhuisweg 7a-9, 8701 ZP Joure, Holland, tel: 011 31 (0) 513 415127, fax: 011 (0) 513 413038. **VAN DER GLAS**, Pastorielaan 4, 8440 AB Heerenveen, Holland, 011 31 513622652, fax: 011 31 513626450.

*Has US distribution; check local dealer for information.



Spaun Stave Snare Drums

These California customizers are ready to play with the big boys.

by Chap Ostrander

Go to the Spaun Web site, and the first thing you read is some company history. You learn how Brian Spaun and David Pimental had a vision to start a drum company whose goal was "to create drums of the highest quality, unique in design, that sound great." Previous reviews of their drums indicate that they have realized that goal. Now, instead of sitting back and enjoying their success, Brian and Dave are going after another corner of the market: solid stave snares. In so doing, they're going head-to-head with a number of the established "heavies" in the drum industry.

The main feature of the Spaun Solid Stave snares lies in how they build their shells. Rather than steaming or bending plies of wood into an unnatural shape, Spaun cuts separate pieces of wood to the proper size and angle, then aligns them vertically to produce a solid shell. The advantage of this process is that the shell has a much greater proportion of wood in it than a normal ply shell. Less glue is needed to hold the staves together than is required for a multi-ply shell. The more wood, the more resonance the shell possesses.

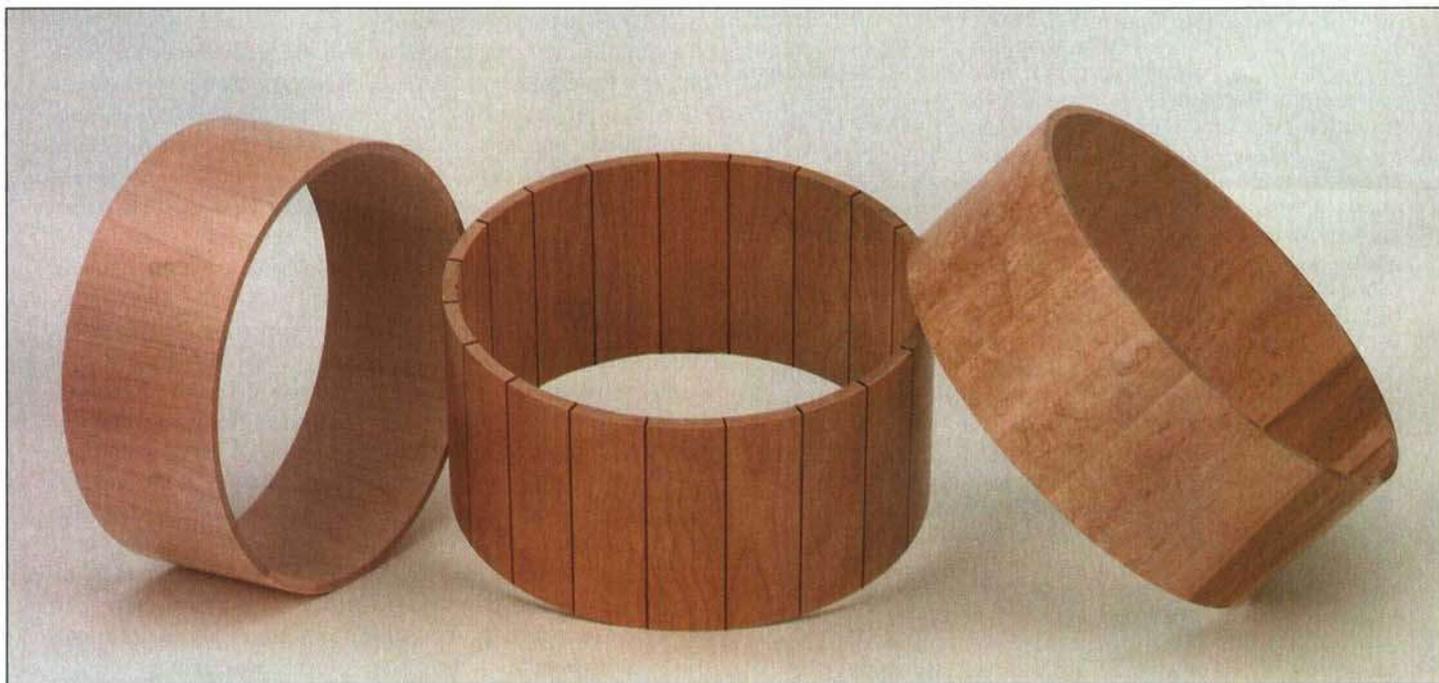
As Brian describes it, the shell comes out of the initial gluing process looking like a "twenty-sided stop sign." Next, the shell is cut to the desired depth and lathed to the desired thickness. Because

they create the horizontal and vertical dimensions of each drum individually, Spaun can offer drummers true customization in the process. You can't get features like this in a steam-bent shell.

The shells are offered in five basic woods: maple, cherry, walnut, oak, and birch. (We'll discuss the character of the different woods a little later on.) The shells can be ordered in 5/16" (7.9 mm), 7/16" (11 mm), or 9/16" (14 mm) thicknesses. You decide which thickness you want based on how you want the drum to sound. Volume, focus, and overtones increase with a thicker shell, while a thinner shell is warmer and more sensitive to distortion.

Stave construction, an art used today to create fine congas and djembes, gives the player more options than ply or steam-bent solid drums can provide. For instance, you can choose to mix woods, like birch and maple. This lets you further customize the sound of your drum. You can also opt for stripes between the staves, which creates a visually stunning effect. All these choices give the player a chance to have a truly unique drum.

Here are the features that are common to all the Spaun Stave snares. They come with 2.3 mm steel hoops, with die-cast hoops as an option. Standard heads include an Evans Genera G1 coated batter



Hits

- outstanding construction and unique appearance
- excellent dynamic response from all models
- wide tuning range



and a 300 GL snare side. The machined-brass lugs are an exclusive Spaun design containing a floating insert to hold the tension rod. Spaun's theory is that instead of interfering with the resonance of the shell, a solid brass lug actually helps it, because the lug becomes a part of the shell. Most of our review drums had brass-finished lugs, which beautifully complemented the natural wood finishes of the shells. But those lugs finished in chrome were also beautifully done. Lugs are also offered in many optional powder-coated colors.

The 7"-deep snares had ten single lugs per head, while the shallower drums had ten double-ended lugs. Each lug is held in place with a single allen screw. Nylon spacers protect the shell from the lugs; nylon washers are used under the tension rods. There is an attractive brass air hole grommet on the same plane with the lugs, with nylon under it as well.

Spaun does not believe in reinforcement rings, so none of their drums have them. (Rings might be needed to keep a steam-bent shell round, but that is not the case with stave drums.) The drums feature a double 45° bearing edge, which keeps the edge on the flat part of the head and not the collar. I opened up one of the drums to check on the bearing edge, and it was smooth and straight.

The shells are finished on the inside with a sanding sealer, which protects the shell from weather changes. The finish on the outside of our test drums is a Spaun secret. They claim that it's stronger than an oil finish, but thinner, and thus doesn't interfere with the natural resonance of the shell. Even though they call it a satin finish, I found it rather shiny. When I questioned Brian about it, he told me that their high-gloss finish is much shinier, "involving numerous applications of a much harder clear coating, and requiring quite a few labor-intensive steps from sanding through buffing the final finish." (If it's that much shinier than the "satin" finish, I hope the drums come standard with sunglasses!)

Spaun tops off their drums with the now-famous Piston Drive Strainer from Nickel Drumworks, Inc. This strainer is phenomenal! The throw travels 5/8", has a guidance system that keeps the snares aligned over the head, and is as smooth as glass. It's an absolute dream, and it's standard on *all* Spaun snares. It certainly seems that Spaun has paid keen attention to every detail of their drums' construction. Now let's see how they sound.

4x14 Solid Stave Maple (5/16" Shell, Chrome Hardware)

For a drum sized in the piccolo range, this is definitely a multi-purpose drum. Yes, it can be tuned up high to produce a real crack. But at the same time the voice is full-bodied. I tried this snare on a few gigs where I would normally have used a 5" or larger drum, and it did not disappoint. It produced a very full sound with lots of overtones.

5x14 Solid Stave Oak (9/16" Shell, Brass Hardware)

This snare possesses a clear and clean voice. Due to the nature of oak, its range is a bit higher than the others and its sound is dry and very articulate. The thickness of the shell gave it a strong sound with no distortion at any tuning.

5x14 Solid Stave Cherry (9/16" Shell, Brass Hardware)

The thick cherry shell gave this snare a lot of highs that would help it cut through just about anything. It impressed me overall as a very bright-sounding drum. Given that quality, it would be interesting to see how changing the thickness of the shell would alter the sound. My guess is that it would still have a piercing voice with clear overtones, but might sound just a bit warmer.

5 1/2x14 Solid Stave Walnut (7/16" Shell, Brass Hardware)

Upon hearing this drum, a friend of mine commented that it sounded like the snare that Neil Peart used on some of the older Rush albums. This is one aggressive snare, with great strength and cut. It would be easy to drive the sound over most amplification. And it's only 5 1/2" deep! Imagine how a 6" or 7" would sound. The mind boggles.

6x14 Solid Stave Maple With Walnut Stripes (7/16" Shell, Brass Hardware)

This was one of my favorites. It proved to be the kind of all-around drum you take on gigs because you can count on it to sound great and respond to your requirements. My first impression of the drum was that it sounded as sharp as a metal snare: extremely clear and clean, all snare and articulation. Rimshots fired off with no effort, rolls flowed out of it, and it just made me want to play it simply to hear it talk back to me. It gave back whatever I put into it. On a cosmetic level, I found the stripes to be very

attractive, especially when I turned the drum over and viewed them through the snare head.

7x14 Solid Stave Birch With Bubinga Stripes (7/16" Shell, Chrome Hardware)

This big guy had the sound I've grown accustomed to with birch shells: dry and very articulate. It's a clean sound with less ring than the maple-shell snare—almost gated in nature. This drum would be good for players who want a lot of clarity in their playing. It has lots of cut and volume, and is also very agreeable to being tuned down into fatback range—getting deeper, but retaining its character.

7x14 Solid Stave Curly Maple With Bubinga And Maple Stripes (5/16" Shell, Brass Hardware)

One quality of all the Spaun drums we tested is that they are not made for just one application. That was especially true with this model. I took it on a gig where most of the playing had to be quiet, and I found it to be very controllable. Snare response with sticks or brushes was clear, and it was easy to play in a delicate fashion. At the same time, I had lots of reserves to call upon should I need them. The drum has a deep sound with lots of overtones, but the whole package is rewarding to play. It just gets fatter and deeper if you tune it down. The triple stripes on this shell give it a great look—especially combined with the curly maple in the larger portions. This drum surprised me, since I don't usually like snares deeper than 5 1/2". In fact, it turned out to be my other favorite.

General Sound Characteristics

All of our test drums had great snare sensitivity, and they didn't tend to close up during hard playing. (I don't think they *could*.) Rimshots were strong and clear enough to take your head off.

Due to the nature of their bearing edges, the drums were very sensitive to tuning changes. What's more, I got the feeling that there is lots of tuning "headroom" in which to work. This means that the drum will work with *you*, not make you find the drum's one sweet tuning and hope you like it. Another character that I love about these snares is their ability, especially in the larger drums, to let you play press rolls forever. Even as I tuned the big ones down they just got more comfortable with the idea.

As I said earlier, you may choose to mix woods for acoustic or cosmetic reasons (or both). In that case the price of the drum would be based on the more expensive wood. According to Spaun's price list, 13" drums are \$50 less than 14" models; 12" drums are \$100 less. Stripes are an option that can really enhance the look and unique character of the drums. Single stripes between each stave adds \$100 to the price; additional stripes adds another \$50 per set. If you check out Spaun's catalog or Web site, you can see the available stain finishes. The drums that I tested were all finished to show the natural wood. Staining is available at no additional cost, unless you want a mixed custom color. These drums are so good-looking in their natural state that I'm not sure you would want to change their color, unless it was really important to match an existing kit.

Spaun has come up with some real winners here. The drums are striking in appearance, a dream to play, and priced in line with

Spaun-ing Ground Solid Stave Shell Snare Drums

Maple, Birch, or Oak

5/16", 7/16", or 9/16" Thick

Depth	Satin	High Gloss
4"-6"	\$750	\$850
6 1/2"-7"	\$850	\$950

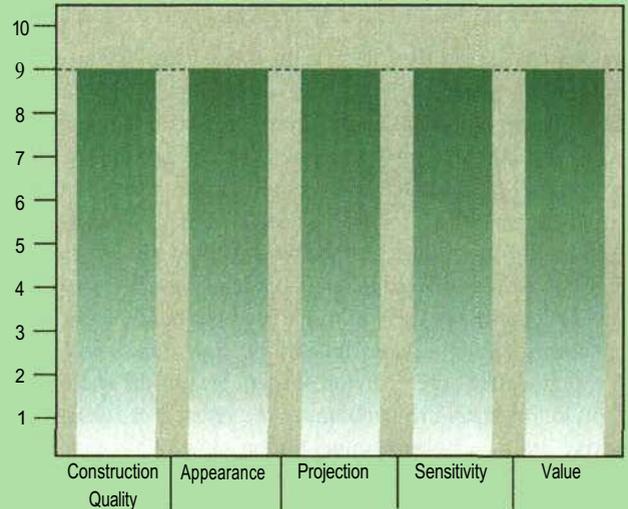
Birdseye Maple, Walnut, or Cherry

5/16", 7/16" or 9/16" Thick

Depth	Satin	High Gloss
4"-6"	\$875	\$975
6 1/2"-7"	\$975	\$1,075

Contrasting Maple, Walnut, or Cherry Stripes: add \$100

In A Nutshell



Ratings are averaged to reflect positive and negative features for all items reviewed.

other manufacturers' custom snares. The vast array of different woods, thicknesses, depths, and cosmetic options may make you dizzy at first. Find a dealer that stocks them, go to their Web site, or contact Spaun at the address below to start the process. If you call them you'll speak to either Brian or David. With their help you can custom-design the sound and character you're looking for. With all the choices available to you, the drum you'll wind up with will likely be the only one of its kind in the world. The fun is in the building!

Spaun Drum Company, 425 West Allen Ave., #101, San Dimas, CA 91773, tel: (909) 971-7761, fax: (909) 971-7441, info@spaundrums.com, www.spaundrums.com.

Istanbul Agop Alchemy Cymbals

New sounds from ancient skills!

by Rick Van Horn

Anybody who reads this magazine or visits a drumshop regularly should recognize by now that there has been an explosion of new cymbal brands in the past few years. More specifically, there are several small brands offering authentic Turkish-style cymbals hand-made in "the old country."

One of those companies is Istanbul, which was established in the early 1980s by Agop Tomurcuk. Agop headed Istanbul until his death in 1996, at which point the company split into two different operations. One of those was established in 1997 by Agop's sons, who added their father's name to that of the company in his honor.

Istanbul has been making fine cymbals for almost twenty years. Their line includes some wonderful models that would likely appeal to jazz players, or to any drummers who appreciate the dark, old-world sound of traditional Turkish-made cymbals. In fact, the new US distributor of Istanbul Agop cymbals, DR Music, sent us a very nice selection from the company's Traditional series. Next month we'll examine those cymbals in greater depth, but for now I'll just say that they are everything you'd expect from high-quality, handcrafted cymbals made in Istanbul.

What I *didn't* expect from an "old-world" company was a line

Hits

- 20" medium ride has more character and personality than many all-purpose rides
- 16", 17", and 18" Sweet Crashes combine quick explosiveness with dark tonality
- 8" splash really is a splash

Misses

- 14" Sweet Crash is a little thin and papery to be an effective crash in some applications

of cymbals that sounded very *new*. That is, a line targeted at the pop/rock market currently dominated by decidedly "new-world" manufacturers. But lo and behold, there they were: the Alchemy series.

Introduced earlier this year, Alchemy cymbals are Istanbul Agop's attempt to break away from the "jazz cymbal" label that Istanbul had previously carried. Buffed and shiny, and slightly heavier than more traditional models, the Alchemy line includes splashes, crashes, rides, and hi-hats in various weights, along with bell cymbals and Chinas. DR Music supplied us with a representative selection of models, so let's take a look at them individually.





20" Medium Ride

Contrary to its designation, this ride was a little thinner than most "medium" rides I've tested. As a result, it offered a slightly darker tone than your garden-variety 20" ride. (That's that "made in Istanbul" character I mentioned earlier.) The cymbal also had some spread, but that spread remained very controlled. Stick attack was never lost, no matter how hard the cymbal was played.

The cymbal was also very responsive to change between a wood- and a nylon-tipped stick. A wood stick created mellow tones and a warmer overall sound, while the nylon tip brought out some "hidden highs."

The ride produced plenty of volume, owing to its fairly large bell. That bell is somewhat flattish, though. Although it offered a large target for playing on, it didn't have a penetrating sound. Rather, the bell sound was broader and more gongy.

Sweet Crashes

All of the crashes we tried were designated as "Sweet Crashes." And were they ever! The 16" was my favorite. It produced a *very* pretty sound: quick and splashy, but with a darker undertone that gave it real character. It wasn't piercing, but it spoke with authority—and musicality—and then decayed fairly quickly.

The 17" and 18" models took the characteristics of the 16" and added more body to them. Both were deeper and darker in tonality, and both had substantially more sustain. The 18" especially had a lengthy decay and a sense of underlying power (without being overwhelming) that would make it an excellent "big crash" for a power ballad. (It'd make a killer big band cymbal, too!)

The 14" Sweet Crash was the exception to the rule. It had a much thinner sound—almost to the point of becoming a splash. But it wasn't quite quick enough to really *be* a splash. And as a crash, frankly, I thought it "wasn't quite all there." However, *MD* editorial assistant Billy Amendola felt that it would be excellent within the context of electronic drums, jungle, or drum 'n' bass playing.

14" Sweet Hi-Hats

The hi-hats were right in context with the crashes. They were thick enough to produce a solid, clear chick sound when closed with the foot, but thin enough to produce a nice shimmer, without ever getting "plate-y." They also had a good, penetrating attack when played—fully closed or partially open—with sticks. Their buffed finish reduced the sibilance of their sound somewhat, so they might not be the optimum choice for a traditional open/closed "spang-a-lang" jazz-ride pattern. But for any other type of playing they'd serve very nicely.

8" Splash

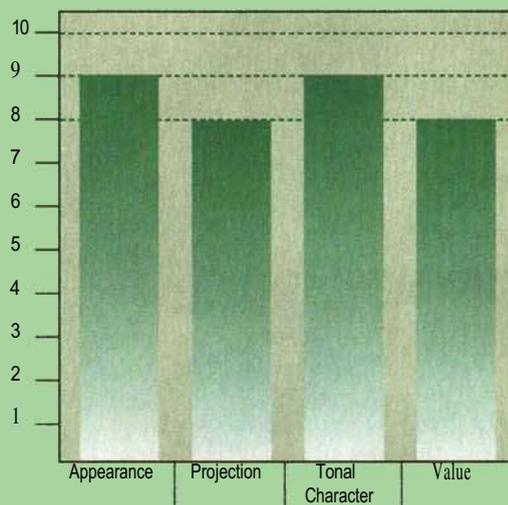
These days, most of the splashes I test really aren't very splashy. Heavier playing has bred heavier cymbals, right down to

Turkish Delight

With the exception of China models, all Alchemy cymbals are priced identically by size.

8"	\$114	China:	\$134
10"	\$144	China:	\$164
12"	\$174	China:	\$194
14"	\$209	China:	\$229
15"	\$229	China:	\$249
16"	\$249	China:	\$269
17"	\$269	China:	\$299
18"	\$299	China:	\$339
19"	\$339	China:	\$379
20"	\$379	China:	\$424
21"	\$424	China:	\$465
22"	\$465	China:	\$519
13" Hi-hat (pair)			\$379
14" Hi-hat (pair)			\$424
15" Hi-hat (pair)			\$465

In A Nutshell



Ratings are averaged to reflect positive and negative features for all items reviewed.

the splashes. So they may be quick to decay, but their initial sound is still a small crash, not a genuine, thin-but-musical *splash*.

Well, that's not the case with the Istanbul Agop 8" Alchemy splash. This little beauty really has all the characteristics of a genuine splash. Yet it didn't sound papery. It had some body within that little explosive shimmer. Although it wasn't designated as a "sweet" splash, it was very sweet, indeed.

16" China

This cymbal was a surprise. To begin with, it sounded bigger than it was. Its sustain and projection matched that of many 18" Chinas I've played. It also had a dark tonality underlying its initial explosion. So it didn't create the thin, splashy, trashy sound of some Chinas. Instead, it produced more of a controlled roar that made a dramatic statement. I'm honestly not partial to Chinas, but I found myself attracted to this one for its combination of power and musicality.

Wrap Up

Alchemy cymbals generally produce a penetrating sound that would easily serve in most pop/rock situations. Yet they're not one-trick ponies. They still offer all the underlying character and nuance that Istanbul cymbals are known for. It's a winning combination.

The Alchemy models we tried are just a sampling of a fairly extensive line from Istanbul Agop. We found them attractive, very musical, and certainly worthy of your consideration the next time you're in the market for a new and different cymbal sound. They aren't cheap; hand-made cymbals imported from Istanbul aren't likely to be. But their pricing isn't out of line with that of premium domestic cymbals, either.

The Istanbul Agop brand is just now getting established. If your dealer doesn't carry them, contact the US distributor, DR Music, at 7 Palisade Ave., Emerson, NJ 07630, tel: (201) 599-0100, fax: (201) 599-0404, istanbul@drstrings.com, www.istanbulcymbals.com

Pearl Powershifter Eliminator Bass Drum Pedals

Don't compromise—customize! With Pearl's Eliminators, you can have exactly the pedal feel you want.

by Rich Watson

Ever sat in on another drummer's kit and struggled with the bass drum pedal? Chances are, he'd struggle with yours too. For such a "simple" device—it's basically just a spring-loaded lever, after all—there's little consensus on how drummers want their pedals to feel. Most of us work hard to find the spring tension, stroke length, footboard angle, and footboard surface that best suits our strengths and weaknesses—or even the demands of a particular gig. And when we choose a pedal, sometimes we're forced to give up some features we want in favor of others we really need.

But with Pearl's new Eliminator pedals, there's no need to compromise. They offer the ability to customize important feel-related features. In addition to the subtle changes, Eliminators facilitate

the really big ones that used to require buying a whole new pedal. So how cool is that!?

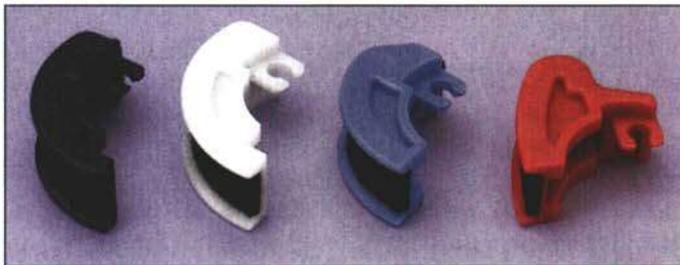
Feel Chameleon

The phattest feature on the Eliminator pedal is the revolutionary CAMEleon interchangeable cam system. This ingenious gizmo allows you to switch among the four performance-shaped cams included with each pedal.

The black Linear Action cam is the most basic design. Its circular shape produces a smooth, even transfer of energy throughout the length of the stroke. The white Oversized Linear cam, also circular, feels similarly even, but lighter. (It's sort of like shifting down on a ten-speed bike.) The blue Progressive cam features the



P-2002B belt-drive double pedal

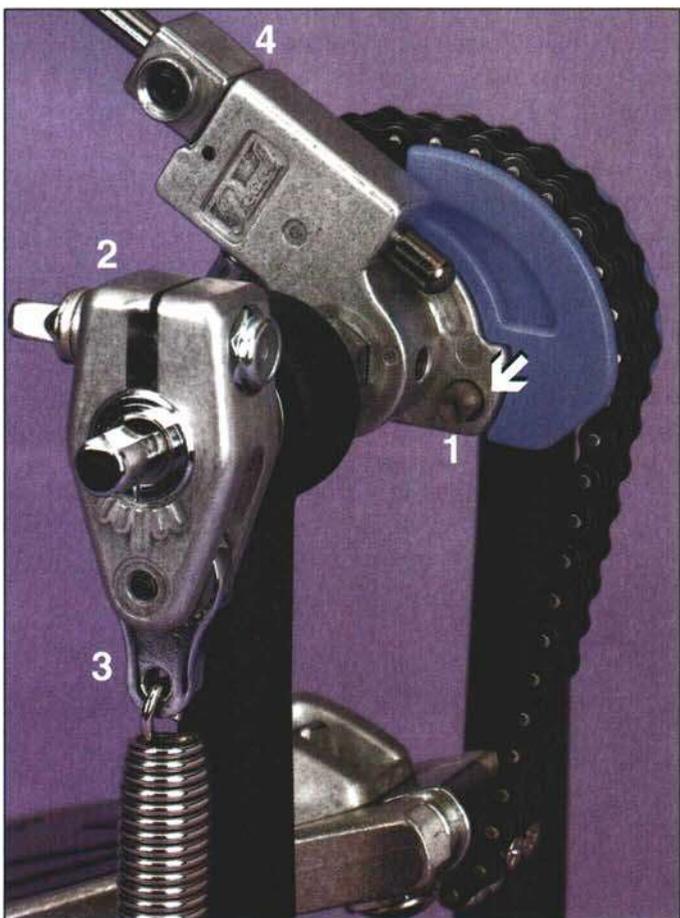


What cams! Linear Action cam (black), Oversized Linear cam (white), Progressive cam (blue), and Radical Progressive cam (red)

popular off-center axle. This shape produces a lighter feel in the beginning of the stroke, then increases in speed and power toward the impact point. The red Radical Progressive cam features an extreme off-center axle design. It produces even greater power at the end of the stroke. Think of it as the one with after-burners.

Switching the cams is super-easy. First push a button on the side of the "mother cam" to release the plastic cam. Then snap in a different cam. It takes just seconds, and you don't even have to remove the pedal from the bass drum.

Why would you want this much versatility? Many drummers haven't tried out different-shaped bass drum pedal cams. Doing so in a drum shop isn't all that helpful, since you usually can't work with them long enough—or under familiar playing conditions—to



1) Pushing a button on the side of "mother cam" releases the interchangeable cam in a second. 2) The Uni-pressure spring clamp grips 360° around the pedal's axle. 3) The Floating Spring Pendulum keeps the spring centered on the clamp. 4) The square memory lock on the beater shaft sets the height and rotation of the Quad Beater.

Hits

- Powershifter and CAMEleon systems provide quick, easy ways to dramatically affect pedal's feel
- smooth, silent action
- tons of adjustability

make a change with confidence. No wonder most drummers stick with what they're used to. Pearl's new pedals erase the financial risk of a major change. I applaud any company who gives this kind of power to the consumer.

I was especially intrigued with the ability to experiment with different cam combinations between the left and right sides of the double pedal. No matter how much I practice, my two feet will probably never be equally strong or coordinated. Since I can't afford a transplant, the Eliminators provide some nice alternatives for dealing with that disparity.

Another reason the CAMEleon is such a great little animal is that its change of colors (and feel) helps it blend in with any stylistic environment. Jazz gig? Pop gig? Thrash metal gig? Some drummers might want to tailor the pedal to the situation. But because changes don't require fussing with vague tension and position adjustments—they're even color-coded—returning to a favorite feel is literally a snap.

Pearl also reports that some players are practicing with the basic (black or white) cam and then switching to a more "aggressive" offset (blue or red) cam for gigs. The effect is like pumping up with heavier sticks during practice so you can really fly when you return to your ol' faithfuls at show time.

Want even more ways to customize? Eliminators also incorporate Pearl's unique Powershifter system. The Powershifter allows you to create a light, medium, or heavy feel by altering the pedal's leverage. Just loosen a single key bolt recessed in the heel plate, slide the heel plate forward or backward, and retighten the bolt—all without removing the pedal from the kick. Quick and easy? We're talking ten seconds, max.

Another highly personal aspect of a pedal's feel is the texture of the footboard. Some drummers like their foot to slide up and down and/or side-to-side on the pedal. Others prefer more stability and "grip." In addition to providing a removable toe stop, Pearl has taken a more advanced approach with their Traction Control System. Rubber "dots" on the footboard can be removed individually (or completely) for the slip-resistance pattern that best suits your playing style. Further, the traction plate can be rotated so that the dots are near the toe or the ball of your foot.

This change takes a little more time, requiring you to remove four setscrews. But it's also the kind of adjustment you're likely to leave alone once you've decided on the feel you prefer.

Belt Or Chain?

Eliminators are available with a choice of a dual-chain or belt drive. Traditionally, strap-drive models have been preferred for their quiet operation. (Toothed sprocket-drive pedals in particular tend to be a little noisier.) Chain-drives, on the other hand, have been preferred for their strength. These distinctions dissolve quite a bit with the Eliminators.

First, Pearl's belt is made of specially formulated stretch-resis-

tant plastic embedded with steel cables. This probably makes it as strong and durable as any chain. Second, because the Eliminator's plastic cams are toothless and their channels are lined with felt, they are virtually silent. So what's the difference?

Pearl's Gene Okamoto points out that the Eliminator's somewhat rigid belt doesn't collapse on the upstroke like those made of floppier material, and even some chains. The result is more of a "direct-pull" feel. I'm familiar with the sloppy feel of some belt-drive pedals, and the Eliminator belt-drive feels infinitely better. But to be honest, I couldn't detect any difference between the Eliminator belt and chain models.

More Fine Tuning

The length of the Eliminator's belt or chain can be altered by moving a single key bolt. This, in turn, changes the footboard angle. The three bolt positions are notched so that the belt or chain remains securely in place.

This footboard angle adjustment is completely independent of the beater angle/stroke length. The latter is determined by the position of Pearl's special spring clamp assembly. The Uni-Pressure spring clamp system is designed to grip the entire circumference of the axle rather than at a single point. If you (or someone else) changes its position, reference lines on the clamp help you reset it.

Pearl's Floating Spring Pendulum between the clamp and the spring is designed to keep the spring centered on the clamp, ensuring smoother movement of the bearing. As with most pedals, the Eliminator's spring tension can be set with one knurled nut and secured with an opposing one.

A memory lock on the Eliminator's beater shaft takes the guesswork out of the beater height. (It tightens with a setscrew.) Once it's been set, the square lock also automatically aligns the Quad Beater ball's rotation against a square lip on the beater holder, no matter which of the four playing surfaces you choose. Simple, but clever.

Like some other pedals, Eliminators feature a side-access hoop clamp bolt. But Pearl's Roller Cam mechanism is superior to some in two respects. First, the tightening bolt is comfortably large and sturdy. Second, it's positioned so that even when the wing bolt's fully tightened point leaves it perpendicular to the footboard, the footboard doesn't run into that bolt. This eliminates the need for fiddling with the toe clamp height-adjuster nut underneath the pedal to make the hoop clamp wing bolt tighten

to a horizontal position.

Rubber front and rear sections on the underside of the Eliminator's base plate inhibit bass-drum creep. The rubber doesn't lock the pedal down to a rug like the hook & loop material found on some pedals. Pearl's approach facilitates easier *intentional* maneuvering—like when you want to attach the pedal to the kick. A pair of retractable spurs can be deployed if you really need to "dig in."

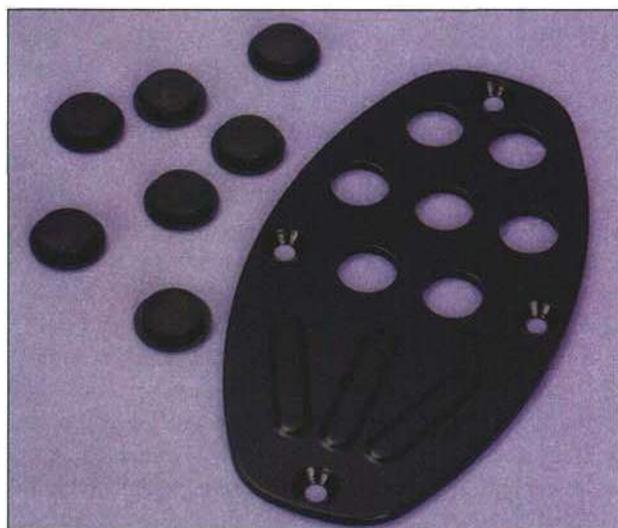
And speaking of security, every connection point on the double pedal's "drive shaft" is secured with two key bolts. Call me paranoid, but I appreciate this double-coverage insurance with parts subjected to a lot of stress and movement.

A Quibble—And Conclusions

I have just one gripe with the Eliminators—and it's a tiny one. The pedals come with three different-sized Allen wrenches to secure numerous moving components. You might never have to mess with some of these parts; for example, the smallest wrench is only used to tighten a hub on the axle. Even so, standardizing the screw heads so that a single Allen wrench fits all of them would have been more convenient.

Nitpicking aside, the Eliminators are fantastic. The CAMEleon, Powershifter, and Traction Plate innovations make them a veritable study in smart, user-friendly design. Even more important, the pedals appear to be very well made, and they're as fast and smooth as anything you're likely to lay your feet on. If you're in the market for a new pedal or two, the flexibility built into this line ensures that you'll get the feel and all the features you want—plus the option to modify them if the mood strikes you.

Well done, Pearl!



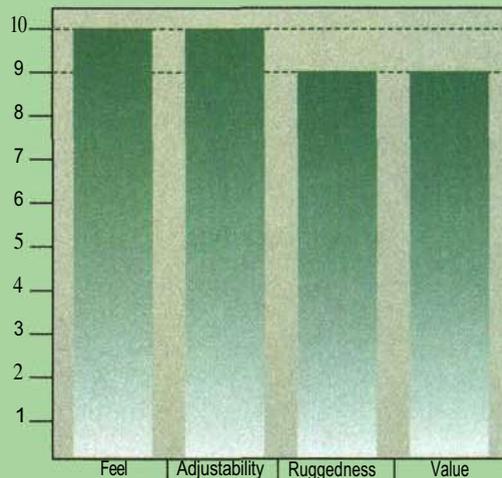
Pearl's Traction Control System

To The Metal

P-2000C single pedal with dual-chain drive	\$229
P-2000B single pedal with belt drive	\$229
P-2002B double pedal with belt drive	\$529

The line's eight models include singles, doubles, belt-drives, chain-drives, righties, lefties, and slaves. All basic singles are \$229. Slave singles (righties only) are \$349. All doubles are \$529.

In A Nutshell



Canopus Zelkova Snare Drums

Rare beauties from the mysterious East

by Rick Mattingly



It wouldn't be surprising if you've never heard of Canopus drums. They're made by a small Japanese manufacturer who is only now breaking into the US market. But Canopus has actually been around for quite a few years, offering a fairly standard selection of traditional-style drumkits—along with the anything *but* standard Zelkova snare drum.

The subjects of this review owe more to the tradition of Japanese taiko drums, which are made from hollowed-out logs, than to the Western-style snare drums that we're all familiar with. Canopus Zelkova snare drum shells are bored out of a solid piece of zelkova—a Japanese hardwood prized for its density and resonance. Because the wood has not been bent, the grain runs vertically instead of horizontally. Additionally, the shells go through various drying processes that take approximately two years.



Zelkova drums start life as a bored-out section of a tree trunk.

Hits

- solid one-piece shell promotes drum projection
- unusual contour of shell promotes head resonance
- 6 1/2x13 offers piccolo highs with deep-shell body

According to Canopus, this process creates a shell with a 9% moisture content, compared to 12% on typical drum shells.

The result is a snare drum with a wide spread of overtones. With the depth and body one would expect from a wood-shell snare drum, it also has the high-end ring that's more typical of a metal-shell drum—and that helps the sound project. This was true of all three Canopus snare drums that *MD* received for review: a 6 1/2x14, a 6 1/2x13, and a 4x14.

Getting In Shape

The outside of the Canopus shell has a very slight vertical curve to it, making it fatter in the center and slightly thinner at each edge. This allows the head to extend out from the shell slightly, much like the heads on timpani. Such mounting tends to increase a head's resonance. On the inside, the shell has a 7/8" taper at each end, culminating in a thin, smooth bearing edge. At its fattest point in the center, the 6 1/2" shell is nearly 1/2" thick, gradually thinning to about 1/4" where the sharp taper on the inside of the shell begins.

The single element of the drum that has a somewhat raw, unfinished look is the air vent. It's simply a hole drilled through the shell. There's no grommet around it, and the logo badge is attached elsewhere on the shell. But the vent doesn't have a particularly unsightly appearance. In fact, it's hardly noticeable at all except close up at certain angles.

The drums are fitted with die-cast rims and classic, double-ended brass tube lugs (with no springs or other parts that can rattle). Each drum has eight lugs attached to the shell with a single screw. Lugs are isolated from the shell by leather washers. Likewise, the tension screws are isolated from the rim by two leather washers with a metal washer sandwiched between them.

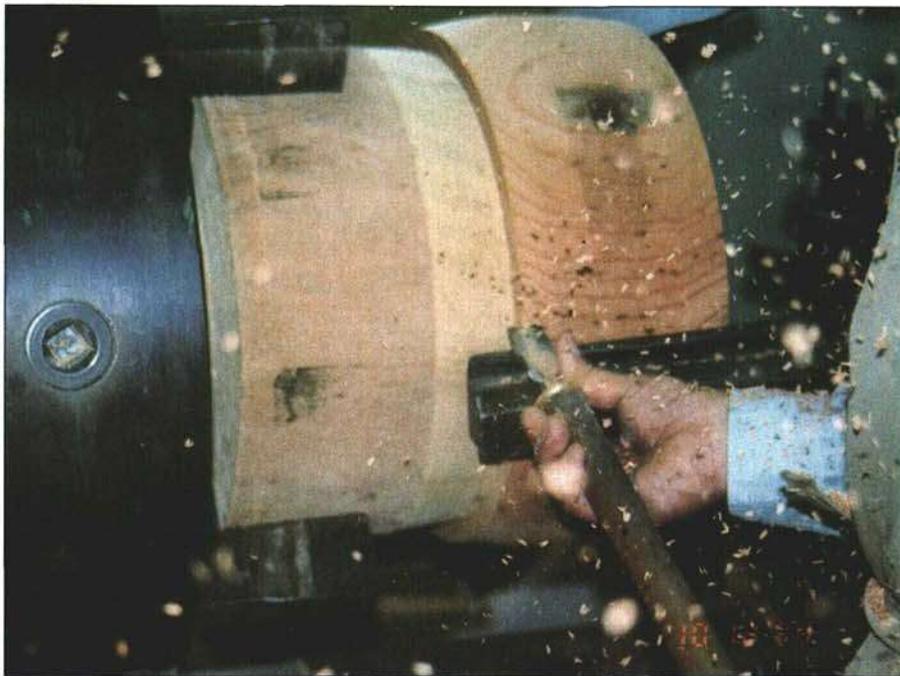
The snare-release lever is a standard vertical throw-off design. Snare-tension adjustments are located on the butt plate as well as the throw-off. The screws with which the snare unit is attached to the throw-off and butt plate are drumkey operated. The snares themselves are standard spiral wire. The drums came fitted with Remo coated Ambassador batter heads and clear Ambassador snare-side heads.

The drums come finished in a stained gloss over the natural wood (which has a striking grain pattern). This will appeal to some drummers and not to others, but it's certainly distinctive.

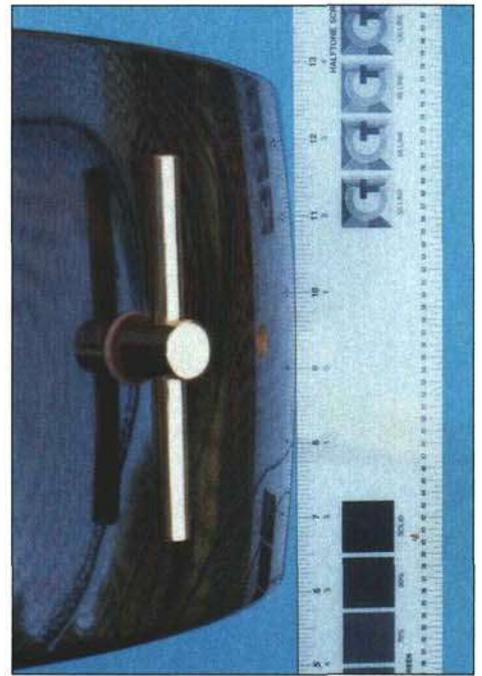
Solid Sound

The integrity of the bearing edges and the rigidity of the die-cast hoops make the Zelkova drums easy to get in tune with themselves. Snare response was excellent: The drums sounded crisp and articulate when cranked up tight, and fat and gutsy when the heads and snares were loosened a bit. Rimshots were bright and powerful.

The 6 1/2x14 model combined a bright, cutting attack with a warm, full-bodied tone that could work in a wide variety of musical styles. It also had plenty of projection for unmiked settings. The 4x14 version had similar tonal qualities, but the shallower



Careful shaping on a lathe is followed by many hand-finishing steps.



The outer surface of the Zelvoka shell features a unique curved contour.

shell gave it a slightly more contained sound with enhanced crispness and response. This would be a good choice for acoustic or softer electric settings, as well as for situations where the drum will be miked.

The 6 1/2x13 drum was a pleasant surprise. In general, 13" heads work better with shallower shells. A deep snare drum with a small diameter can often sound like a tom-tom with snares. But the Zelvoka 6 1/2x13 produced a clean, high-pitched sound with plenty of body and projection. It would be especially good in live, unmiked situations where you want the high pitch of a piccolo snare drum but need more sheer sound than a 3" or 4" shell can typically deliver.

Worth A Search

Zelvoka snares have been a well-kept secret among top international drummers for several years. In fact, Canopus may have been the first company to offer one-piece, bored-out drums. Whether or not that's the case, the point is that these drums are not new and trendy. They're well-established, with a deserved reputation among those familiar with them. After playing them myself, I can understand why.

The drums feature unique, labor-intensive construction, and they are imported—so they aren't cheap. But they have a design unlike any other, and they sound terrific. So you definitely get what you pay for.

Canopus drums aren't on the shelves in every local drumshop. But they are available through a few selected dealers across the country, or directly from the manufacturer in Japan. The company's Web site is canopus.inc.co.jp/, or you can email them at canopus@tkh.att.ne.jp.

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Zelvoka one-piece solid-wood snare drums

4x14	\$1,490
6 1/2x13	\$1,490
6 1/2x14	\$1,490

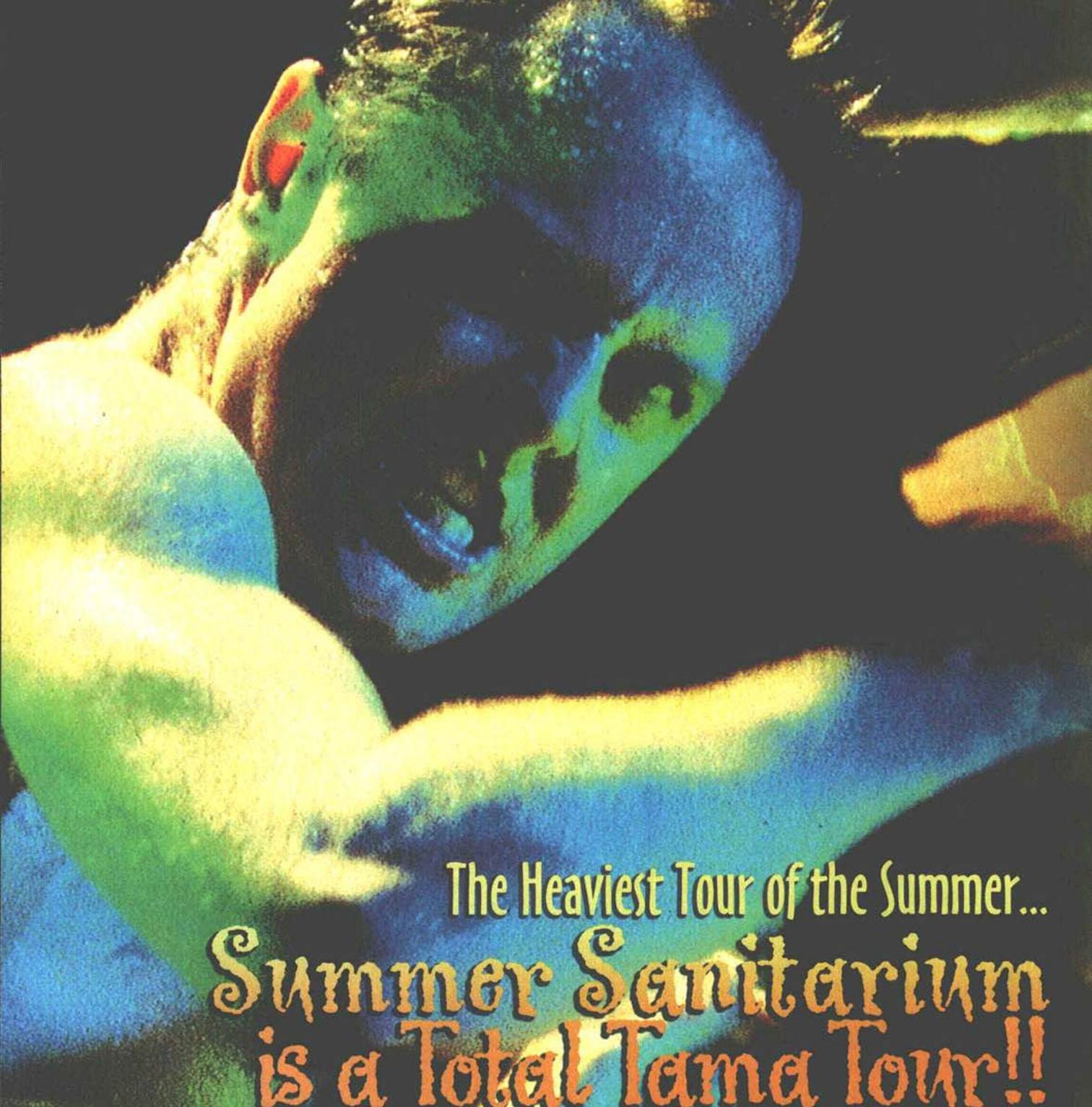
In A Nutshell

Category	Rating
Construction Quality	9
Projection	9
Response & Clarity	8
Appearance	8
Value	9

Ratings are averaged to reflect positive and negative features for all items reviewed.

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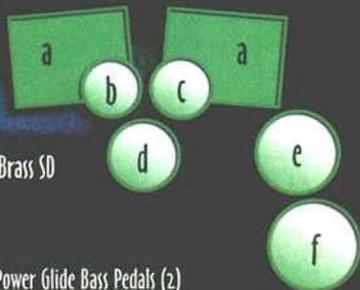


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Lars Ulrich (Metallica)

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- f. 16 x 18 FT



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HH905NL Iron Cobra Legless Lever Glide Hi Hat
HT410 1st Chair Throne

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That's why Tama will be at the Summer Sanitarium Tour helping to staff the asylum. So take some time to stop by the Tama Tour Tent and say hello. But please, leave your medication at home.

tour dates...

June 30th - Foxboro Stadium, Foxboro, MA

July 1st - Rockingham Dragway, Rockingham, NC

July 3rd - Gateway Intl. Speedway, St. Louis, MO

July 4th - Ravens Stadium, Baltimore, MD

July 7th - Georgia Dome, Atlanta, GA

July 8th - Kentucky Speedway, Sparta, KY

July 9th - Texas Stadium, Dallas, TX

July 12th - Mile High Stadium, Denver, CO

July 14th - 3 Com Park, San Francisco, CA

July 15th - LA Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles, CA

July 16th - Schnepf Farms, Queen Creek, AZ

July 20th - Giants Stadium, E. Rutherford, NJ

Starclassic Maple
 a. 6 1/2 x 14 Maple SD
 b. 8 x 10 TT
 c. 9 x 12 TT
 d. 18 x 22 BD
 e. 4 x 8 Tymp Tom
 f. 14 x 15 FT
 g. 16 x 16 FT
 h. 16 x 20 Gong Bass



HP900TW Iron Cobra Flexi-Glide Twin Bass Pedal
 HH905 Iron Cobra Lever Glide Hi-Hat
 HT510C Lever Glide Cable Hi-Hat

David Silveria (Korn)

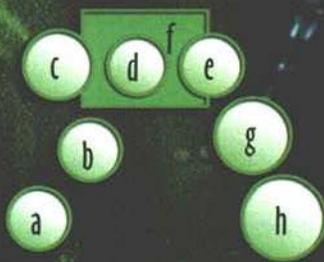
Starclassic Maple
 a. 18 x 20 BD
 b. 5 1/2 x 13 Maple SD
 c. 7 x 8 TT
 d. 8 x 10 TT
 e. 9 x 12 TT
 f. 12 x 14 TT
 g. 14 x 16 TT
 h. 16 x 20 Gong Bass Drum



HP900P Power Glide Bass Pedals (2)
 HH905 Iron Cobra Lever Glide Hi-Hat
 HT510C 1st Chair Cloth Top Throne

Stefanie Eulinburg (Kid Rock)

Starclassic Maple
 a. 5 1/2 x 14 SD
 b. 5 1/2 x 14 Aluminum Hand Hammered SD
 c. 12 x 14 TT
 d. 9 x 12 TT
 e. 10 x 13 TT
 f. 18 x 24 BD
 g. 16 x 16 FT
 h. 16 x 18 FT



HP900F Iron Cobra Flexi-Glide Bass Bedal
 HP905 Iron Cobra Lever Glide Hi-Hat
 HT510C 1st Chair Cloth Top Throne

AL3 (Powerman 5000)

Starclassic Maple
 a. 16 x 18 FT
 b. 6 1/2 x 14 Maple SD
 c. 9 x 10 TT
 d. 10 x 12 TT
 e. 18 x 22 BD
 f. 12 x 14 TT
 g. 14 x 16 TT



HP900PTW Iron Cobra Power Glide Twin Bass Pedal
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CHARLIE WATTS & JIM KELTNER

WALKING INTO THE FUTURE

"Don't worry about it," said Cynthia Keltner, reassuring me on the eve of my interview with her husband and Charlie Watts. The two old friends, the legendary session drummer and the Rolling Stone, were gathering in a New York hotel suite to promote their album, *The Charlie Watts Jim Keltner Project*. "You'll love talking to the two of them together," Cynthia continued. "They both have an attitude about playing drums that's different from other players. I've known Jim since he was fifteen. Drums are what he is."

I've also known Jim for a while now, and I'd have to agree. In some occupations, after age forty-five, the springs of action get weak. Not with Jim Keltner. He still means every note he plays. Despite his deep focus, though, his grooves come out as casual as if they tumbled off a truck.

And what a track record! Keltner has recorded with Beatles George Harrison, John Lennon, and Ringo Starr. He's on countless soundtracks and albums with Ry Cooder. (The two even joined briefly with Nick Lowe and John Hiatt to form the critically acclaimed band Little Village.) That's Jim on Eric Clapton's killer ballad "Oh Love," off *Journeyman*. It's also him on the bouncy "Josie," from Steely Dan's masterpiece, *Aja*. Jim's on projects as diverse as Crowded House, Roy Orbison, Gabor Szabo, The Traveling Wilburys, Randy

Newman, Bob Dylan, Pink Floyd, Rickie Lee Jones, and even Michael Jackson. His studio career has been nothing short of incredible. And Jim occasionally tours a bit. He's currently on the road with Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young.

Where do you begin with The Rolling Stones' Charlie Watts, one of the most influential drummers in the history of rock 'n' roll? His career dates back to the early '60s and includes such landmarks as the drum intro to "Get Off Of My Cloud," the stomping two-bar break in "Satisfaction," the charming "interrupted" hi-hat pattern in "Jumpin' Jack Flash," and the driving four-on-the-floor of "She's So Cold." And there's probably not a bar-band drummer who doesn't know what it is to emulate Charlie on "Honky Tonk Women." Those slinky fills. So simple, yet so elusive.

Charlie has recorded many of the songs that literally define rock 'n' roll—"Sympathy For The Devil," for example. Yet in his spare time, this same man leads a jazz quintet and orchestra.

I have read about Charlie Watts' impeccable wardrobe, so for this interview I wore a good blazer and shined my shoes. Knowing about his deep affection for jazz, I brought along old issues of *Down Beat* magazine, red rubber-handled wire brushes, and even a pair of vintage Gretsch sticks. That way, I figured, if the conversation faltered, one of us could roll.

* Story by T. Bruce Wittet * Photos by Paul La Raia *



The props came in useful—not that the conversation ever stopped, though. In fact, when Charlie grasped a pair of sticks, he was at home. When he tapped on the coffee table, music came out. That's what sealed it for me. Drums are what *he* is, too.

Last year's Stones release *Bridges To Babylon* arguably displays Charlie's best work in years. *Such* a beautiful snare drum sound and feel on "Anybody Seen My Baby?" Incidentally, Keltner's on there too, in the background playing percussion. In fact, it was around the making of *Babylon* that the two started work on the *The Charlie Watts Jim Keltner Project*.

Surprise—this new disc has nothing to do with jazz or rock. It's *techno*. The music originated from Keltner's homemade sequences of pots, pans, and "things in the basement." These snippets were then taken to Ocean Way Studio, where Watts overdubbed his old, beat-up blonde Gretsch kit. Kenny Aronoff also drifted in and played some buckets, and there were other guests. Further tracks were cut live off the floor, with Watts on kit and Keltner on toms and percussion. Then the 2" analog tape of those sessions ended up in Paris with producer/engineer Philippe Chauveau, who had the daunting task of editing. Charlie oversaw Philippe, who used ProTools to carve out manageable chunks and do overdubs.

When it was done, Charlie named the pieces after cher-

ished jazz drummers. He gave me a light scolding for snooping around for traces of Billy Higgins' ride sound or Max's toms on the tracks bearing their names. That wasn't the point, he insisted. It was a *mood* he was going for. This is music that celebrates the spirit, if not the substance, of jazz.

Try as I might, I couldn't make much headway getting these guys to take credit for anything more than a casual role in the history of the drumset. I had the feeling that Charlie believed *nothing* he did would be worthy of his inclusion in the legion of "true" drummers like Dave Tough, Phil Seaman, Max Roach, and Kenny Clarke.

With Jim, you don't want to accuse him of having pulled off anything original. He'll rebuke you with a reference to some drummer who had come before him. Yet, as the sun dipped behind the tall buildings on 51st street in New York City, a block away from the ghosts of Philly Joe and Shadow Wilson, an irony became apparent: Watts and Keltner are every bit drummers' drummers. A hundred years from now a new crop of modern drummers are going to whisper in low tones about the way Charlie melted the time in "Beasts Of Burden," or the way Jim wrote his name all over John Hiatt's "Memphis In The Meantime."

I arrived at Charlie's hotel suite before Jim. Charlie and I got talking about soul drummer Al Jackson, who used to get so excited he would stand behind the kit. I asked Charlie if the adrenaline ever pushed him to such displays.



Charlie: Yeah. To be honest with you, when you're in the same band, doing the same thing over and over for a year, it's fun to do that. It's not something that comes easy to me, grandstanding and all. But I *have* stood up while playing the drums. It's bloody hard to do!

MD: I don't know when you last walked into a drum store, but you have to test hi-hats standing up! That's the hardest thing.

Charlie: Yes it is, and it's silly because you never *play* the things standing up.

MD: Tell me about your China cymbal.

Charlie: I play a UFIP cymbal. I never play it the wrong way around: I play it the Chinese way, with the edges up. I like them because

"If you transcribed some part Charlie played, you could then play the notes, but you wouldn't get the feel. That's the one thing we *own* as individuals: our feel."

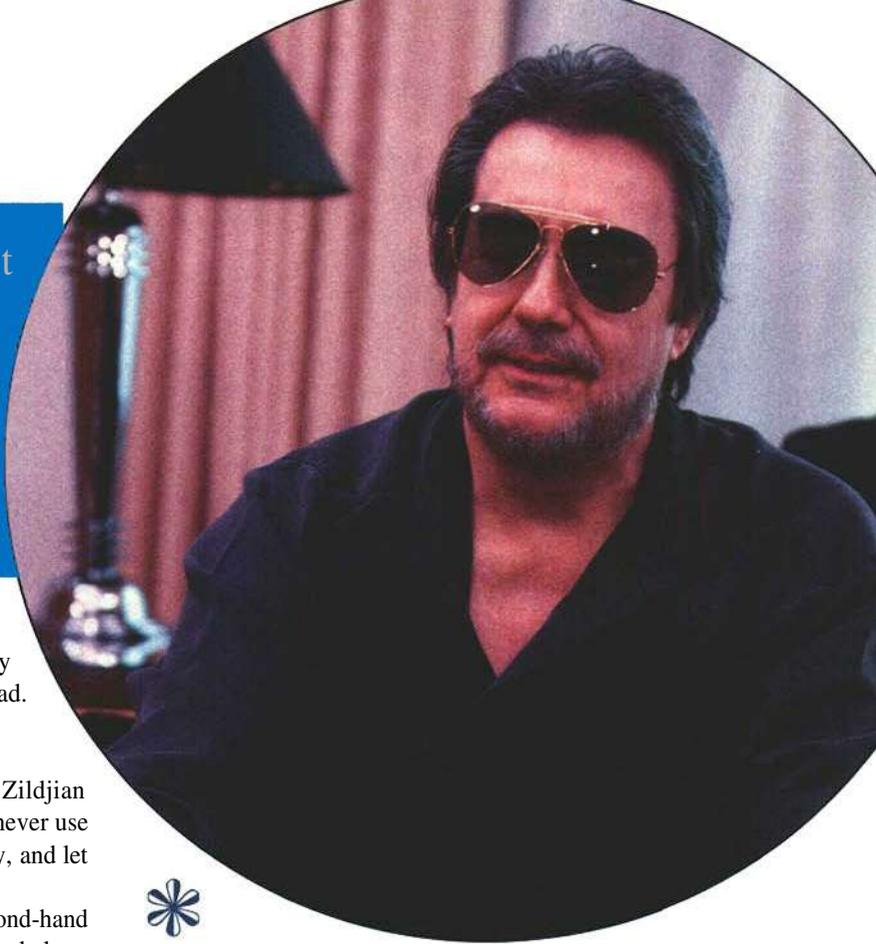
—Jim

they're very trashy. They do tend to crack, and I can only drill them so much before they lose the sound and go dead. I've kept them all, though, for thirty years.

MD: You've never replaced a cymbal?

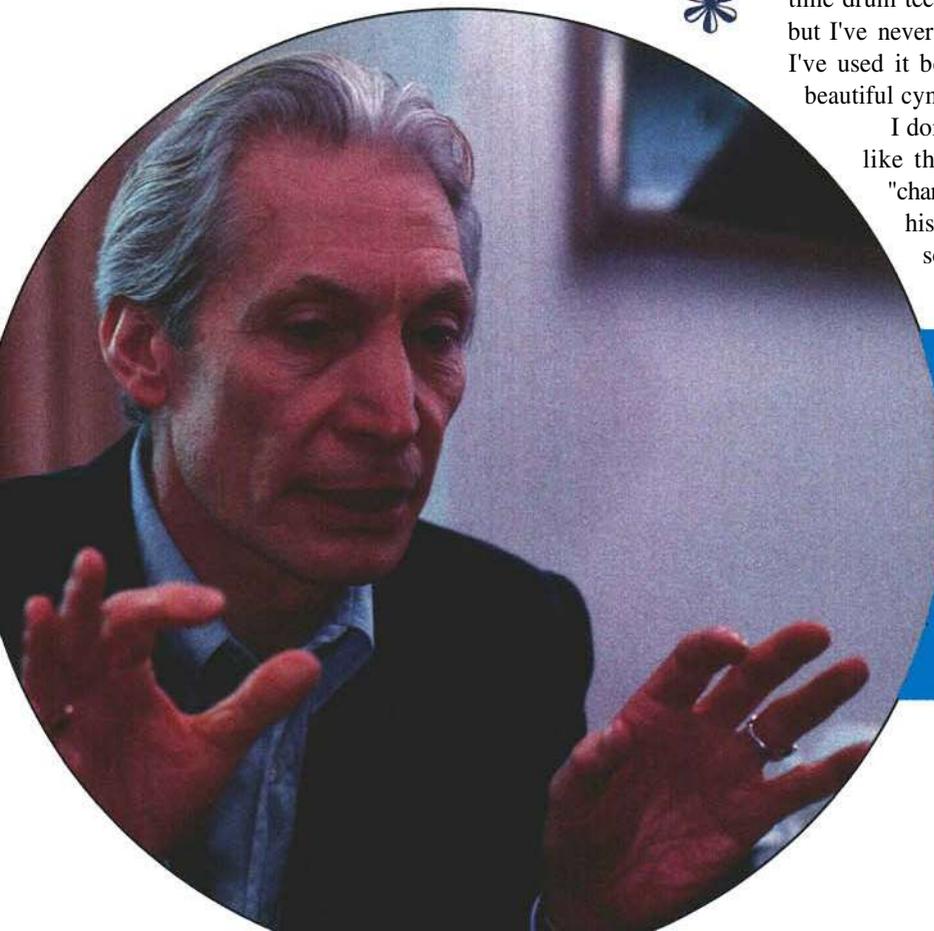
Charlie: Over the years I have. John DeChristopher at Zildjian is always sending me cymbals. He's a lovely guy, but I never use them right away! I choose the ones I like, put them away, and let them marinate.

For me, finding a cymbal is about going into a second-hand shop and digging. I prefer one of Shelly Manne's old cymbals to ten new ones. Even a guy in a dance band or a club: *his* cymbals get a sound and a look about them. I don't like new drums, either, and I *hate* new shoes.



I like things that are well made, like Zildjians, but that are fifty years old. I use an old 18" flat ride and I'm scared stiff it's going to go. They've sent me new ones but they're never as good. I found it in Paris in '70-something with Cheuch [McGee, long-time drum tech]. We were bombed out of our 'eads at the time, but I've never stopped using it. I've used it in a piano trio and I've used it behind Keith [Richards], and it's fabulous. It's a beautiful cymbal to record with.

I don't use many drums or cymbals. I don't *hear* things like that. The man who will be joining us is a great "changer." Jim is a great one for adding this or that to his kit. I never change drumheads either. I need the sound guy to say, "That tom-tom's gone a bit flat"



"This project started out with nothing melodic or harmonic going on—no piano, no bass, nothing. It was purely *us*. It was about rhythm."

Charlie

Watts & Keltner

before I'll change a head. I get used to the *feeling* of them! Mick [Jagger] is always after me to try this or that because he's seen Omar [Hakim] or somebody play something.

[Jim Keltner buzzes up and enters. Talk turns to magazine articles on legendary jazz drummers, including Dave Tough.]

MD: What would constitute a great drummer for you guys? I've heard both of you say that you don't have chops. Dave Tough didn't have chops. I mean, he never soloed....

Charlie: Actually, he *did*. He played a great drum solo on "The March Of Time" with Eddie Condon. It's Chicago drumming. *You* try and play it like that! He might not be Buddy Rich to someone who listens for drum solos, but he must have had tremendous technique to have lived in a world where Benny Goodman gave him fours in "Stompin' At The Savoy." First, you have to read very well, and second, you have to have tremendous technique. I don't believe it for a minute that he had no technique.

MD: And yet, apparently Dave Tough, after someone suggested he teach, pleaded,



"What would I teach anybody?"

Charlie: Well, it's an attitude. That's what I would say, too. Some people are very good at telling other people what to do; I'm not! Dave Tough probably wasn't a teacher

because he saw too many faults in himself.

MD: I brought some old photos. Here's a picture of Dave Tough playing a China cymbal.

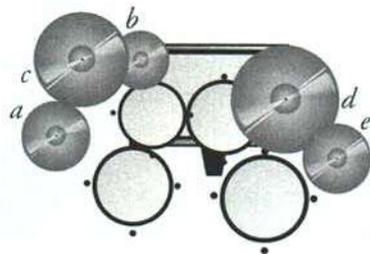
Charlie: I have a beautiful Swish from the

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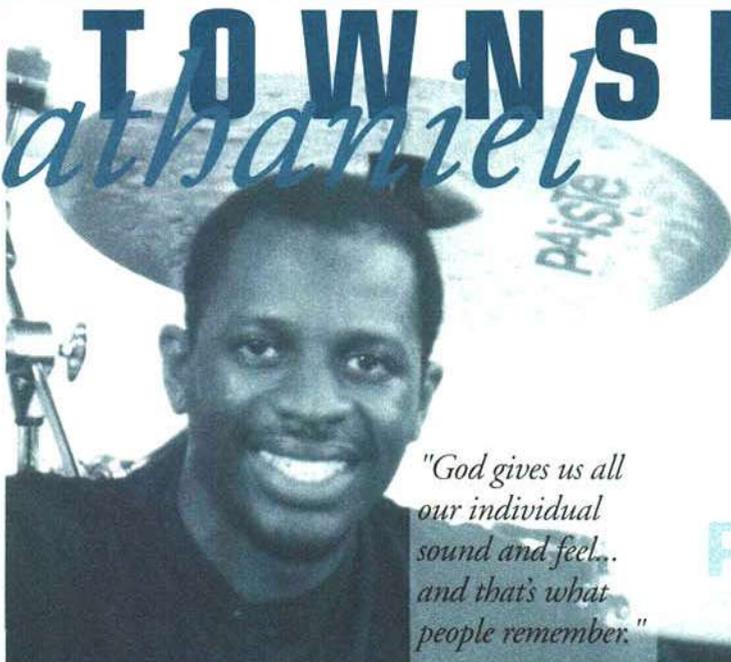
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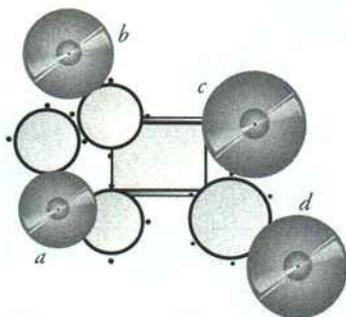


*"God gives us all
our individual
sound and feel...
and that's what
people remember."*

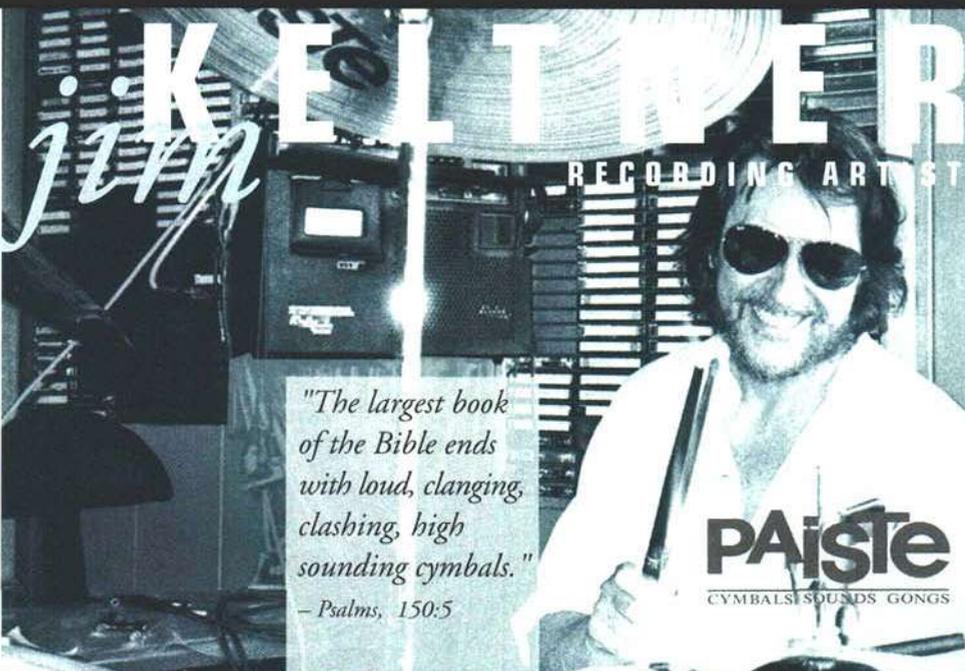
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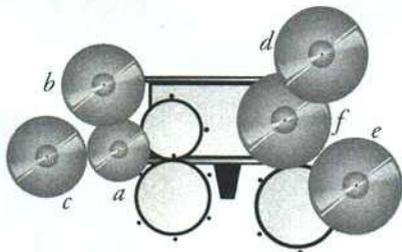
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Watts & Keltner

'40s that I use with my jazz quintet. It's really deep. You have to ride on it with a light touch. They choke after a certain pressure, but when you start on them, they're like a crowd roaring.

Jim: Yeah, Dave Tough used to play a smaller one. That's what Freddie [Gruber] said. Is that why yours are small, Charlie? Charlie's are incredible-sounding. I never could be happy with a small Chinese cymbal, though.

Charlie: Talking about technique, from that era there was George Wettling. To play what he played took a hell of a lot of technique. There are some intros he played on cymbals that are fantastic. There's *no way* he doesn't know how to play a paradiddle.

Jim: All those guys had technique. In fact, I believe that's the thing that makes a guy comfortable enough to play simple—when he's got the goods.

Charlie: It's also how you *hear* it.

Jim: When you listen to how Charlie plays on the Rolling Stones tunes, you go, "That's easy." But when you sit down and try to play what he plays and with that feel, it's extraordinarily hard to duplicate.

MD: When did you two meet?

Charlie: It was in England in 1971.

Jim: Charlie was on tour with the Stones. They hadn't toured Europe for a long time. I was staying in London with my wife and kids, working for Denny Cordell. Bobby Keyes phoned and asked me if I wanted to come on tour and hang with him and The Stones. I asked Cynthia and she said, "I guess I couldn't stop you anyway." It was extremely exciting to watch Charlie up close—all of them, really.

Charlie: The first time I saw Keltner, he was at my elbow, which is the best place to stand to watch a drummer. This was on stage at Leeds University—where The Who did their live recording. He frightened the life out of me! Oh, Jim Keltner. Another time in New York, Roy Haynes turned up at a gig. Oh God! You get halfway through the show and, *crikey*, he's there, in person!

MD: When did you and Jim first record together?

Charlie: We never *consciously* recorded together until this project, although he's been on things we've done. I don't think we've ever sat together at a drumkit—he

would never do that. Jim is the only guy I know who can play *without* a drumkit. He can "play the air." His time is just as good doing that as when he's playing his DWs, whereas I couldn't do that because I don't "play the air." [laughs]

I've never minded Jim playing with me because I've always known that it would be something that would help what's going on, even if it was just a tambourine. The worst thing about asking another guy to play with you is that they'll do it so well you won't get asked to play again! Worse than that, Mick and Keith are very easy to work with—just don't get in the way! But Jim has such good ears, he's easy to play with.

Even when we got to the point of taking over Studio Two at Ocean Way for our project, Jim and I didn't play drums together. I played drums over Jim's little sequences. I can't do much else, so I *have* to play the drumset. I hate hand drums. I love *other* people playing them, but I can't. He plays the shakers and the sticks at the same time. That takes a *lot* of technique. Jim plays a lot of different shaking things.

I like what Jim does with the two-foot

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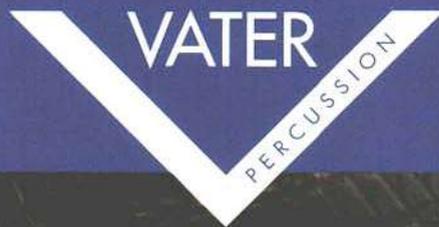
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Watts & Keltner

thing [double pedal]. They're not that hard, but when you're going along and trying to play them, well, I'd have to stop and start again. Guys say to me, "It's just practice and getting it right," but I've never felt comfortable doing it.

Jim: Nobody wants to hear *you* doing that anyway. One of the things I marvel at with Charlie is his bass drum—boom, b-boom [repetitive pattern]. Then all of a sudden he wouldn't do that little b-boom double. I'd wonder what the thought process was that made him decide to skip one of those....

Charlie: It's called a mistake! You see, *he* comes from that dreadful world of the studio where they hear everything you do.

Jim: These days studio correctness is horrendous. Even studio people agree that there's nothing worse than studio correctness.

Charlie: I quite admire it.

Jim: Sure, Jeff Porcaro—everything he touched in the studio was beautiful. But the thing is, with Charlie there are dozens of records I could point to where what he played was perfectly appropriate for the

music—perfect with the vocals, perfect with the guitar, and perfect with the phrasing of the song. If you transcribed something Charlie played, you could then play the notes, but you wouldn't get the feel. That's the one thing we *own* as individuals. That's the one thing that's ours alone—our feel.

For instance, Charlie surges and comes back. That's not allowed in the studio. Not with a click, for sure. In a chorus you *want* to surge. *That's* why they have conductors in symphonies. Music has to go forward and come back. That's the way music breathes and the way the body reacts. The ocean is like that, everything in life is like that.

MD: Very few people will ever get into a situation where they can get applauded for following their own urges.

Charlie: That's the best thing about being in a band. To be honest, when you play with great musicians for the first time, you *long* for the first mistake, because then they're out of the way.

MD: And then you relax?

Charlie: I do. I know I'm going to make mistakes. We talked about Al Jackson. There's nothing worse than playing one of those beats like "Coffee And Cigarettes." You can be playing the whole song and doing great and then on one of those beats you're going to miss or come in a bit early. No one will notice except for Darryl Jones [Stones touring bass player], so get that mistake out of the way!

[Keltner sees a pair of 1960s-era Gretsch 5D sticks on the table and picks them up.]

Charlie: Those are like mine. Do you remember the old Ludwig Joe Morello model? They were white. I still have a pair of those. That's what they modeled my stick after. I've always played 11As with a wood tip.

Jim: Charlie's current sticks are heavier and bigger than they used to be.

Charlie: Because I'm older and weaker.

MD: There's something to be said about using bigger sticks to get a more substantial sound. Tony Williams' sticks were like tree trunks.

Charlie: I hate that feel on the drums, though, when the sticks are real big. For Tony, it was fine. I have two kinds of sticks I use: My model sticks are for *playing*, and then I have these big ebony marching ones I use for *wanning* up, which

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Watts & Keltner

I bang on my legs with. When I hit the drums with them, it feels horrible.

That's why I hate sitting down at other people's drums. You're sitting down *here* and the snare drum's up *there*. In Brazil, I had a rented drumkit that was unbelievable. One of the pedals had a chain: great to look at, but it was too fast for me. The toms were Sandy Nelson-type things. I thought, "I don't want to be seen with *that*." It's all snobbery, really. I thought I was Kenny Clarke, you know, [affects casual air] *I'll just borrow a kit, rent one, no problem*. When I played in New York with the Orchestra I had to rent three Gretsch drumkits before I found one I was comfortable with. Oh, the *moaning* going on from me!

MD: Speaking of Gretsch, why don't we ever see these? [Shows photo of Charlie on an old, green-sparkle Gretsch kit with gold-plated lugs.]

Charlie: You know why? I had the gold put on because I saw Mel Lewis with a set like that when he came to England with Stan Kenton. But when you put the gold plating next to the chrome stands, it looks horrible. I use Buck Rogers stands, and I

thought I'd have them plated to match, but they looked really bad.

MD: What is it with those blonde Gretsch drums you use? With respect, for a guy who could own literally anything....

Charlie: What do you mean, "With respect?" [laughs]

MD: Well, your blonde Gretsch drums have a huge scuff on the small tom and they're tattered. You'd think you would at least have them refinished.

Charlie: I'm very superstitious about those drums, although [motions to Keltner] *he ain't like that*. I never change anything.

Jim: One fascinating thing about that is Charlie's bass drum head. That Remo Black Dot head has been on there since the early '70s! *Imagine* all the music that's been played on that bass drum: all the tours, all the records—that *same* bass drum head!

Charlie: The funny thing is, *now* is the time when it's not good for the drums because they're in flight cases, locked up in a rehearsal studio in London. When they're on tour they're looked after. That kit is in London at Bill Harrison's along with Keith Moon's and Ringo's drums.

That's the original Beatles drumkit with the name on the head. I've still got my original Ludwig kit that I bought from Drum City on Shaftsbury Avenue in London. I preferred mine to Ringo's because mine was Blue Oyster finish; Ringo's were the black ones. Mine are prettier.

MD: Before the tape rolled, we talked about Phil Seaman, and Charlie, you said you owned the album *The Phil Seaman Story*.

Charlie: I was fifteen when I first saw him. I'd sit mesmerized watching him play. Every time our eyes met, I'd get a *look*.

He'd go into Drum City a lot. The salesmen there would do what you just did: put sticks down in front of the customers. Drummers can't resist that; it's like cookies or chocolate. Phil came in one day and gave me that look.

MD: [Holding sticks in matched grip] Wasn't Seaman one of the first jazz drummers to not play traditional grip?

Charlie: Yes, but not the way you're doing. He'd play like this [demonstrates thumbs on top of sticks]. Ringo plays the way you're playing [palms down]. Phil

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used to play like he was playing timpani, and he used to do all the fanning techniques with the sticks.

Jim: You mean like this? [*Keltner takes the stick and plays a rapid succession of strokes, alternating from the tip to the butt end of the stick.*]

Charlie: No, that's the one you showed me. We all do that one now. It's the "Keltner lick." Whenever I sit down now, I do it on my flat cymbal and everybody's really impressed.

MD: You dedicated a tune to Billy Higgins on *Project*.

Charlie: The thing about Billy Higgins is his touch. He has the nearest cymbal sound to Kenny Clarke, who to me had the greatest ride. Having said that, live, Dave Tough *must* have sounded as sweet—otherwise you wouldn't get guys talking about him like they do. But Phil Seaman was phenomenal. You've got to believe it because I'm *talking* about it. Do you know what I mean? You don't talk about people if they're not. Shelly Manne used to ask where Phil was when he played in London.

MD: Could we discuss the distinctive drum things that people associate with

Charlie Watts and Jim Keltner?

Charlie: We'd be too embarrassed to talk about them.

MD: But Charlie, what about something like your light touch?

Charlie: [pauses] I can't play heavy, really. The problem when you play heavy is that you tend to get lead-footed; it sounds that way to me, anyway.

MD: What about the classic groove Charlie plays? In fact, both of you do it. It's where you're playing backbeats with your left hand and 8th notes with your right, but you lift the right hand off of the hi-hat on 2 and 4, leaving room for the arc of the left hand hitting the snare.

Jim: I saw Levon Helm do that with The Band in the early '70s. It sounded better to just sometimes have the snare by itself on the backbeat without the hat. I think Charlie and Steve Jordan are the only other drummers I know who do that today. When I first started doing that, I noticed it tweaked the groove just slightly—enough to make me want to keep doing it.

MD: Jim, a little signature thing that you do would be with brushes, the accented swish just before you close the hi-hat.

Jim: I probably heard a million guys do that. I learned to play brushes from this little Mexican guy, Rod Rodriguez. He showed me how to do this [demonstrates up-tempo bop beat, right hand swishing madly clockwise] instead of *this* [demonstrates usual bop pattern, with left hand swishing and the right playing the conventional jazz-ride pattern]. It took me a long time to be comfortable with that. There's a song on Nick Lowe's album *Party Of One* that I finally got to play that pattern on: "Shting, Shtang."

MD: So are *wire* brushes the real deal?

Charlie: I use both plastic and metal. I use a pair that Jake Hanna gave me. They're all taped up. I've even got the original box they came in, too—Regal Tip. Jake gave them to me in LA when we were there with my Quintet.

A lot of the art of brush playing is gone with calf heads. With a thick calf head the swish could be as loud as sandpaper. And I always play brushes with the snares off.

Jim: Jo Jones said you're supposed to.

Charlie: There were things that Jim and I learned that you *had* to do, otherwise you wouldn't be allowed to play with a band.



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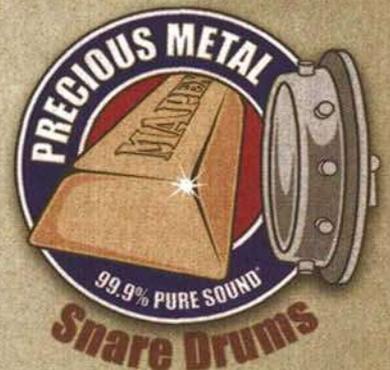
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Watts & Keltner

One was you never drowned out the piano player. When the piano player came in, you shut up. When the trumpet player came in, you kicked him up the ass.

On record, Jo Jones had that *swish*, light as a feather. When you saw him live, his bass drum foot was on all fours. When he got going, his foot was so fast you'd think it wasn't the same guy!

MD: Jim, you did a thing with Willie Nelson and I think with Bill Frisell. It's a backbeat with little trailing beats, but they're not ghost notes. They make it sound as if the backbeat has been processed through a digital delay.

[Jim demonstrates pattern on table.]

Charlie: Tricky Keltner we call him!

MD: The point is that the quiet notes are not exactly equidistant. It's more interpretive. You're just playing stuff that ties the strong beats together.

Jim: Well, you know, drums are conversational. You're just trying to keep the conversation interesting. If you're constantly thinking about what you're saying, and not listening, then it suffers. But, of course, all people are guilty of that, not just drummers.

I can hear when a drummer's listening to himself, and I'm guilty of it too on occasion. It's like sitting here talking. What should be coming out is the *idea* I'm trying to express, not *how* I'm expressing it. If I'm thinking too much about how I'm going to express it, then the idea will be convoluted. It's the same thing musically. You want your playing to be part of the conversation, to enhance the conversation, but you don't want to take over the conversation. If you really have a point to make and you have something very interesting to say, go ahead—but it better be interesting!

MD: Let's get to *The Charlie Watts Jim Keltner Project* and the track "Shelly Manne."

Charlie: A week's supply of conversation there, just with the name.

Jim: That was a little sequence that featured a berimbau. When Charlie heard that, the title came to mind. Charlie named all the songs. Invariably it would be somebody important to him.

We had gone to a few jazz clubs one week and had seen Elvin Jones, Roy Haynes, and Dave Weckl. We saw Billy Higgins at the Jazz Bakery; he was there to

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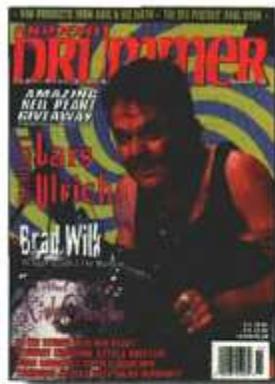
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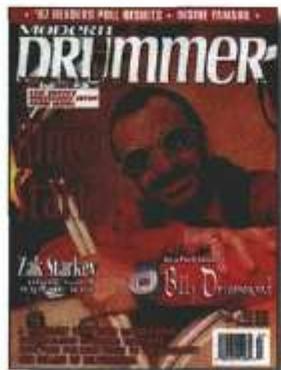
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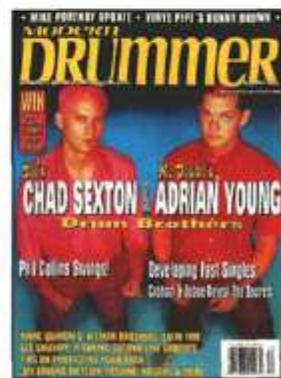
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Watts & Keltner

see Elvin. Those guys were on our mind. Plus right at that time Tony Williams had died. Roy was playing with Tony's trio: Ira Coleman on bass and Mulgrew Miller on piano. Tony was a young man who could've been Roy's son. Roy played in a very inspired way, and Charlie and I were fortunate to be in the audience.

We would be in the studio playing things back, just drums and percussion, and Charlie would say, "That's Roy Haynes, that's Max Roach, that's Tony Williams." Charlie has a creative mind and I trust his instincts.

Charlie: I had seen Shelly Manne play a berimbau. It's not an instrument that I hear a lot of.

MD: Art Blakey is a more obvious choice because of the tribal drums. Was that a surdo I heard?

Jim: No, "Art Blakey" was toms. Charlie started off playing a tom-tom beat. I only had two toms; Charlie was playing a whole kit. I started playing two 8th notes every other bar, and later on they added African toms with my toms, in unison, just to fatten them up.

Charlie: I played all of the tracks with my

usual setup. I was sitting there with the same cymbals, the same bass drum...

MD: ...the blond, round-badge Gretsch kit?

Charlie: Right, because this is what Jim said he wanted to do on some of the tunes he'd gotten together. So I said, "Yeah, let's do it." I sat and played. Five of the tracks are the reason we went in there: me playing with Jim's samples, his little melodies and sequences. The other four songs were just messing around, whether it be slow or fast, with various people interrupting me and Jim. Those four are very organic: "Airto," "Elvin," "Tony Williams," and "Art Blakey."

I kept hearing this magic word, "ProTools," being bandied about in the studio between Jim and engineer Pierre De Beauport. I didn't know what the hell they were talking about. I got to Paris later with the tapes and they recommended this guy, Phillipe Cheaveau, who is a programmer. He sits in this little black world—no windows, with hundreds of CDs of samples of birds and everything.

I told him that all I wanted was to cut these things up into manageable bits I

could copy and send to Jim so we could go into the studio again next year. But we cut them up quickly and I thought we should add things—in other words, turn them into songs.

Normally, the way we see drums in the world of "conversation," as Jim puts it, is that they're accompanying what's going on. For this project, there was nothing going on—no piano, no bass, nothing. This was purely *us*. We had rhythm, and the melody was an afterthought.

MD: This would be killer electronic stuff for clubs.

Charlie: I hope so.

Jim: We've been approached by a few remixers in London to try a few things with our tracks.

MD: Was the thick hi-hat sound on "Tony Williams" of any significance for you in naming the track?

Charlie: That title came about as a result of Jim buying a copy of *Modern Drummer*, the one with Tony's last interview, on the day we were doing that track. Tony said something about the ride cymbal being the center of the universe. And the loose, washing hi-hats came out of that. While we

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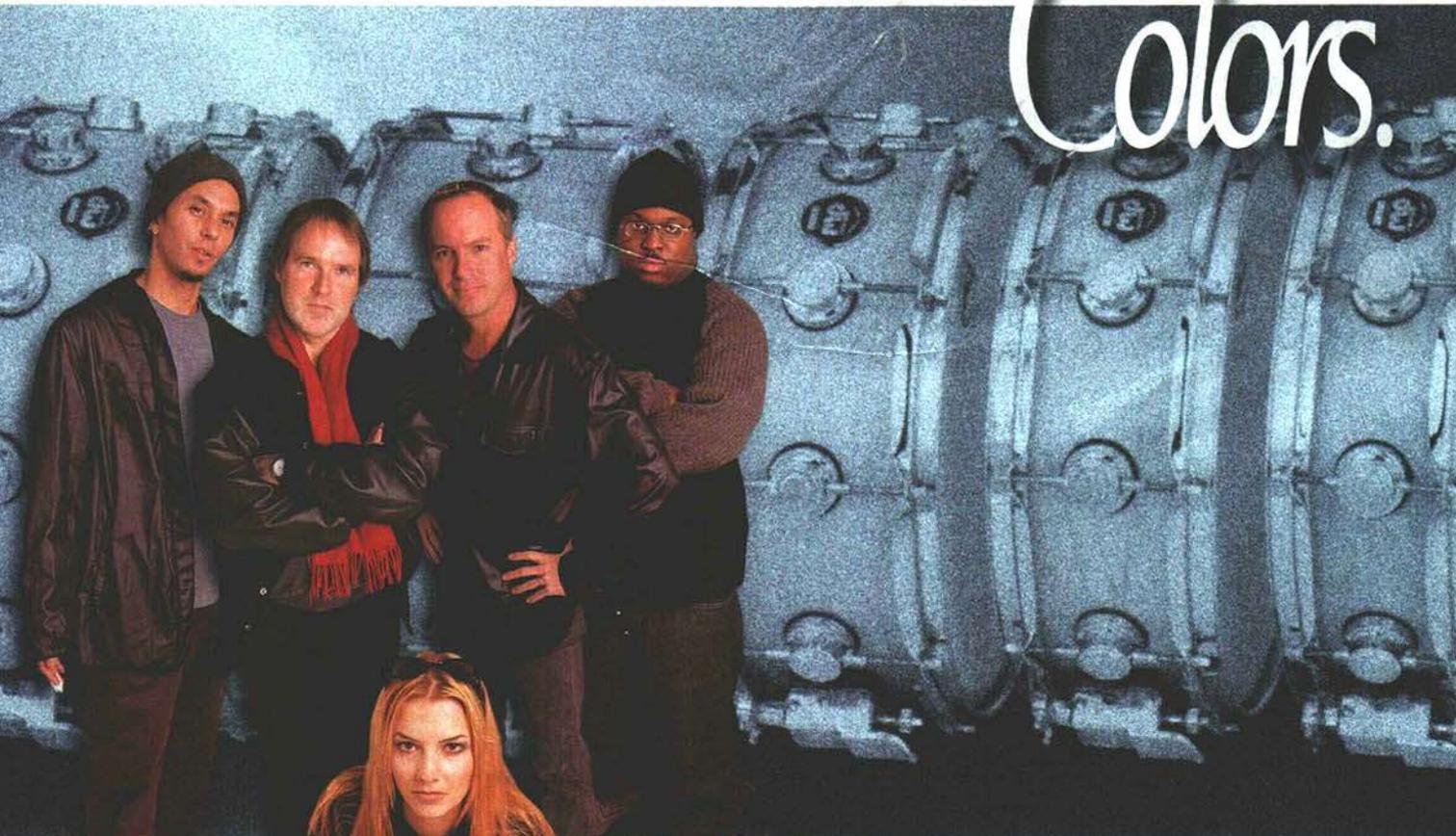
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Watts & Keltner

were recording this sound and tempo, Mick [Jagger] started to interrupt on piano—perfectly...

Jim: Perfect chords. The groove was slow and intense: this strange, sloshy groove, and it held together for so long.

Charlie: The thing is, it had to be long to be hypnotic. You wonder if it'll get dreary after five minutes, but it doesn't. I said that Jim should sing on it.

Jim: I had this little "voice changer" and I put it on the lowest setting, I didn't know what to say exactly. Basically, it was me trying to remember the Tony interview and other bits and pieces, talking about how he was as a younger man. It's just a vibe, more than anything. Charlie understood the words and when I came into the control room he said, "That was quite touching. It almost brought a tear to my eye." We listened back and the chords Mick had played were so appropriate for the feel of the drums. Tony had just died, and that feeling expresses the immediacy of that sadness.

As a person, Tony was changing. He was becoming an accessible guy. We talked and became friends. You know, it's like Charlie and me: We walk into the future

together as friends.

MD: "Billy Higgins"—I thought the back-beat was kind of odd, 'til I thought of "Sidewinder," the Lee Morgan tune.

Charlie: *None* of these tunes are like you're analyzing! They're not meant to do that.

Jim: Only with "Airtro," "Elvin," and "Art Blakey" can you equate the drummer with the music.

Charlie: Hopefully people will buy this, people who may not know the names, and become aware. They'll learn who Billy Higgins is. Yes, it's electronica, but there's a lot of straight playing too.

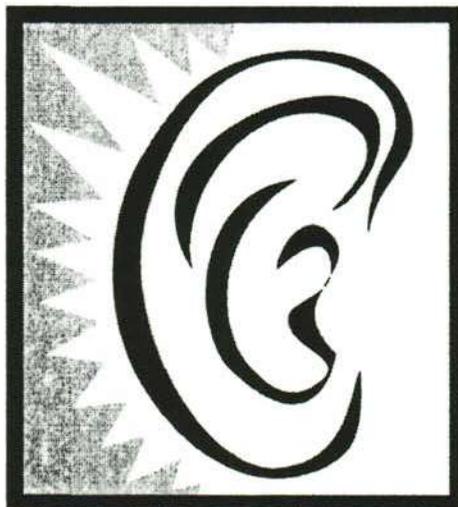
To be honest, I don't know what this record is. A friend of both of ours, Ringo Starr, who I spoke to the other day, asked me, "What is it?" I went blank.

MD: Before we go, Charlie, indulge me for a moment. You were formative in my drumming development. Who thought of the drum pattern I learned as a kid on "Get Off Of My Cloud"?

Charlie: I dunno. You know, I never listen to our records, ever. I only hear them if my wife puts them on.

MD: Charlie, if you don't like to play "mod-

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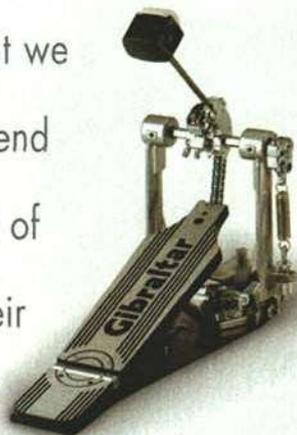
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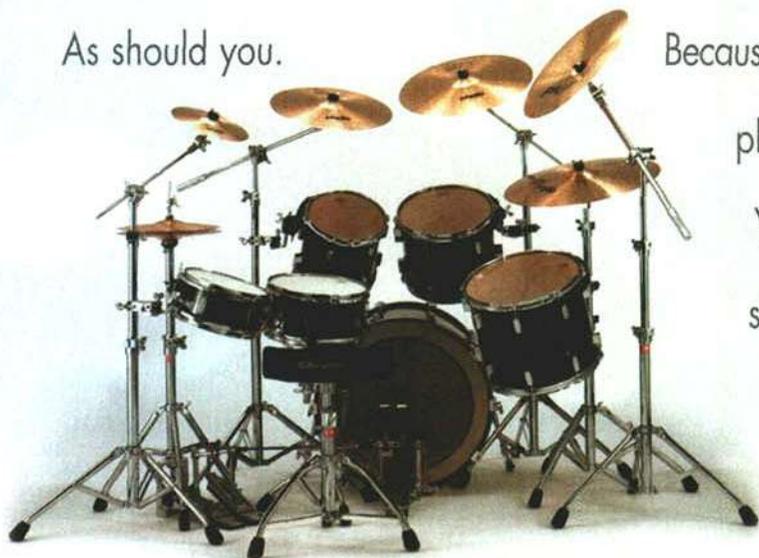


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Watts & Keltner

ern stuff on your stereo, you should at least hear Jim on "Razor Love," off Neil Young's new CD, or on Bill Frisell's *Good Dog, Happy Man*. I never heard Bill Frisell play stuff like that before Jim. You even brought Ry Cooder in on a track, "Shenandoah." It reminds me of an old album of his you played on. *Paradise And Lunch*—all those ruffs and the deep snare drum.

Jim: The snare *is* a little deeper. I like the alternative sometimes to the same old high-pitched snare sound on everything.

MD: Charlie, I made you a taped copy of *The Phil Seaman Story*, but you explained you already have it.

Charlie: I actually have the remains of Phil Seaman's record collection. There are some wonderful recordings in there, like *Charlie Parker In Sweden*. Another is a Duke Ellington one that Phil had written on the cover: "Piano in the foreskin." It's funny when you read these things, though. It really makes you think that time *is* of the essence.

MD: Time is on our side.

Charlie: Yeah, that too.



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The Palladium Dance Hall in the early days. 1962



The first LP Endorser photo. 1969

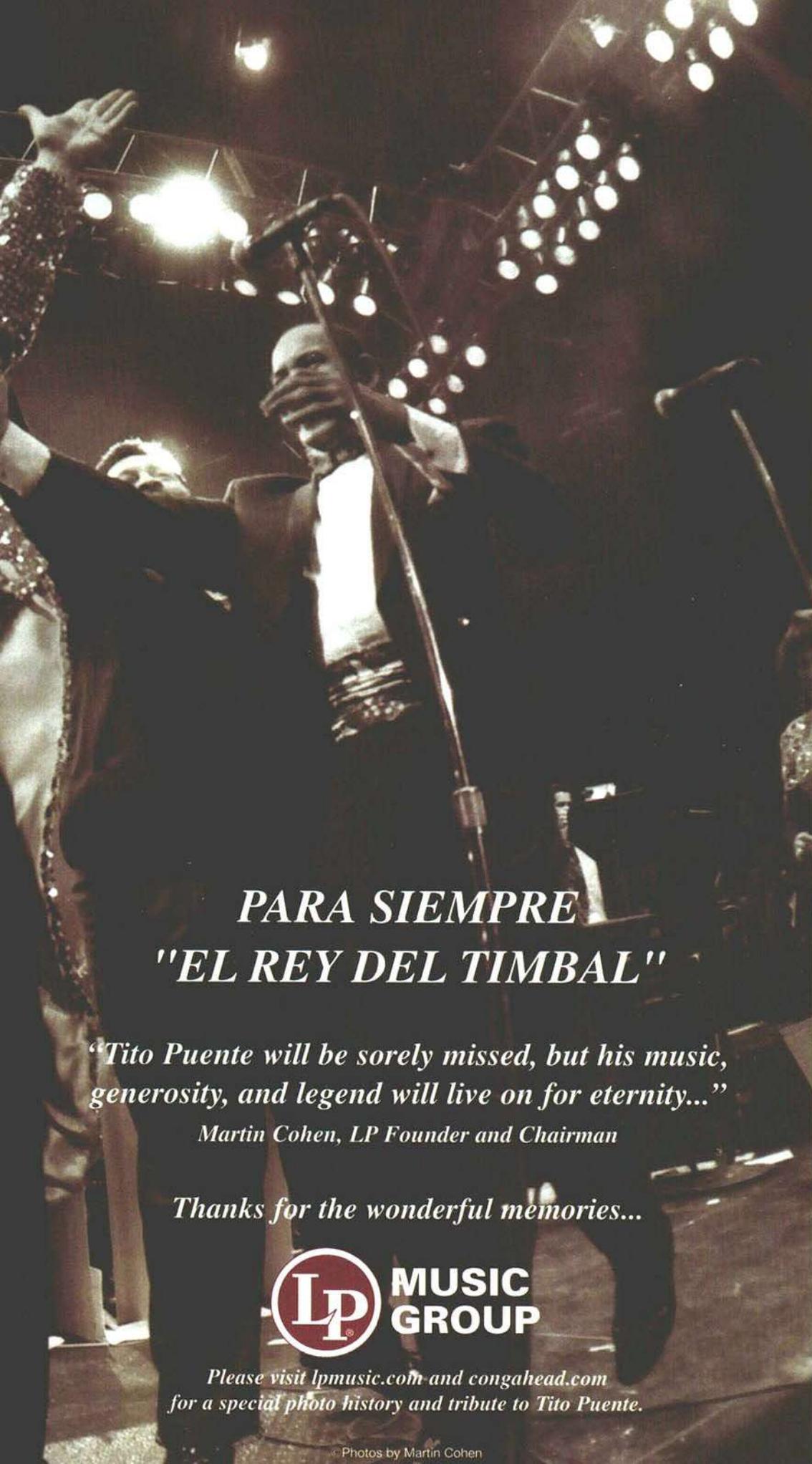


At home, with his trophies. 1975



His 65th Birthday. 1988





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Clowning around. 1990



With Martin Cohen. 1991



With Celia Cruz. 1992



National Endowment of the Arts Award. 1997





The
Deftones'

Abe Cunningham

The White Pony Sessions

Story by Matt Peiken

Photos by Alex Solca

Watching The Deftones make a record is like witnessing the unfolding of a multiple-personality disorder. They stumble, stall, curse, scream at each other, laugh to the point of coughing fits, fall prey to the slightest distractions, feign boredom, ride bursts of mind-blowing creative energy, and, somehow, piece together things of beauty—all in the course of mere hours.

The band and producer Terry Date are in a redwood-lined control room at The Plant recording studios, within southern eyeshot of the San Francisco skyline. "Can you lay off the drum fills?" guitarist Stephen Carpenter tells Abe Cunningham as they listen to a playback of a song with the working title "Webster."

"Can you shut up?" Abe says in return.

"Just kick, hi-hat, and snare," Stephen says. "That's all you need."

Few "new metal" drummers are as creative with just a kick, snare, and hi-hat, but even Cunningham can't save this song today. The band sweats through two more takes before someone suggests taking the tape outside, unspooling it across the parking lot, and lighting it like a fuse.

"We got 'Tools' and we got blades to fix these things," Date says to a room full of tired ears. "And if those don't work, I'll use the blades on my arm."

Date didn't have to resort to such measures. He used Pro Tools merely as an editing machine, kept his blades in the box, and over the course of two months, choreographed another sweetly brutal recording session for The Deftones. *White Pony*, the new album, is an earthy, edgy, eerie, dreamy, breathy, bombastic ride.

Cunningham's contribution is deceptively subtle and nuanced. To the eye, he seemingly plays with too much force and arm movement to pull off the crisp double strokes and stickings that mark his faster rhythms. At any tempo, he's able to coax several voices out of a hi-hat and turn the emotional tide of a song with one simple, well-placed tom stroke. None of it's conscious, says Cunningham, who instead chalks it up to musical maturity and a more relaxed approach in the studio. He's so consistent with the tape rolling, Date says, that choosing the keeper take is generally a matter of feel rather than bypassing a clunker.

"I don't think I'm a better drummer than I used to be," Cunningham decides. "But I'm probably a better musician. I'm hear-

"There's almost a nervousness to my playing on some of these tracks, which is cool, because we wanted to make a very human-sounding record."

ing things in our music I maybe didn't hear before—maybe they weren't even there—but I think I instinctively want to hear different things from my drums now. They might be very simple things, but putting those things in the right places makes such

a big difference. With maturity, you learn that the little things count."

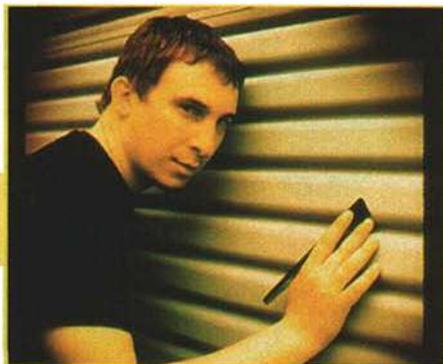
MD: Were the *White Pony* sessions typical of how it generally goes for The Deftones in the studio?

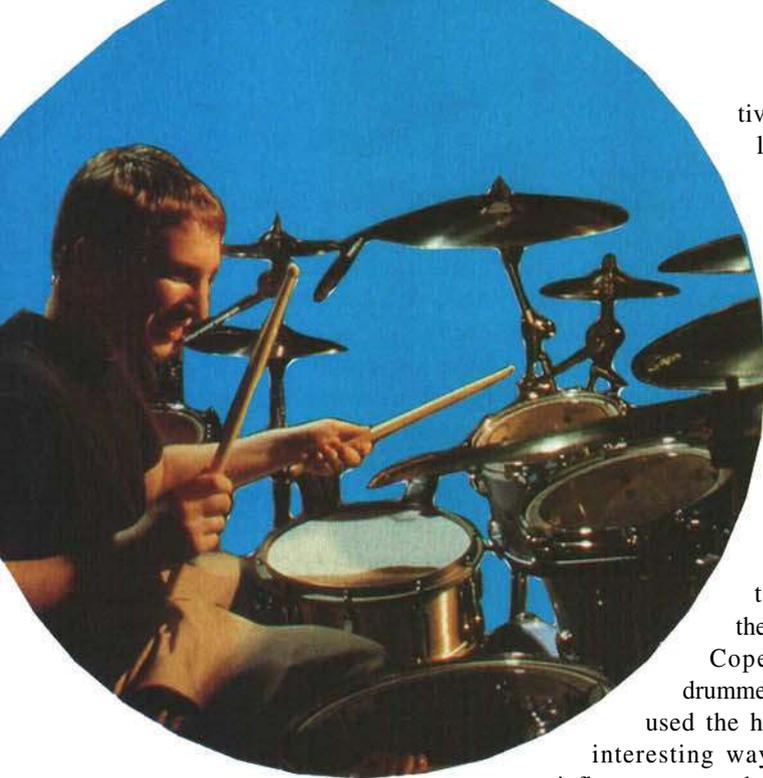
Abe: You saw how productive and unproductive we can be at times, and in some ways it was a difficult record to make, even before we went in to record. At first, Stephen, our guitar player, had a different objective. He's always been more of the metal guy in the band, and around that time he'd been listening to Meshuggah and nothing *but* Meshuggah, and that's the type of music he wanted to make. We all like that kind of music, too, but the rest of us were into taking our music somewhere else, and it took Stephen a while to come around to that.

MD: That's surprising, because Stephen's such a big part of your band's songwriting, and *White Pony* is the least "metal" of the three Deftones records.

Abe: Well, we ended up writing a lot of songs without his total, direct input. Whereas he and I would hash out riffs and do a lot of the writing before, this time Chino [Moreno, singer] picked up the guitar, and he and I screwed around with different things. It kinda had to be that way because we were running out of time and we had to make this record. But it was fun and it worked out really well.

Chino's very rhythmic and he's got great ideas. There are things on this record we've never done before, and some of that is because Chino played more of a role in the overall songwriting, beyond his lyrics. And once it came down to really making this record, Stephen was totally into it, too.





MD: Your beats have always been an unheralded strength of this band, and few heavy rock drummers use a hi-hat as effec-

tively as you do. Songs like "Change" and "Digital Bath" come to mind, where a subtle open hi-hat stroke adds so much texture to the beat.

Abe: The hi-hat has always been a big part of my beats. I'm not playing the most technically intricate things, but I do try to change things up and make them interesting. Stewart

Copeland was the first drummer I really got into who used the hi-hat in these totally interesting ways, and he was a big influence on me during the first couple of years I played drums.

Then I got turned on to Manu Katche and Carter Beauford. They're from different generations, but all of them were really

creative with the hi-hat and with splashes, too. They showed me how you can be really musical with the hi-hat, but I also like that you can just rock out and bash away on it.

MD: It sounds like you were more influenced by pop and new wave than by rock, at least early on.

Abe: In a way, yeah. My mom was really into Elvis Costello and The Police. My stepdad plays drums and my dad plays bass, so I was always around a variety of music. But The Deftones were my first real band. We all had different bands we were into and bands we all liked, but the common ground was that we all skateboarded, and the music around that culture happens to be fast and heavy.

Faith No More, Metallica, Death Angel—all these Bay Area thrash bands were so influential on us. My main two hobbies and passions were skateboarding and the drums, both very physical things.

MD: How do you think you've grown or evolved as a drummer since the first Deftones record?

Abe's Kit

Drumset: Tama Starclassic in custom powder-blue finish

- A. 5 1/2x14 hand-hammered bronze snare
- B. 8x8 tom
- C. 6 1/2x14 bell brass snare
- D. 10x10 tom
- E. 10x12 tom
- F. 16x16 floor tom
- G. 18x20 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian

- 1. 14" hi-hats (Z Custom top, Rock bottom)
- 2. 12" K splash
- 3. 19" A Rock crash
- 4. 10" A splash
- 5. 22" A Custom ride
- 6. 20" A medium crash
- 7. 20" Z Custom China

Percussion: LP

aa. Jam Block (low)

Hardware: Tama, including their Lever Glide hi-hat stand and Iron Cobra double pedal (with either wood or plastic beater, medium spring tension on pedals)

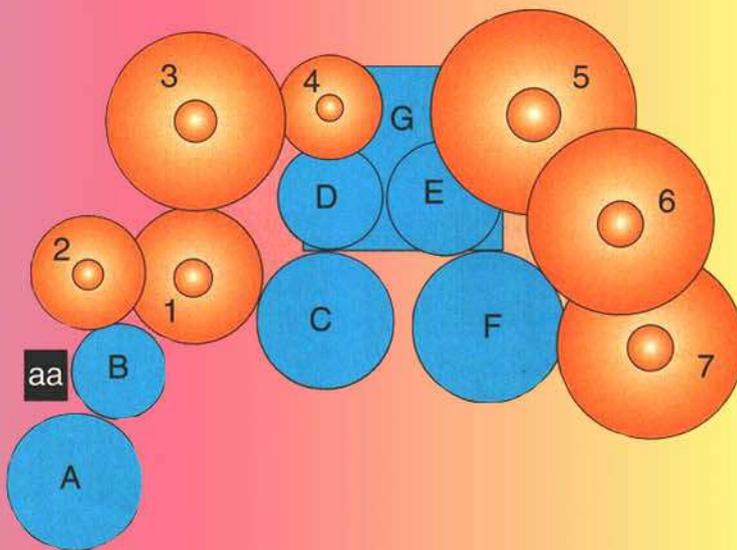
Heads: Remo coated Emperor (or Falam) on snare batters, tuned tight with no muffling;

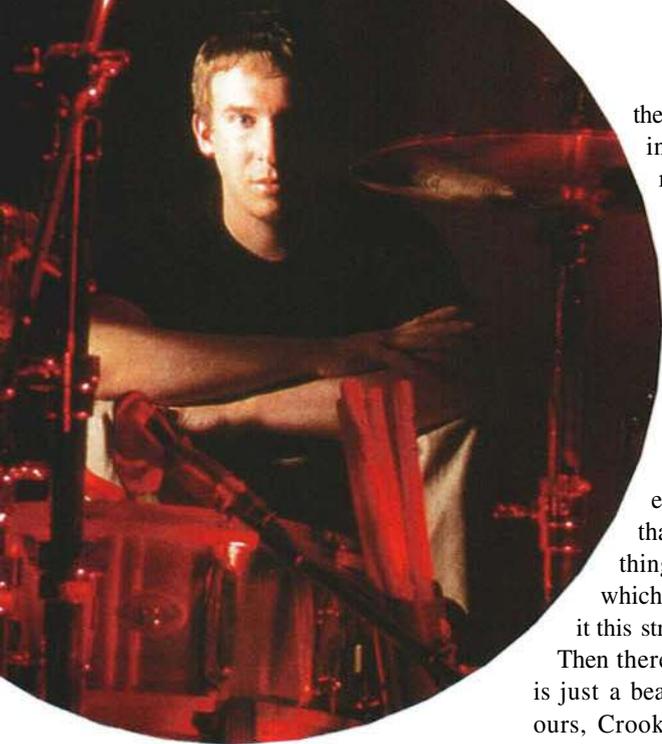
clear Pinstripes on tops of toms (no muffling) with clear Ambassadors on bottoms; clear Pinstripe on bass drum batter with Ebony Ambassador on front (tuned big and open, with only a small pillow used for slight muffling)

Sticks: Zildjian Rock model

Electronics: Roland V-Drums

Microphones: Shure





Abe: I think there was more of a difference between the first and second records than there is between the second and third. With *Around The Fur*, I tried to simplify more and be more musical. You read that a lot in interviews with other drummers, but it's something that I think happens naturally with age and experience.

On the new record, there are certain songs that have a simplistic approach, but there are spots where I also went way out on a limb. There's almost a nervousness to my playing on some of these tracks, which is cool, because we wanted to make a very human-sounding record.

MD: There's also more variety to your sounds and textures, beyond using different snare drums.

Abe: We used a click on two songs this time, which was pretty interesting. We were having some difficulty with the song "Elite" and we were running out of time in the studio. Stephen already had his guitar part down the way he wanted it, so I went back and laid my drum part down to a click over his guitar. We'd never done it that way before. Normally we record everything live, all at once. But this freed me up and took some of the responsibility off me to nail the perfect take.

"RX Queen" was interesting, too. There are three kits on that song. We started with Chino sitting at my kit and playing a beat on kick, snare, and those Ribbon Crashers. I was standing up behind him and playing hi-hat on top of that. We didn't even have

the song yet, we were just messing around. But we ended up recording that groove and looping it, and that's the pattern you hear running through the whole song. I went back and played this simple cross-stick thing in the verses, and then snare and timbale going into the choruses. Then on the chorus, I played my main drumset on top of everything else. It sounds more complex than it really was. The weirdest thing about the song is the loop, which has this odd upbeat that gives it this strange feel.

Then there's the song "Teenager," which is just a beat programmed by a friend of ours, Crook. Some drummers might be threatened by that, but it was a really cool beat, and looking at the record as a whole, it just added a different dimension and sound. We're still not sure how we're going to do it live, but maybe I'll play on top of the programming, which could come across really cool. I also had a set of Roland V-Drums that I played on a couple of tracks that didn't make the record, but they'll end up as B-sides.

MD: Tell me about your beat on "Change." It reminds me of something Danny Carey would play.

Abe: There's a song called "One Week," from our first record, that has the same kind of hi-hat choke, and that's probably where I got it from. But Danny's an amazing drummer, and maybe he was some kind of influence without me being aware of it.

MD: Speaking of Tool, how did Maynard's involvement with "Passenger" come about?

Abe: We'd always admired him as a singer and as an artist, and we met him while we were in LA writing songs for this record. He was interested in what we were doing and wanted to show us a different approach to writing, which we kinda needed at the time because we were

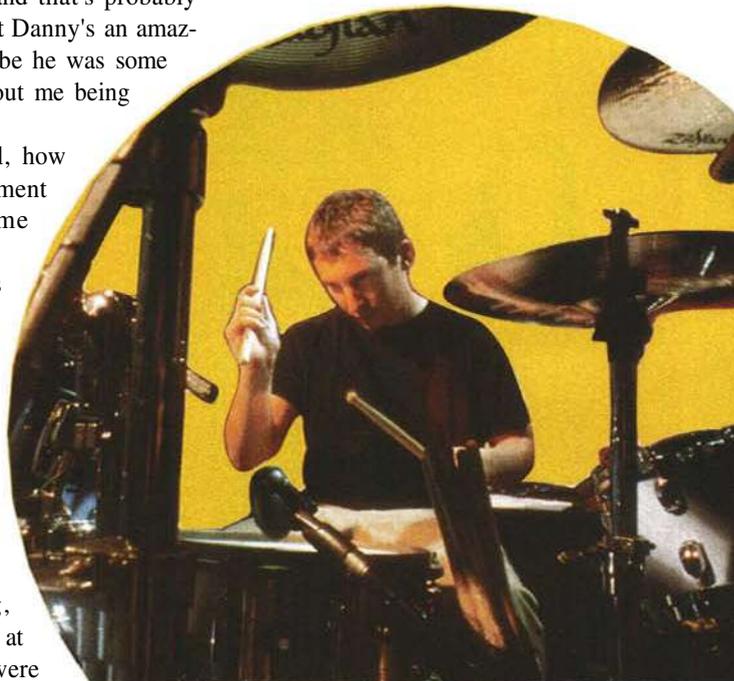
feeling the pressure to get the record done.

Maynard's very regimented and disciplined. When it's time to work, he works, which is very different from the way we work sometimes. I mean, one day we might rip out three or four songs and be creative and productive for twelve hours, and the next we might play the Tony Hawk skateboarding video game all day. I mean, I thought that game was going to be the death of us.

For better or worse, I think we're kind of set in our ways, and that works for us. But we're always open to trying something new and different. Maynard gave us that kick when we really needed it, and he brought something really creative to the process. We'd already written the song that he ended up singing on. But he just grabbed a microphone while we were rehearsing the song, and he came up with this totally cool thing. His voice and Chino's worked so well together too.

MD: Terry Date has produced all three Deftones records. How important has he been to you as a drummer and to the band as a whole?

Abe: He's been amazing, and he's really helped us find our sound. At first we wanted to find a different producer, just to change things up and have a different experience. We met with lots of different people, from major rock producers to a guy who did The Cardigans' record. We thought about working with a guy who'd



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Abe Cunningham

worked with Depeche Mode. It was great talking to all these people and seeing where they might take us.

But during the time we were working with Maynard, we were in the lobby of our hotel one day and in walked Terry. We had no idea he was staying there, and it turned out he was there working on a record. It was totally cool and we started talking, and he said he'd love to do another record with us but he also understood where we were coming from. Basically he said, "If you want me, I'm here." And just from that, realizing the comfort level we'd felt with him and how much we've grown with him, it just felt right to work with Terry again. When he gets in the studio in the morning, he's there all day, and we need that kind of discipline. Terry also engineered the record. He knows my drumming really well, and I left a lot up to him in terms of the sound.

MD: You just got a brand-new set of powder-blue Tama Starclassics. Why did you switch from Orange County Drum & Percussion?

Abe: I've always loved OCDP drums—and I still do. But it just came to a point where we were on the road so much and I needed support from a company on a worldwide level. With OCDP, it was difficult to obtain parts when I needed them.

MD: Are you doing any particular conditioning to gear up for the road again?

Abe: I used to ride a bike, but I'm not doing that much now. I basically do what I call a jail-cell workout routine—sit-ups, push-ups, chin-ups, that sort of thing. But the main thing is just getting in there and playing. We just put together a song list with like seven or eight songs off each record—a lot more than we'll actually play—and started rehearsing again. My hands are dying, my body's dying...but that's what it takes to build back up.



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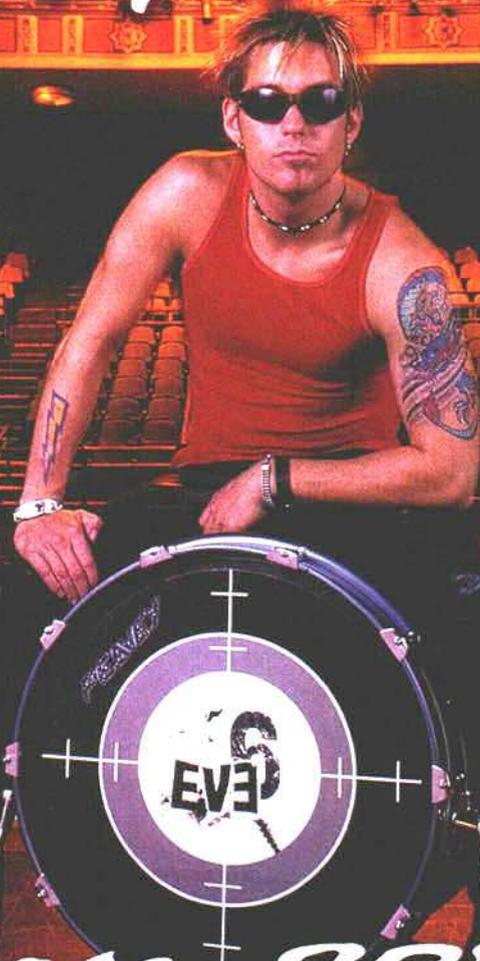
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Richie "Gaj



ate" Garcia

TRIPLE THREAT Percussionist, Inventor, Educator

Story by Stephan Samuel

Photos courtesy Martin Cohen/LP Music Group

Richie "Gajate" Garcia is one of a select group of musicians who are recognized as much for their role as a clinician/educator as they are for being a player.

As a performer, Garcia has worked with many of the most respected artists in music. Just a few of his credits include recording and/or live performances with Phil Collins, Diana Ross, Art Garfunkel, John Denver, and Hiroshima, movie soundtracks like *Jungle 2 Jungle* and *Eraser*, and a great deal of television work.

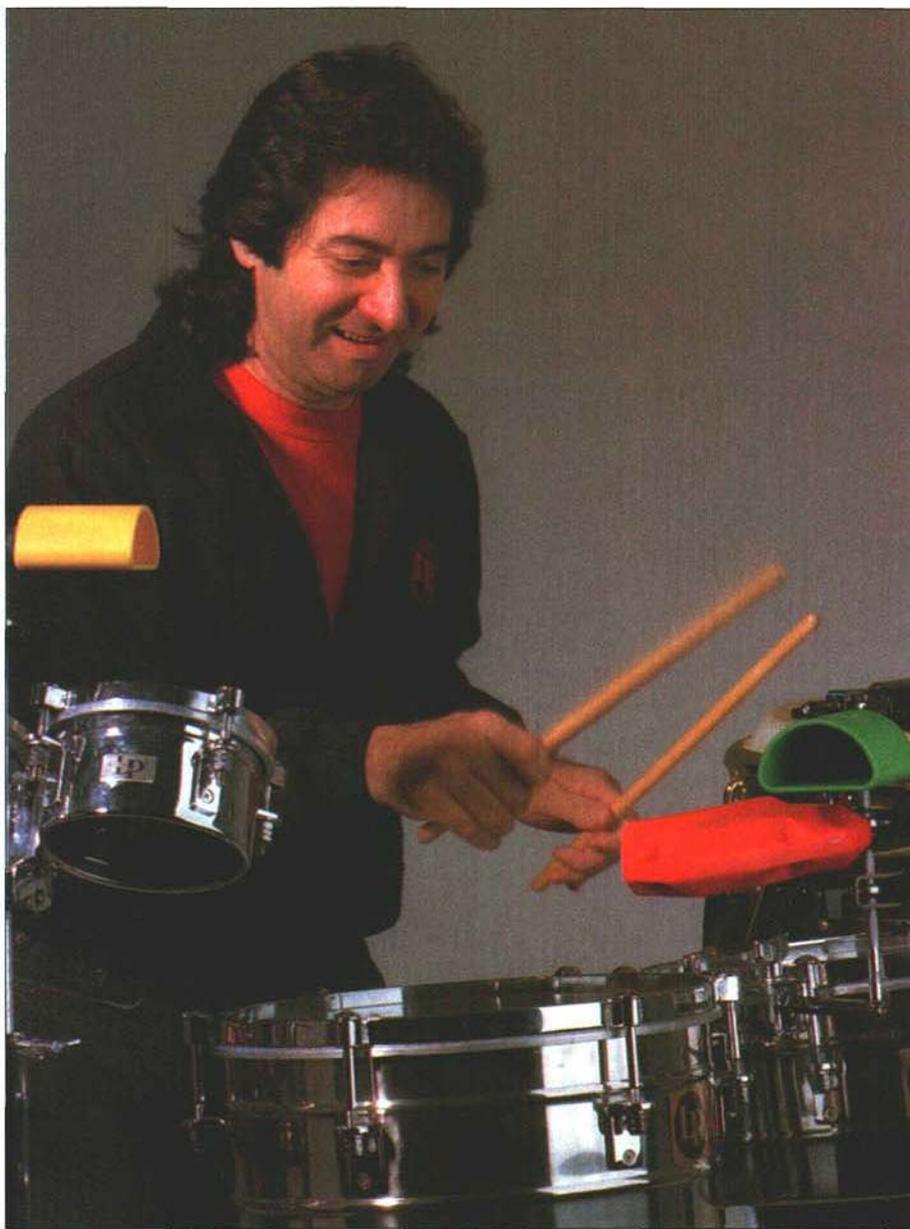
Despite his hectic schedule, Garcia manages to find time to develop new products and instructional videos for the companies he endorses. (Yes, he's the guy who invented LP's Gajate Bracket.) And because of his playing ability and natural talent for imparting knowledge, Garcia has become one of the most in-demand percussion clinicians. Yet, Richie's proudest achievement is probably the fact that he has always made sure he remained a dedicated family man to his wife, Mary, and their three children.

Born in New York City and raised by Puerto Rican grandparents, Richie's first exposure to music as a young boy came in the form of Latin and doo-wop songs. Though he didn't begin playing an instrument right away, Richie received his musical education through the conga players and other musicians who would stop by the house to visit his aunt and uncle. "I remember being influenced by popular American music—with a side helping of Latin songs," he recalls. "There were always congas, cowbells, and maracas around my grandparents' house, with music and dance playing a big role in our home life."

Ironically, Richie's musical education would take an even greater step when he discovered a family link to one of the greatest percussion legends of all time, Armando Peraza. "My mother married a man who helped

Armando Peraza get established when he came to the US from Cuba," Garcia says. "I will never forget learning to play from Armando as a little boy on the first pair of LP bongos he gave me, which I still have today." To this day, Richie and Armando have remained close friends, and occasionally they get the opportunity to perform together.

When Richie turned eight years old, his entire family moved from New York to Puerto Rico, where he soaked up the music on the island and began playing congas. Due to the fact that his stepfather was friends with many of the most popular Latin musicians in Puerto Rico, there were parties at the house with musicians jamming around the clock. "Congas, trumpets, and timbales were constantly around," Richie fondly recalls. "And because I got to stay up late to help serve the guests, I was right in the middle of the music."



By watching and learning from many gifted *congueros* and *bongoseros* in Puerto Rico, as well as from a neighbor who played drumset, Richie was exposed to many different kinds of percussion.

Our neighbor, Chony Porrata, played drums in a band that was very much into jazz music and legends like Art Blakey and Buddy Rich. He taught me how to play drumset and to read music, and he even gave me the key to his rehearsal studio next door." So dedicated was the young Garcia that he would often climb the tree in his backyard, jump over the fence, and use Chony's studio to practice. As a result, he continued to hone his chops on different instruments, a skill that

would, years later, shape him into a versatile and popular percussionist/educator.

Soon after, fate would once again play an important role in steering Richie toward a career in music, when a friend invited him over to play his new drumset. After Richie sat down behind the kit, the tune "Sherry," by Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons, came on the radio, and he instinctively played along with the song. Little did Richie suspect that, years later, he would land his first steady pro-

fessional touring gig playing drums in Frankie Valli's band.

Though Richie's stepfather taught him how to play congas, he originally intended it to be more for enjoyment than as an occupation. Of course, like countless other musicians at the time, Richie's mind was made up as soon as he heard The Beatles. "I realized that the cool thing was to start playing music," Richie recalls, "which caused all of those prior influences to gel inside of me. By the time I started high school, I had already put together a four-piece band in which I played drumset and timbales."

Though some would imagine Richie's sole musical exposure in Puerto Rico was Latin music, there was still a very strong presence of American artists for him to enjoy. Because of the "*Nuyorican* connection," whereby many Puerto Rican people would travel back and forth between New York and Puerto Rico and bring the music back with them, Richie got the best of both worlds. He was exposed to American pop and Latin tunes. As a result, he became equally as excited with such American artists as The Platters, Ricky Nelson, The Four Tops, and Paul Anka as he did with the Latin bands. The fact that many of the high school dances in Puerto Rico featured live bands also contributed to Richie's love affair with music and dance. Not surprisingly, Richie's band enjoyed a great deal of success and respect from their peers, and further gave the drummer a taste of what it was like to be in a gigging band.

By Richie's senior year in high school, his stepfather encouraged him to start thinking about a career with more financial security. "Years before he became president of an insurance company, my stepfather dabbled in music, having played with Xavier Cougat [famed Latin bandleader of the 1940s]," Richie says. "He knew how uncertain the music business could be, and he didn't want to see me go through that."

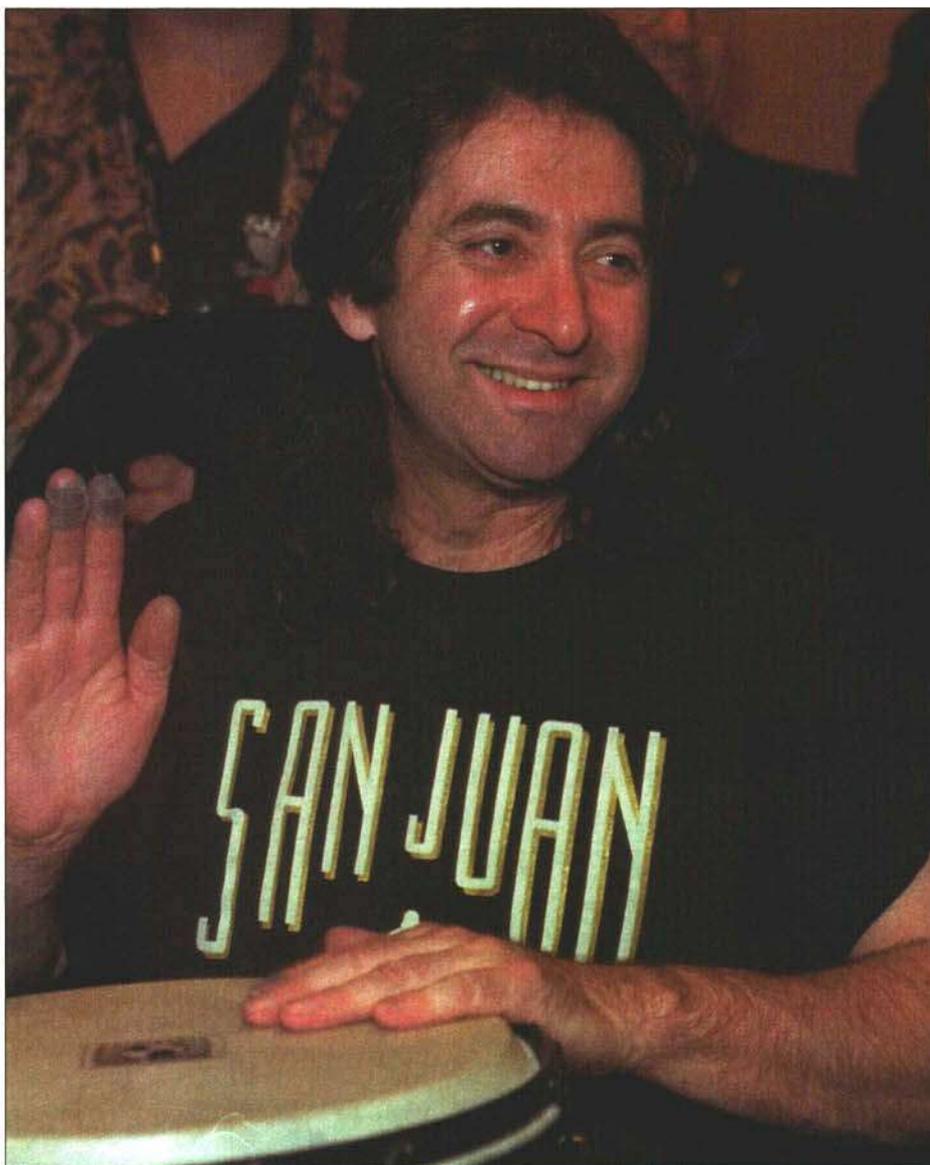
Throughout Richie's upbringing, his stepfather made sure to impart a strong work ethic upon him, teaching him responsibility and organization. Though Richie performed in live bands during his teen years, he always had a "proper job" working as a courier and office assistant. Although these vocations were intended to prepare him for a career outside of the music business, they actually taught him skill sets and ethics that would later help him to have success and longevity as a professional musician.



A percussive summit: Giovanni Hidalgo, Richie Garcia, and Armando Peraza

Things began to change as soon as Richie was sent to live with relatives in Springfield, Illinois. His stepfather had hoped that he would work for an insurance company and attend college in the United States, but fate would not have it turn out that way. Richie felt a sense of isolation in Springfield, since he was still perfecting his English and there were not many Latinos in the area.

"I realize I've been fortunate to work with some of the most respected names in the music business. But it's also been very satisfying to share my knowledge of percussion through my teaching and clinics."



The situation improved when Richie walked into the music department at Springfield College, where he was enrolled, and began playing with the other musicians. As the only person who could authentically play congas, bongos, and timbales, Richie instantly found a niche for himself in the school's stage band. Soon after, he officially changed his major to music education, and took classes such as piano, music theory, timpani, and voice to fulfill the requirements needed to earn a degree.

With his chart-reading ability steadily improving, Richie played as many different gigs as possible. These included a stint as house percussionist with The Metropolitan Opera in Springfield, as well as some rock, contemporary, and even country & western gigs. He also traveled with the college band and choir, where he got a taste of touring for

Richie Garcia

the first time. Upon graduating from Springfield College, Richie furthered his studies by enrolling in Chicago's American Conservatory of Music, where he studied snare drum, vibes, marimba, orchestra bells, and other classical percussion. He soon began playing percussion in productions like *Promises Promises* and *Three Penny Opera* at the famed Shubert Theater, which was located in the same building as the Conservatory.

Garcia began to make *such* a name for himself that one of the percussion department chairmen asked him to develop and teach a Latin percussion curriculum at the conservatory. Though Richie had never formally taught before, he created his own system of teaching that used symbols to represent sounds, making it easier for students to learn. By the time he graduated from the conservatory, he had fifteen private students and taught three classes. He continued teaching at the school and gigging around Chicago. Richie also secured a steady gig playing The Blue Max showroom in Chicago's Hyatt Regency O'Hare hotel, where he played his first "big name" gigs with stars like Barbara "I Dream Of Jeannie" Eden and Bobby Sands.

Richie with the pedal-operated cowbell bracket that bears his name



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Richie Garcia

One night, unbeknownst to Richie, the horn players from Frankie Valli's band were in the audience at the Hyatt. They were so impressed with Richie's performance that they asked him to play a few of Frankie's shows with them. "At that time, I didn't even own a set of congas of my own," Richie admits. My stage gear was on loan from the Conservatory. I went into one of the large drum shops in Chicago and told them my dilemma, and they lent me the gear."

After playing a few of Frankie Valli's shows in Chicago, Richie expected to go back to teaching at the Conservatory. But he received a call a few months later from Frankie's organization, asking him to permanently join the band. Most people would have jumped at this big break. But Richie turned it down because he wanted to fulfill the teaching commitment he made to the Conservatory through the end of the semester. Fortunately, this professional attitude paid off, as Frankie agreed to wait a few months until Richie was able to join the band.

During his five years with Frankie Valli (during the singer's very successful *Grease* period), Richie performed all over the globe. The inventor in him soon came out, when he

built his first Gajate Bracket, a device that allowed him to attach a pedal to a percussion instrument like a cowbell. (LP mass-produces the bracket today.) By using the bracket, he was able to incorporate left-foot bell patterns into his kit and percussion work.

Richie later moved on to a gig with Tony Orlando during the singer's heyday. "One of my friends, who played in Tony's band, asked me to play timbales with them for a few weeks," Richie recalls. "Shortly after, Tony's percussionist decided to leave the band, and I was asked to be the full-time percussionist." Then Tony's *drummer* quit, leaving the drumset playing to Richie too. Orlando liked Richie's groove so much that he made him the band's drummer/percussionist, a position that would last eight years and provide Richie with a steady salary and employment security.

Richie eventually grew tired of life on the road. He left Orlando's band in 1988, establishing himself as a player on the local LA scene. He also began teaching at Musician's Institute (MI) in Los Angeles, where he remained for ten years. During this time, LP founder and chairman Martin Cohen dropped by unannounced to see one of Richie's class-

es. Cohen was so impressed that he asked Richie to be LP's official educator/clinician.

In response to the favorable feedback Garcia received from his clinics, he worked with LP to create two percussion instructional videos. Today, *Adventures In Rhythm Volumes 1 & 2* are considered by many to be the best of their kind. Richie also began working with important artists like Diana Ross and John Denver, all the while maintaining his dedication to education and clinics.

Today, Richie's plate is extremely full. He still works closely with his endorsing companies, LP, Sabian, DW, and Vater, developing new and innovative products. He's also a member of Phil Collins' touring band, having performed around the world on the *Tarzan* movie promotional tour and during Collins' Super Bowl half-time appearance earlier this year.

Looking back on his career, Richie takes nothing for granted and is thankful for all that has happened to him along the way. "I realize I've been fortunate to work with some of the most respected names in the music business. But it's also been so satisfying to share my knowledge of percussion through my teaching and clinics."



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Danny Carey: "Forty Six & 2"

Transcribed by Damon Weber

MUSIC KEY

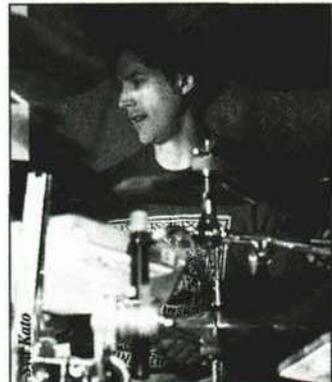
T.T.
S.D.
T.T.
B.D.

R.C.
C.C.

2nd B.D.
Add'l Toms

This month's *Drum Soloist* features the slammin' playing of Tool great Danny Carey. "Forty Six & 2" is from the band's mega-successful *AEnima* release, and it's a solid showcase for Carey's abilities.

Danny sounds very comfortable in the chugging 7/4 odd meter of this tune. The twelve-bar solo (also in 7) reveals his fast hands, syncopated ideas, and precise double-bass work. It's a tour de force by one of the best drummers in rock.




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The "Third Hand" Concept Part 2

Using Your Bass Drum To Spice Up Fills

by Ted Bonar & Ed Breckenfeld

MUSIC KEY

T.T. 
 S.D. 
 F.T. 
 B.D. 

In Part 1 of this series (July 2000), we discussed some basic ways to add single bass drum notes to common rhythms in order to add a new texture to your drum fills. Much of that approach was based on developing the ability to "fill the holes" in basic hand patterns to give them a new sound. We concentrated primarily on filling single 16th notes with the bass drum, like so:



We talked about how this technique effectively gives you a "third

hand" when playing fills. Mastering this technique adds variety and interest to fills and solos for drummers of all levels.

This month we'll explore and develop double strokes on the bass drum and incorporate them into a few basic rhythms. Now, doubles require a technique that can be practiced for years, and there are countless ways to develop playing strong, distinct double strokes on the bass drum. This article is not intended to develop the double-stroke technique, but rather to suggest musical ways to incorporate it.

The double stroke needs to have two separate strokes of distinct, consistent volume and attack. It's common among drummers to play the first stroke stronger than the second. This is a trap that you should try to avoid.

As in the first part of this series, the flow of 16th notes must not be disturbed. Remember, you're thinking of the bass drum as your third hand. Play these basic permutations slowly and consistently, and build up the speed over time.

12 numbered musical examples showing various 16th note patterns with bass drum fills. Each example includes a staff with notes and a corresponding rhythm diagram below it.

1: R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R

2: R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R

3: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

4: R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R

5: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

6: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

7: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

8: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

9: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

10: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

11: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

12: R L R L R L R L R L / L R L R L R L R L R

Elvin Jones Style & Analysis

Part 1: Comping

by John Riley



Elvin! Few musicians create such a strong impression that we recognize them by their first name alone. But ever since the early 1960s, "Elvin" is all you've needed to say to conjure up images of intense sonic alchemy.

Mr. Jones was born (in 1927) and raised in Pontiac, Michigan and was the youngest son of a minister. Two of his older brothers, pianist Hank and cornetist Thad, made their own significant marks on the music world and helped young Elvin get started on the right track. Though Elvin was playing with fine musicians in the Detroit area in his late teens and twenties, he didn't make national waves until he joined John Coltrane's band in 1960 at the age of thirty-three.

Elvin has a very unusual sound and approach to playing the drums, of which he states clearly, "I think of the drumset as one instrument, not a collection of instruments, and I take that single idea as the basis for my whole approach to the drums."

Early in his career, many musicians found Elvin's style confounding. They were not accustomed to having the time volleyed about the kit. Rather, they wanted to hear more consistent and repetitious rhythms on the ride cymbal, snare drum, bass drum, and hi-hat.

One musician observed that when he was playing with Elvin he felt like he was riding in a train that was going in one direction

while sitting on top of another train going in the opposite direction!

Every time I've had the opportunity to play opposite a master like Buddy, Tony, Jack, Peter, Dennis, Vinnie, and so many more, I've been inspired to play the best music that I was capable of. That being said, one night at the Bottom Line, when I played with Randy Brecker opposite The Elvin Jones Jazz Machine, is especially notable in my mind. We opened the first set, with Elvin's band following, and they were on fire. After the intermission, we opened up again, but when I started to play, Elvin was playing *me*. I was not trying to sound like Elvin, but Elvin's spirit had taken over my interpretation of the music. His power, grace, ideas, and groove became the drumming accompanying Randy Brecker. I can't explain what happened or why it happened, but for that one set I was just inspired, subconsciously, in a way that I've never felt since.

Elvin, through the deployment of his "one instrument" concept, de-emphasizes the traditional driving cymbal beat and hi-hat as markers of the pulse. This approach generates a rounder, more legato, yet still driving groove by spreading the time out around the entire kit. At one point the cymbal is the lead voice, at another it's the hi-hat, an instant later the bass drum and snare drum are prominent. Additionally, Elvin was the first drummer to comp while using vocabulary consistently stressing the middle note of the triplet. This creates the illusion of rhythmic elasticity, thereby generating the feeling of being on the "wrong train."

Here are some ideas to explore from the world of Mr. Jones.

Traditional ride cymbal phrasing:



Elvin's ride cymbal phrasing:



While playing the hi-hat on 2 and 4 and keeping a consistent ride pattern, practice the following comping ideas (which stress the middle triplet note) as both one-measure and four-measure phrases. A good tempo to start at is quarter note = 60.



Elvin varies his touch on the snare drum by doubling or buzzing the middle triplet note. Practice the following ideas as one-bar phrases, then combine them into a four-bar phrase. Make sure that your snare drum phrasing is accurate; don't play the doubled middle triplet note as the "e-&" of straight 16th notes.



Here's the same idea in a three-beat cycle:



Elvin maximizes his "one instrument" concept by completely integrating his hi-hat into the comping scheme. By playing the bass drum or hi-hat on the middle note of the triplet, he generates more variety, which results in an even more "topsy-turvy" feel. Play the hi-hat as written.



Elvin creates long phrases by incorporating mixed three-beat motives, as in the following example. Be careful to keep your ride pattern steady.

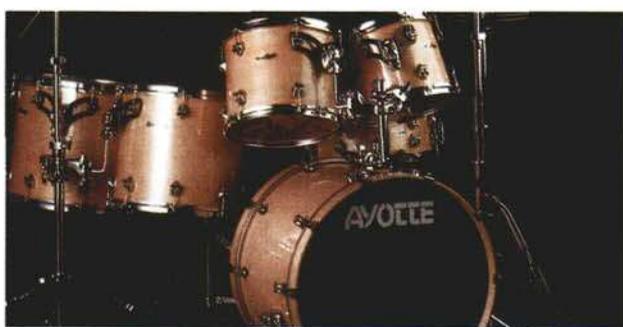


The ideas above represent "concentrated" excerpts of Elvin-like phrases. After you're comfortable with them and have worked through their intrinsic coordination obstacles, experiment with allowing your ride cymbal pattern to accommodate—i.e., follow—the flow of the other three limbs. This looser ride approach will help complete the "one instrument" vibe.

To have a better understanding of Elvin's intense approach, one must see him perform live. If that isn't possible, check out his video *Different Drummer*. Listen to the 1960s John Coltrane CDs such as *Coltrane Plays The Blues* and *Crescent*, or McCoy Tyner's *The Real McCoy*. The recent CDs by Joe Lovano (*Trio Fascination*) and Michael Brecker (*Time Is Of The Essence*) are also great and show that Elvin, at over seventy years old, is still playing with fire! My book, *Beyond Bop Drumming*, includes related information.

Elvin Jones is one of the all-time masters and truly one of a kind. Every serious player, regardless of style, can learn from and should have knowledge of Elvin's contributions to music. Next time we'll explore his unique and passionate solo approach.

John Riley's career includes work with such artists as John Scofield, Mike Stern, Woody Herman, and Stan Getz. He has also written two critically acclaimed books, *The Art Of Bop Drumming* and *Beyond Bop Drumming*, published by Manhattan Music.



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The Flam Accent Chain

by Chet Doboie

Too often, when we drummers think of any specific drum rudiment, our concept is very literal and specific, many times exactly how our "drumming ancestors" defined them. The real excitement of drum rudiments is when we have "no boundaries." The concept of exploring the possibilities—the "how lo's" of breathing musical life into rudiments—represents a great way to build new ideas and to expand our technical abilities.

A chain is a means in which we can state a theme, in this case the flam accent, and, based on a thread of "linking criteria," build variations.

How To Use The Chains

Here are some helpful tips for getting each of the following three chains happening:

1. Work out each bar separately. Make sure that you can play each figure accurately. Counting is essential.

2. Use the "theme" measure as a point of reference. Start by playing the flam accent theme four times, followed by four repetitions of variation 1. Then repeat this process of playing four bars of the theme and then four bars of the next variation, and so on, until you complete the entire exercise.

3. Play the chain as written, from top to bottom.

4. Perform each chain at a variety of tempos.

To get started, let's remind ourselves what a flam accent is:



Flam Accent Chain #1

This first chain explores the possibilities of expressing the flam accent rudiment in a variety of rhythms. Note that the sticking remains the same as each variation presents a different twist on the traditional flam accent rhythm.

Flam Accent Chain #2

The ideas in this second chain are linked by building 16th notes off of the various 8ths within the flam accent.

Theme
 R L R L R L

1
 R L R L R L R L

2
 R L R L R L R L R L

3
 R L R L R L R L R L

4
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

5
 R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

6
 R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

Flam Accent Chain #3

I've included this flam accent chain to demonstrate the "no boundaries" side of developing chains. Here, inspired by the theme, I've chosen to add a fourth note to each flam accent variation. So the common ground for all the variations here is a flammed, four-note figure taking place in the space of a "triple based" flam accent.

Theme
 R L R L R L

1
 R L R L R L R L

2
 R L R L R L R L R L

3
 R L R L R L R L R L R L

4
 R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

5
 R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

6
 R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

7
 R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

Try creating your own flam accent chains. There are many possibilities. Be creative, and "let there be no boundaries."



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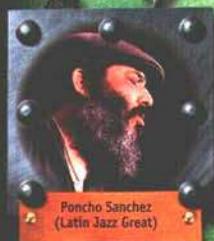
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 by Larry Crockett

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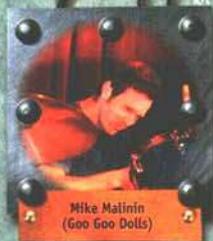
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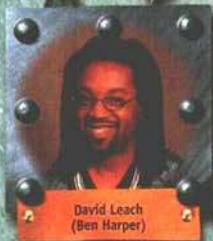
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Tito Puente
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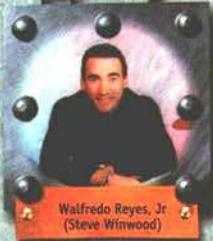
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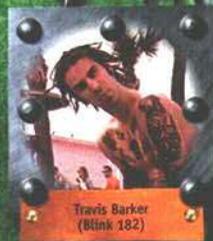
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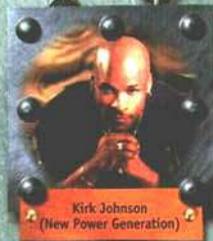
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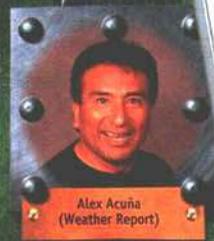
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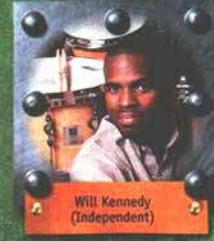
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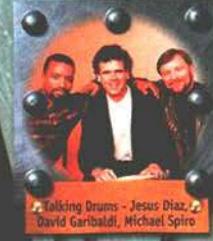
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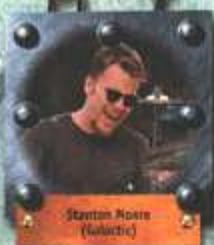
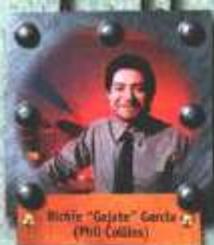
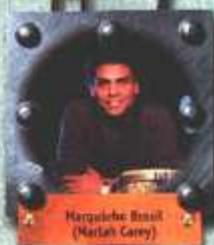
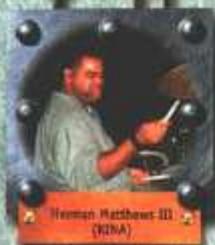


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The Perfect World Of Gerry Hemingway

by Michael Bettine

Drummer/composer/bandleader Gerry Hemingway has nearly one hundred recordings to his credit. He's toured and/or recorded with masters such as Leo Smith, Kenny Wheeler, Derek Bailey, Oliver Lake, Georg Graewe, Ernst Reijseger, and Ivo Perelman. Between 1983 and 1995, alongside pianist Marilyn Crispell and bassist Reggie Workman, he was a member of famed saxophonist Anthony Braxton's celebrated quartet. And BassDrumBone, Hemingway's groundbreaking trio with trombonist Ray Anderson and bassist Mark Helias, has worked together for twenty-two years.

Watching Hemingway play is often akin to watching a painter paint. He works with texture and shade to bring out the nuances in the music. Using sticks, brushes, mallets, and even his hands, Gerry coaxes subtleties from his instruments. To further enhance the sound, he'll play woodblocks,

small cymbals, or pieces of metal placed on top of his drums and cymbals to create new sonorities. A length of plastic tubing inserted in a drum's air hole allows him to change the pitch of the drum by blowing into it.

Although Hemingway resides in New Jersey, the bulk of his touring activities have been in Europe. But lately he's been more active back home in the States. "I've done two lovely tours here recently," Gerry says. "One was with [saxophonist] John Butcher, and the other was with [synthesist] Thomas Lehn, who I have a bit of a track record with. We've just released a double CD [*Tom & Gerry*] on Erstwhile Records. It's very representative of some work we did a few years ago.

"So Tom and I went back out and did eleven gigs in a row," Gerry continues. "It was an intense schedule of driving, but we really got into it. There was a little more

intensity than the previous European tour. Tom's playing is quite special. He's an analog synthesist based in Cologne, Germany. He uses an English Synthesizer, which is sort of a version of the old Mini Moog. It's a very cool little box with a modular patch bay."

The other duo, with British sax player John Butcher, again covers a wide range of sounds in an improvisational context. "He has a very strong repertoire of extended techniques on his instrument—an incredible player," Gerry says. "We'd known each other for a long time but hadn't worked together. He called me ostensibly looking for help lining up a solo tour. I told him I'd help on one condition: that we do it together. So I ended up doing these two back-to-back tours in America, and it worked out well. I got a lot from it. It felt like each night we were digging deeper and deeper."

Concurrent with his active performing

schedule has been Hemingway's career as a composer. This has included writing for the various groups he plays in, as well as works for both chamber and symphonic groups. As a composer, he has received grants/commissions from the Holland Festival and NPS radio of the Netherlands, Arcadian Arts, and the Parabola Arts Foundation. He's also received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York Foundation on the Arts. And most recently, he's earned his most prestigious award: "The biggest news is I've been selected for a Guggenheim Foundation grant," Gerry says, proudly. "It's a prestigious grant that supplies me with about half a year's income to spend the time composing.

"The piece I'll be composing is for orchestra and three improvisers," Gerry explains. "The improvisers in this case are pianist Georg Graewe, cellist Ernst Reijseger, and me. The composition should be finished around May, 2001. I'm already starting to look for possibilities of getting it performed. So that's the biggest piece on my agenda. It will be dominating a lot of my time.

"I've composed one piece for orchestra before, a commission for the Kansas City Symphony for myself and orchestra. That piece, 'Terrains,' has been recorded twice now, the second of which I'm fairly pleased with. It's not an easy thing to get an orchestral piece released. The German Kolner Rundfunk Orchestra recorded the second one, the revision of the "First Concerto." It came out very well.

"For 'Terrains' I was the concerto soloist, and my part was sort of improvised—organized improvisation. I had specific things I knew I'd do, but it wasn't a set, written-out part. And I used electronics that were put together specifically for the piece—a sampler with the drumset. It was a very nice piece. It was my first piece for orchestra, and I expect the second one to be perhaps a little more fluid and mature in terms of orchestral writing. Writing for an orchestra is like writing for a yacht after you've written for a speedboat. It's a much more cumbersome thing to move around, but a far grander and more expansive vehicle. The possibilities are quite rich."

So how does a drummer become an orchestral composer? "My composing career and my drumming career are con-

current," Gerry says. "They were always interlocked. As long as I've been drumming professionally, I've been writing music. I started writing when I was about seventeen. So it's not like a drummer trying to write pieces—I'm a composer *and* a drummer.

"Frankly, the composing is where the real developmental work goes on," Gerry admits. "That's where I'm working out new ideas and concepts and developing different approaches, ideas that tend to filter back into my drumming. I get a sense of where I'm going with technique, ideas, and content mostly through my composing process. The pieces I'm working on are what drive me to develop new material for the instrument. And then again, when playing drums, things come up as they do when I'm improvising. Those sometimes feed the composing process. So it's a two-way

operation.

"With free improvisation," Gerry continues, "the first couple of gigs tend to be easy. It's after that that the hard work begins. It's not necessarily hard coming up with something new every night. Developing something that pushes you beyond the available resources is the challenge. Somehow that becomes part of the process. And there's some stumbling and failures with the hard work to make it come together. Ultimately, the rewards are great when things begin to change into new areas that surprise the players.

"As a composer and as a performer playing composed music," Hemingway elaborates, "this experience of working in improvised music becomes invaluable. Speaking as a composer, improvisation has given me an understanding of the relationship to an intuitive process that is more or

The Drum Also Rises

Drumset: a combination of '60s vintage drums

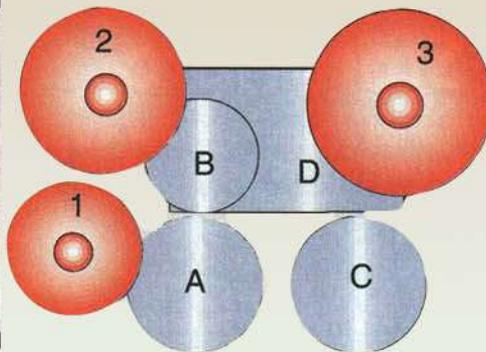
- A. 5x14 Ludwig Aerolite (aluminum) snare
- B. 8x12 Ludwig tom
- C. 14x14 Gretsch floor tom
- D. 14x20 Ludwig bass drum

Cymbals: Istanbul

- 1. 14" hi-hats
- 2. 18" crash
- 3. 20" ride

Other: various small cymbals, woodblocks, and found objects placed on top of the drums and cymbals

Electronics: KAT (Alternate Mode) controller pad, Roland S760 sampler ("It's now antiquated, but it works for me.")



Gerry Hemingway

less my path as a composer. I'm not a systemized composer with predictable elements. I tend to work in an intuitive way. I more or less compose what I hear, and the more I work in the improvised domain, it's expansive to my ability to hear more things as a writer. And both of these feed my skill as an interpreter of composed music.

"When I approach someone else's composition," Gerry continues, "I'm often bringing to it a sense of orchestration. I can suggest things with my drumming or help things in a particular way that is how I look at things. So if there is some open-ended improvisation in a piece, I might tend to shape that in terms of various options. As a player I may think in an orchestrated way about how I might be able to bring out the best in the composed material. That's just the way I think, and I see it filtering into various projects I do. And I often work with people who are like-minded in this regard."

Another random aspect of the creative process that Gerry deals with is the equipment he uses on tour. By economic necessity, he travels with only his cymbals and a bag of small percussion. Drumsets are of the rental variety and vary in type and quality at every gig. "I'm not an equipment-aholic," Gerry says. "It's almost comical what I have to deal with."

"But touring in America lately has allowed me to perform on my own instruments," Gerry enthuses. "My set is a combination of old '60s Ludwig and Gretsch



"With free improvisation, the first couple of gigs tend to be easy. It's after that that the hard work begins."

drums. The hardware is pathetic and lightweight, but it works. I've played the same bass drum since I was a kid—it was from my first drumset. My equipment is pretty old and beat up, basically. It's not a matter of laziness that I haven't gone out and bought something shiny and sparkley. I find that the more you play an instrument, the more it becomes a part of you and

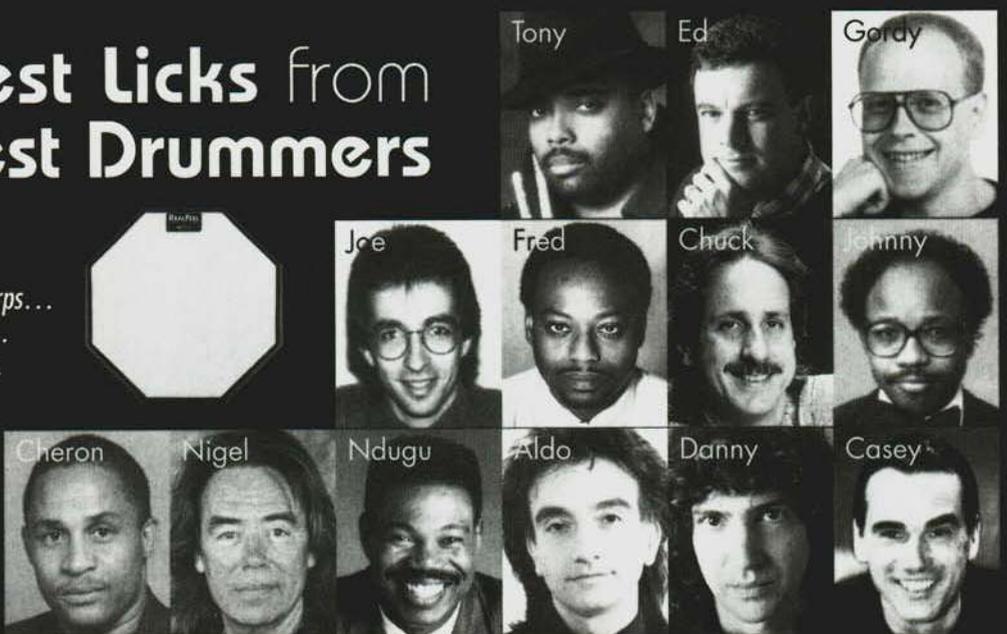
begins to sound as you envision it to sound. "A drumkit isn't a Stradivarius by a long shot; they're just plywood, but they do take on a sound. Everyone thinks it's the wood, the skin, or the rims, but it's everything. The whole thing hangs together in a certain way that produces a certain sound. I'm also not fussy about drumsticks being snappy and new. In fact, I kind of like them beat-up."

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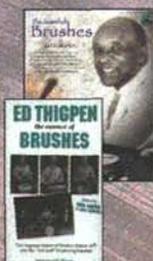
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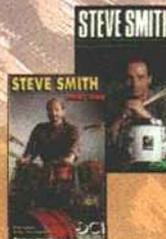
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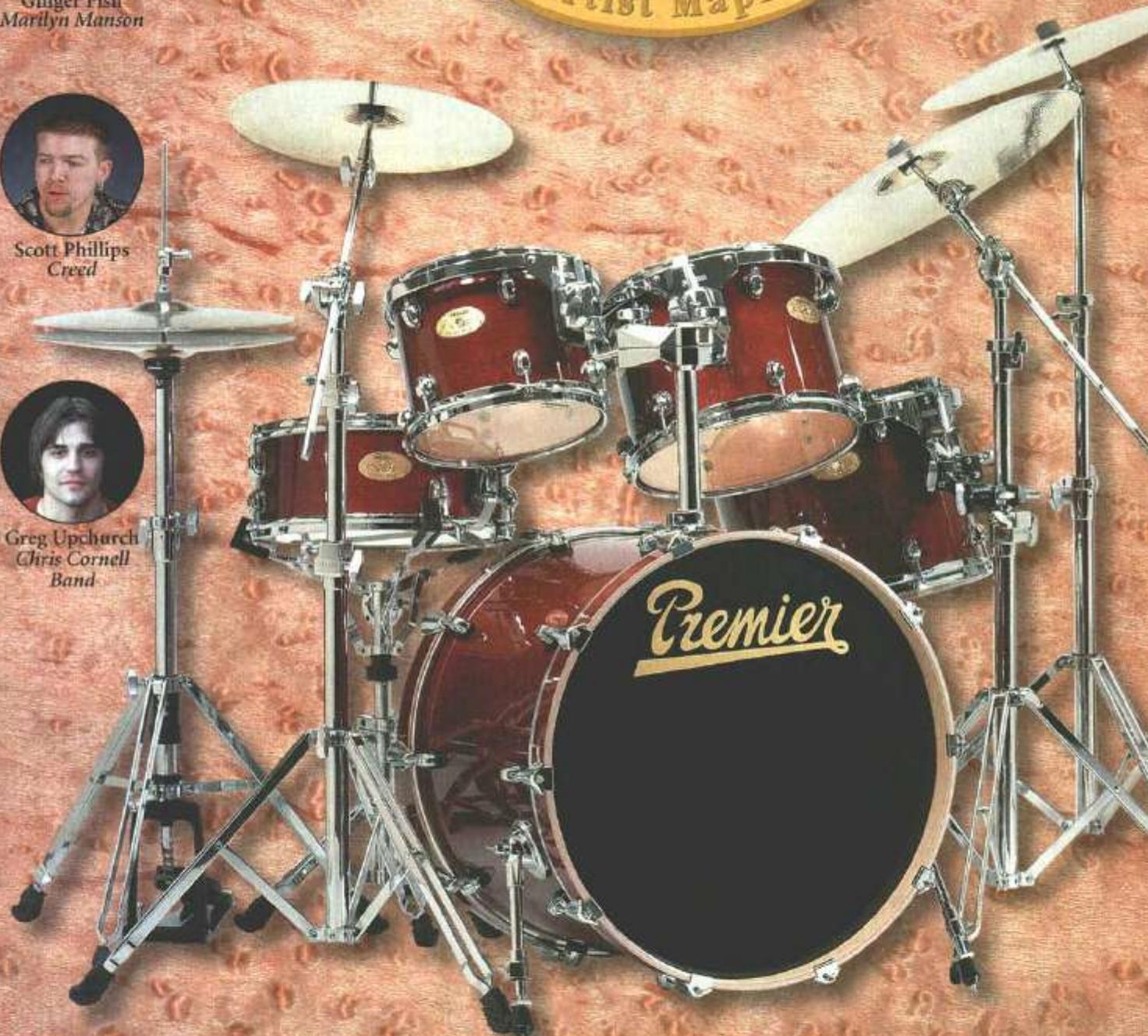
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Hemingway On Record

Gerry has appeared on nearly one hundred recordings. Here are just a few that he feels best represent his playing. Many of these are imports, available from Cadence (www.cadence.com) or Tower Records (towerrecords.com).

Hemingway Quartet/Quintet

Waltzes, Two-Steps & Other Matters Of The Heart	1999	GM Recordings
Johnny's Corner Song	1998	Auricle
Perfect World	1996	Random Acoustics
The Marmalade King	1995	Hat Art
Slamadam	1995	Random Acoustics

BassDrumBone

Cooked To Perfection	1999	Auricle
Hence The Reason	1997	ENJA

Graewe/Reijseger/Hemingway

Saturn Cycle	1996	Music & Arts
Flex 27	1995	Random Acoustics
The View From Points West	1994	Music & Arts

Others

Identity—Wintsch/Hemingway/Oester	1999	Leo
Thirteen Ways—Hersch/Moore/Hemingway	1997	GM Recordings
Tom & Gerry—Lehn/Hemingway	2000	Erstwhile
The Flume Factor—Frank Gratkowski Trio	1998	Random Acoustics

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Acoustic Solo Works (1983-94)	1996	Random Acoustics
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Gerry Hemingway

Hemingway has a refreshing approach to the rental kits he plays night after night. "I sometimes get very nice drumsets that I think sound quite a bit better than my own in certain ways," Gerry explains. "And they sort of please me as a player in ways my own don't. The first thing I do is just play the floor tom with my fingers—just tap it. I listen to it for quite a while, and I don't tune it at all. I listen to what it says to me, so that I don't necessarily demand the instrument to become something it isn't."

What about tuning concepts for these different kits? "I have a standard range I like drums to be tuned in. I tend to go low, to give the instrument as much earth as possible. So I'm looking for the bass drum to speak as low as it's going to go. Sometimes I'll find that the bass drum I'm provided with is stuffed full with pillows. If I feel that pulling out all the stuffing and letting it ring is a good idea, I might go for it. But often I don't. I'll leave it stuffed because that seems to be what it's about. And I work with that sound even though it's quite a bit different from my normal sound."

"Sometimes I get instruments that are pretty much geared for the rock vein, and I just use them as is. I actually enjoy the variety of things those instruments allow me to do that are different from what I normally do. They'll inspire me to try different directions, or they'll allow for different articulations. On a kit like that, parts of my playing become amplified and other parts become more subdued. It's a matter of finding a relationship with it and making it work."

Since cymbals are one of the few things

that Hemingway carries, he must have strong opinions about what he uses. "At the moment I'm playing all Istanbul cymbals," he says. "I have a 20" ride that I bought from a Turkish gentleman living in Amsterdam in 1985. At the time, I was playing a 20" K Zildjian that I had bought as a kid, along with an 18" A from my original drumset. I also had a pair of Paiste Formula 602 hi-hats that were magnificent, until they finally broke on a session for Klaus Konig."

"When I bought the 20" Istanbul," Gerry continues, "I also bought a pair of Istanbul hi-hats. This was before anybody knew about Istanbul cymbals. I gave this guy some money, as he was going back and forth between Turkey and Amsterdam buying cymbals for various players. He found a very early Istanbul 20" and these really nice hi-hats. Years later I was in Istanbul looking for an 18" crash to replace the A, and I found one that worked well with the 20". I think the alloy that Istanbul uses retains a few of the mysterious qualities of the old Ks—the darkness, the directness. But they also have a wider and more versatile set of harmonics."

So coming full circle from drumming and improvising, Hemingway now finds himself immersed in composing. "This orchestra piece will dominate a lot of my time in the coming year and take me out of the performing loop for a while. The other main composing project that's coming up is for Between The Lines, a German company. They offered to do a recording with no touring requirements attached to it. There's a budget to do a recording and give it to them as a final product."

Hemingway says this project has inspired him to take a leap in a new direction. "I decided to take a chance and work in an area I've been thinking about for a while," he explains, "which is vocal music. At first I conceived the project as a sort of sextet—two vocalists, violin, cello, electric bass, and me playing acoustic and electronic percussion. Now I'm envisioning more musicians being involved. But the main issue is that I'm going to be writing *songs*. They'll be more akin to popular traditions these days."

"I've been particularly inspired in this direction by [singer/songwriter] Ani DiFranco. I think she's absolutely incredible. If I had more of a budget, I'd try to persuade her to produce the record. But that's probably beyond my financial means. I do plan to contact her along the way, because I think she's a fabulous musician, singer, songwriter, guitarist, and artist. I'm also particularly moved by the content of her work. It's more or less the area I'm interested in writing about, because I'll be writing both the music and the lyrics."

Even with his hands full with composing, it's likely that Gerry Hemingway won't be able to stay away from performing for too long. He's more apt to go out on a short tour here and there, keeping his mind wide open for new ideas and inspiration. You can keep up with Gerry's activities by checking out his Web site (which he maintains himself) at: userweb.interactive.net/~gerryhem.



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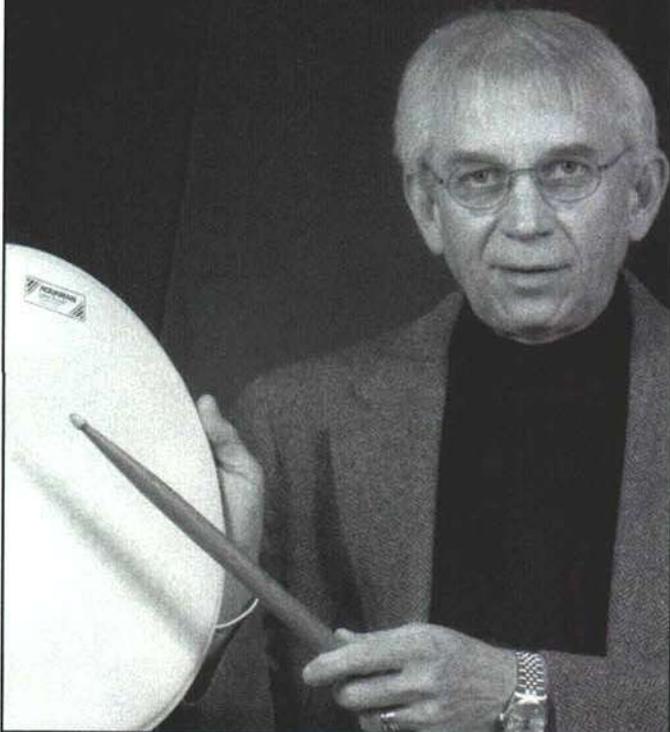
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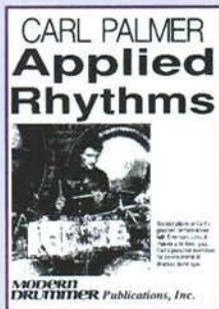
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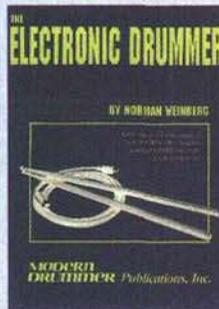
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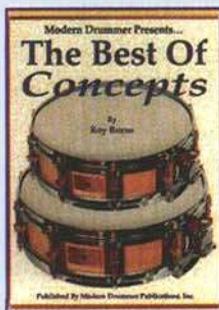
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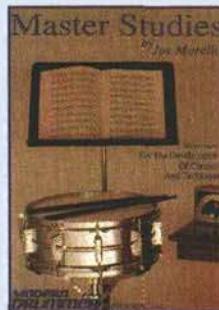
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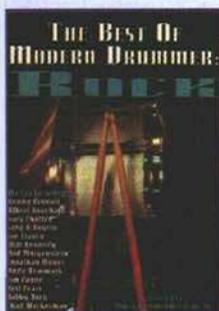
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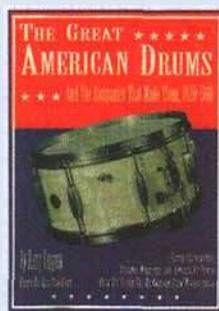
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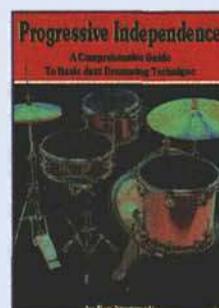
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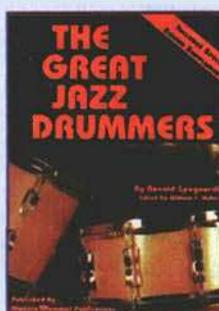
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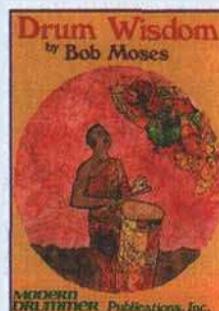
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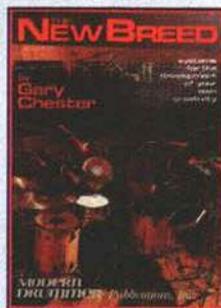
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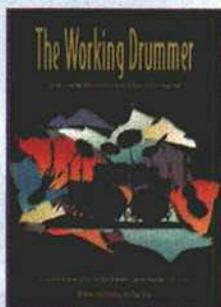
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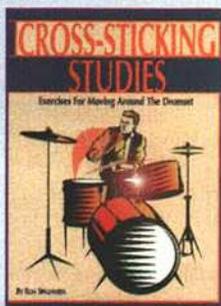
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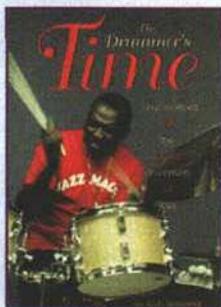
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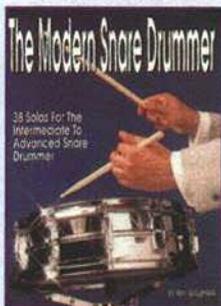
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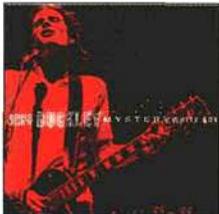
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RECORDINGS

10 ratingscale 10 classic

9 Jeff Buckley *Mystery White Boy: Live '95-'96*

Matt Johnson (dr), Jeff Buckley (vcl, gtr), Michael Tighe (gtr), Mick Grondahl (bs)



The late Jeff Buckley had an uncanny ability to translate the most raucous sounds into something meaningful. Culled from various international gigs spanning three tours, this seamless collection of originals and covers captures a glimpse of his band's rare energy. Navigating the churning musical currents with a balance of poise and fervor is drummer Matt Johnson. His great range allows him to play soft sweeping beats, as in "Lilac Wine," and rock out for a punked-up version of "Eternal Life," which features burning foot work that borders on funk metal. Likewise, Johnson's ferocious improv attack towards the hellish end of Alex Chilton's "Kanga Roo" simply smokes. Though many of these avant-rock tunes were written in the early and mid '90s, they remain on the cutting edge. (Columbia)

Will Romano

9 Pantera *Reinventing The Steel*

Vinnie Paul (dr), Philip Anselmo (vcl), Dimebag Darrell (gtr), Rex Brown (bs)



An extreme disc full of positively devastating drumming, *Steel* is an album that I'll reach for when I want my metal appetite sated. Vinnie Paul's double-bass, meter-shifting drum attack is relentless, the epitome of what one looks for in aggressive music. Although metal is Paul's game, his drumming prowess stands on a par with Cobham or Bozzio at their blasting best, and he easily surpasses most other metal drummers of recent memory when it comes to force, dexterity, and sheer ridiculously large double bass chops. For the non-metal fan, the most difficult aspect of this album will be getting past the equally brutal vocal delivery. For the chops or muscular drumming fan, this is a must-have. It's flawlessly recorded, too—you can hear every jaw-dropping 64th note. (East West/Elektra)

Ted Bonar

8 D'Angelo *Voodoo*

Ahmir Thompson, D'Angelo (dr), Giovanni Hidalgo (perc), Pino Palladino (bs), Mike Campbell, C. Edward Alford, Rafael Saadiq, Charlie Hunter (gtr), Roy Hargrove (trp), James Poyser (kybd)



Voodoo is an R&B adventure in floating time. Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson is in no hurry, giving each note its full value—and sometimes a little extra. Thompson's got some other stuff goin' on too. He co-wrote "Greatdayndamornin'," featuring double rimshots that are commanding yet

perched way back on the beat. And "Africa" displays some of his most nimble stickwork. There's also a certain amount of programming here, making it difficult to tell whether D'Angelo himself has snuck behind the kit or it's a DJ Premier sample. The Prince protege is credited with "all other instruments" on several tracks, so it may well be his loose hi-hat triplets and slightly sloppy cross-stick/handclap hybrid on the Curtis Mayfield nod, "The Line." Regardless, this is some hip stuff. (Virgin)

Robin Tolleson

8 Gregg Bissonette *Submarine*

Gregg Bissonette (dr, perc, vcl, trp), Man Bissonette (bs, tbn, pno), Doug Bossi, Robben Ford, Frank Gambale, Gary Hoey, Richie Kotzen, Michael Landau, Tim Pierce, Joe Satriani, Steve Stevens, Steve Vai (gtr), David Garfield (pno, org)

Gregg Bissonette's second solo CD is a great example of just how versatile a musician he is. Featuring a smorgasbord of styles, from funk, hard rock, Cuban, and jazz to pop, fusion, and Texas shuffle, each of the eleven new tunes also showcases a different world-class guitarist. Exciting drum solos dot most of the songs, each one fitting seamlessly into the compositions. Gregg sings lead on three cuts, plays trumpet, shows off his new tabla chops, and plays percussion on all the tunes (which were written by Gregg's brother Matt). And happily, because of the songs' great melodies and the performers' musicianship, this is *not* just an album for drummers. (Favored Nations, tel: [818] 528-2580, fax: [818] 528-2684, favnations@aol.com, www.favorednations.com)

Andrea Byrd



MAKING PROGRESS

8 King Crimson *ConstruKction Of Light*

Pat Mastelotto (dr), Robert Fripp (gtr), Adrian Belew (gtr, vcl), Trey Gunn (touch gtr)



King Crimson continues to explore new and creative territory with yet another lineup. Bassist Tony Levin is gone. So is drummer Bill Bruford, leaving Pat Mastelotto the monumental task of filling the gap left by one of progressive rock's most advanced players. Bruford's influence certainly is evident in Mastelotto's choice of rhythmic ideas throughout. But Mastelotto's sounds are all his own, and his ability to create intriguing yet grooving drum parts for this complex material is to be commended. Mr. Bruford has left Crimson in some pretty capable hands. (Virgin)

8 Platypus *Ice Cycles*

Rod Morgenstein (dr), Derek Sherinian (kybd), Ty Tabor (vcl, gtr), John Myung (bs)

A gathering of progressive all-stars, *Ice Cycles* features strong melodic vocals from King's X's Ty Tabor along with John Myung (Dream Theater), Derek Sherinian (Planet X), and Rod Morgenstein (Dixie Dregs / Jazz Is Dead). Morgenstein displays a perfect blend of progressive chops and pop/rock sensibility here. When it's time to cut loose—as on "25"—Rod unleashes his arsenal of odd-meter patterns with a serious rock attitude. This group could easily cross over to the pop/rock market if corporate ears were willing to listen. (Inside Out Music America/www.insideoutmusic.com)

7 The Trey Gunn Band

The Joy Of *Molybdenum*

Bob Muller (dr, perc), Trey Gunn, Tony Geballe (gtr)

This instrumental trio featuring King Crimson's Trey Gunn is an eclectic blend of world, ambient, industrial, rock, and Crimson-style music. Bob Muller provides an interesting backdrop of sounds and textures using drumset and percussion, adding a beautiful organic edge to a landscape of sounds. This release would be especially appealing to fans of the King Crimson double trio. (Discipline Global Mobile/www.disciplineglobalmobile.com)

Mike Haid

7 Pink Floyd Is There Anybody Out There? The Wall Live 1980-81

Nick Mason, Willie Wilson (dr), Roger Waters (bs, gtr, vcl), David Gilmour (gtr, vcl), Richard Wright (kybd, vcl), Snowy White, Andy Roberts (gtr), Peter Woods, Andy Bown (bs)

This live recording of Floyd's classic concept album has all the exciting edge one expects from a concert performance. These shows were a massive undertaking, involving an opening surrogate band and the construction of a literal wall on stage. Given this theatricality, the drumming here fills two crucial functions to a greater extent than in many other situations. First, it provides a solid foundation, as on "Another Brick In The Wall Pt. 2" and "Run Like Hell." Second, it fills the music with drama, with booming tom fills vital to "Happiest Days Of Our Lives" and "In The Flesh." Although it's not always clear how the drum parts are divided, the power and validity of these performances should not be missed. (Columbia)



Martin Patmos

supportive stickman is best known for his extensive discography as a sideman and long stints with Horace Silver, Oscar Peterson, and Cannonball Adderley. Yet when jazz fans talk of the great drummer/bandleaders, they too often overlook Hayes' role as leader of several great units through the decades, including superb groups he co-lead with Woody Shaw and Junior Cook. Hayes' latest outfit is another fine, aggressive straight-ahead group. The CD has a lively, "let-the-tape-roll" energy, and Hayes is absolutely poppin'. And watch out for that cymbal ride to die for. (TCB)

Jeff Potter



8 John Patitucci Imprint

Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, Jack DeJohnette (dr), Giovanni Hidalgo (perc), John Patitucci (bs), Danilo Perez, John Beasley (pno), Chris Potter, Mark Turner (sx)

The word "monster" certainly fits when discussing John Patitucci, and the bassist has enlisted percussionists of equal calibre to back him here.



"El Negro" and Gio bubble along with a special passion. Hernandez shows a light yet pointed and aggressive touch on the title track, triple-timing the loping groove before it's done, toying with the meter as Hidalgo chops gleefully. On "King Kong" Horacio builds to a thundering crescendo over Giovanni's insistent hand drumming. Jack DeJohnette performs with his usual playfulness and creative coloring on four tracks. Whether he's building a wash of cymbals, slapping out a backbeat on toms and kick, keeping great creative time, or playing free with sure-handedness and drive, Jack provides whatever the music needs. (Concord)

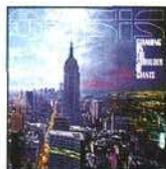
Robin Tolleson

7 Oasis

Standing On The Shoulders Of Giants

Alan White (dr), Liam Gallagher (vcl), Noel Gallagher (gtr, vcl)

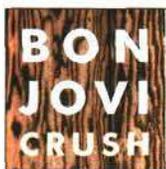
It doesn't matter much if Noel Gallagher set out to find himself a modern-day Ringo, or if he molded drummer Alan White in Mr. Starkey's image. The result is the same: simple, clean drumming that doesn't stand in the way of Oasis's anthemic pop. With huge drum sounds, White is acutely tuned in to what the songs require. And while he may be in the style of the Beatles' anchor, his technique is contemporary, making good use of percussive toys and samples to



6 Bon Jovi Crush

Tico Torres (dr), Jon Bon Jovi (vcl), Richie Sambora (gtr), David Bryan (kybd)

Crush opens with techno-industrial strains, an announcement that Bon Jovi has joined the 21st century. Not a bad move, really, since the band's last studio disc was 1995's *These Days*. Old fans, relax: This is no departure from the tried-and-true Jovi sound. Guitars still squeal, ballads still plead, and tuneful pop songwriting still abounds. Drummer Tico Torres is a no-frills, few-fills rocker, but he picks his spots. A double-time beat gives motion to the "Hey Jude"-like coda of "The Next 100 Years," and China punches animate the bridge to "Say It Isn't So." Unfortunately, Tico's sounds are overproduced. The snare exploding from your speakers is to an unmiked drum what a booming Hollywood gunshot is to the dry pop of a real gun. To those who know the real thing, it's a bit much. (Island)



Michael Parillo

8 Louis Hayes Quintet

Quintessential Lou

Louis Hayes (dr), Abraham Burton (tn sx), Riley Mullins (trp), Dave Hazeltine (pno), Santi Debriano (bs)

Hayes made a name with the big jazzers as a teen. Now, at sixty-three, he's still sporting that urgent, exciting, hard swing. The

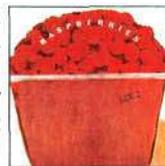
FROM THE EDITORS' VAULT

Dusting Off Drumming's Hidden Gems

8 The Raspberries Side 3

Jim Bonfanti (dr), Eric Carmen (vcl, gtr, kybd), Wally Bryson (gtr, vcl), David Smalley (bs, vcl)

Side 3 is one of the most joyous pop-rock albums ever. Singer Eric Carmen would later have hits all by himself. But between '72 and '74 his band spouted young and lusty tunes rivaling Cheap Trick, Badfinger, and Kinks singles in sugary distortion rush. Producer Jimmy Ienner and engineer Shelly Yakus gave Jim Bonfanti a killer sound to work with. Always pushing the beat, Jim was like a dream combination of Keith Moon and Ringo Starr, merrily marking changes on the hits "Tonight" and "Ecstasy" with big, deep snare/tom smatterings and swooshy cymbal washes. RPM Records has reissued all four Raspberries albums on *Power Pop Volumes 1 and 2* (*Side 3* is on *Volume 2*). But vinyl hounds will want the LP for the great artwork.



Adam Budofsky

anchor the backbeat. The disc's intro is a perfect example of White's strong rocking groove. Easing into "Go Let It Out," he opens with a nice sample that, just as the song kicks in, filters into a perfect fill, foreshadowing the quality of drumming on the entire album. (Epic)

Lisa Crouch and Fran Azzarto

8 Either/Orchestra

More Beautiful Than Death

Harvey Wirtz (dr), Vicente Lebrón (perc), Russ Gershon (sx), Charlie Kohlhase (bar sx), others

7 Satoko Fujii Orchestra Jo

Aaron Alexander (dr), Satoko Fujii (pno), Chris Speed (tn sx), Jack Walrath (trp), Stomu Takeishi (bs), others

Big band may be a lost art form to some, but you wouldn't know it listening to these two very creative and stylistically different outfits.

Either/Orchestra is a perennial Boston band with years of experience reflected in leader Russ Gershon's expansive arrangements and the band's cohesive playing.

Death... is contemporary big band in the lineage of renowned outfits led by Thad Jones/Mel Lewis or even Buddy Rich. But E/O also stretch into funk, blues, New Orleans, Latin, and Caribbean terrain. Though the album was inspired by Ethiopian music, no new ground is broken.



Still, the music is exceptionally performed and as comfortable as a worn-out copy of *Kind Of Blue*. Drummer Harvey Wirht is a team player who, without pushing anything fancy, nonetheless swings hard and serves the music well. (Accurate)

Jo is an altogether different bag of tricks. With newcomer Aaron Alexander's arresting drumming adding an animated edge to already experimental sounds, listening to the album is like riding a skateboard through a tornado. On the title track, Alexander solos and spurts as bassist Takeshi rumbles. Windy, boisterous, cacophonous, and atonal, *Jo* careens 'round the warped march of "Kyu," the delusional belligerence of "Okesa Yansado," the geriatric merriment of "Jasper," and the itchy beauty of "Around The Corner." (Buzz/Challenge)

KenMicallef

7 Veruca Salt Resolver

Jimmy Madia (dr), Louise Post (vcl, gtr), Suzanne Sokol (bs, vcl), Stephen Fitzpatrick (gtr)

With a little help from her new band, singer/guitarist Louise Post resurrects Veruca Salt's combination of grinding grunge-pop and sexy-hard lyrics. Outstanding production work by Brian Liesegang and a stinging stick attack by Jimmy Madia (a versatile country and jazz drummer) deliver sonic sharpness to this CD. The song "Best You Can Get" showcases a snare barrage that propels the driving tune into a frenzy that's only cooled by an effective but drastic edit of the song's ending. Even



when Madia is not so over-the-top, his syncopated cymbal beats, compelling shuffles, and musical tom-tom phrasing conjure images of bright colors in stark contrast to some of these dark tunes. *Resolver* is packed with dynamic songs and should help re-establish Veruca Salt's audience. (Beyond)

(Beyond)

Will Romano

8 Phil Haynes & Free Country

Phil Haynes (dr, perc), Hank Roberts (cello, vcl, jazzophone fiddle), Drew Gress (bs), Jim Yanda (ac gtr)

On this disc, all kinds of dissonant, forceful, and wonderful things happen to popular folk songs from another era. Whether swinging "Rosin The Beau," dragging "Oh Susannah" down to the slowest imaginable tempo, or giving "My Old Kentucky Home" a sloshy funk reading, Haynes succeeds in recreating and expanding familiar themes. A former Oregon State Percussion Champion, Haynes has become a distinctive free-form drummer around New York. Chops give way on his band's new CD to emotion and vision. Like a bluegrass Medeski, Martin & Wood, this group does occasionally flash its musical muscle. But more often than not, the reward is in the way they play as little as they can with as much feeling as humanly possible. (Premonition)



Robin Tolleson

8 Tony MacAlpine, Bunny Brunei, Dennis Chambers CAB

Dennis Chambers (dr), Tony MacAlpine (gtr, kybd), Bunny Brunei (bs, kybd)

Haven't we heard enough of Dennis Chambers? I didn't think so! Dennis has played on so many releases, yet still seems to find a way to sound fresh and exciting. This instrumental fusion trio works well together and is another excellent vehicle for Chambers to let us drummers know that he hasn't lost his edge. Much of the material has an old-school fusion vibe, with Dennis sounding a bit like Billy Cobham and Lenny White from the early days. Dennis turns it loose on "Boogie Me" and "Elastic Man" with super-swift, ultra-clean chops. This is some of the most sincere fusion to come out recently. (Tone Center)

Mike Haid



7 Albert Mangelsdorff & Reto Weber Percussion Orchestra

Live At Montreaux

Reto Weber (perc), Nana Twum Nketia (African perc), Keyvan Chemirani (zarb), Albert Mangelsdorff (tbn)

This meeting of German avant-garde trombonist Mangelsdorff with Swiss percussionist Weber and his group provides for some interesting sonic



Going Underground This Month We Visit The World Of Avant-Jazz Drumming

8 Thirteen Ways Focus

7 Gerry Hemingway Quintet

Waltzes, Two-Steps, & Other Matters Of The Heart

Gerry Hemingway (dr), Michael Moore (al sx, dr, bs dr), with (on Focus) Fred Hersch (poo), (on Waltzes) Wolter Wierbos (tbn), Ernst Reijseger (cello), Mark Dresser (bs)

Focus is a lovely record with space, color, beauty, and intriguing instrumentation. Without a bassist to muddy up the water, Hemingway and his cohorts definitely play outside, but it must have been a wonderful day. Gerry is subtle, with brushes and cymbal work to die for. (Palmetto Records, www.palmetto-records.com) *Waltzes* is more ambitious and robust but a bit less satisfying, owing to the larger (and equally unorthodox) ensemble. But there are plenty of fresh ideas on this effort as well. (GM Recordings, www.GMRecordings.com)



7 Abbey Rader/David Liebman Duo

Inner Voices Live

8 Abbey Rader/Davey Williams

The Ballistics Of Yin And Yang

Abbey Rader (dr), with (on Inner Voices Live) David Liebman (sx, fl), (on Ballistics) Davey Williams (el gtr)

If the wall-of-drumming sound is a bit more your style, look no further than the dynamic *Inner Voices Live*. Avant veteran Abbey Rader packs an aggressive punch as he fills in the holes between his partner's skrinks and skronks, and he also shows a deft, soft touch to complement the bombast. Rader lets it fly in combination with a wailing rock guitar on *The Ballistics Of Yin And Yang*, and the result is a free-riffing barrage with a phenomenal amount of texture. There are plenty of subtle passages supported with hand drumming and small percussion, too. (both discs Abray Productions, www.abbeyrader.com)



8 Joe Fonda Quintet Full Circle Suite

8 Edward Ratliff's Rhapsodalia

Wang Fei-Hong Meets Little Strudel

Kevin Norton (dr), with (on Full Circle Suite) Joe Fonda (bs), Gebhard Ullmann (bs dr), Chris Jonas (sp sx), Taylor Ho Bynum (conch, pocket trp, trp), (on Wang Fei-Hong) Michael Attias (sx), Sam Bardfield (vln), John Hebert (bs), Edward Ratliff (cornet, trp, tbn, euphonium, acdn)

Kevin Norton continues to be one of the most impressive drummers of the genre. On *Full Circle Suite* he lays down some traditional smokin' swing grooves that give way to fits of quirky, clicking percussive interplay within some very long, difficult forms. Check out the press rolls! (CIMP Ltd., www.cadencebuilding.com) On *Wang Fei*, the drummer supplies a lively pulse to a quirky, robust cabaret-sounding ensemble. The always punchy Norton sets up music that is all over the map on this highly inventive CD. (Strudelmedia, www.studel.net)



Ted Bonar

explorations. Weber's Percussion Orchestra works with a variety of instruments, from drumset to steel drums, shakers, African drums and wood blocks, and Chemirani's Iranian hand drum, the zarb. The three percussionists generally work with organic polyrhythmic vamps, often West African or Iranian in flavor. At times one of them is heard exploring solo ideas above the pulse, Chemirani often standing out. Mangelsdorff enters the fray producing otherworldly sounds that both merge with and cut across the rhythmic backdrop. There are a few slow moments, but overall the set remains interesting with exciting moments peppered throughout. (Challenge)

Martin Patmos

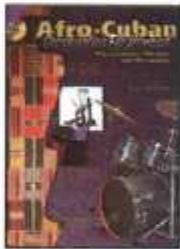
BOOKS

9 Afro-Cuban Coordination

For Drumset by Maria Martinez

level: intermediate to advanced, \$14.95 (CD included)

Like Maria Martinez' *Brazilian Coordination* book/CD package, this new offering taps into her own Latin roots. Basic mambo, nanigo, songo, and mozambique rhythms are presented with scads of variations. Most are shown in both 2-3 and 3-2 son and rumba clave. Challenging chapters on improvisation, bongo-bell ostinatos, and left-foot clave round out this comprehensive study.



On the CD, Martinez demonstrates many of the book's basic patterns with a cooking Latin rhythm section and sax player. (No cheesy beat-box here, thank you!) Each demo is followed by a much longer rendition without drums for play-along. Full-band backup helps you grasp the rhythms. Generous groove time helps you get immersed in the feel.

Afro-Cuban Coordination For Drumset includes a sizable list of recommended listening, but there is little theory or cultural background offered. Lucid, to-the-point chapter intros provide the practical information needed to get you playing. This is clearly a hands-on package meant to make Latin rhythms a usable part of your drumming vocabulary. An unstated bonus is the material's certain development of coordination for all types of music. Maria Martinez has served up another winner.

(Hal Leonard)

Rich Watson

7 How To Play Djembe: West African Rhythms For Beginners

by Alan Dworsky and Betsy Sansby

level: beginner to intermediate, \$24.95 (with CD)

Okay, maybe every American doesn't own a djembe yet. But those who want to learn the basics of the instrument will enjoy this concise and fun how-to and accompanying CD. The authors make the book user-friendly, from the easy-to-understand rhythmic notation to the spiral binding, which allows it to be laid open for study and play-along.

Dworsky and Sansby start at the beginning: how to hold the instrument. They then explain how to perform the basic bass, tone, and slap strokes. And it's not long before they're onto the popular West African 4/4 rhythms Kuku, Djole, Kassa, and Madan, then the 6/8 grooves Suku, Sunguru Bani, and Tiriba. Included throughout the book are tips on tuning the djembe, as well as general "practice principles" for guidance and inspiration.

On the CD, the parts are performed by Sidi Mohamed "Joh" Camara, a drummer and former chief choreographer for the West African dance companies Troupe Mande and Troupe Sewa. Not everything in the book is demonstrated, but the rhythms that are last about five minutes each, giving lots of time for experimentation and interaction. At times it's a little difficult to hear the distinct stroke sounds. This isn't terribly bothersome, but there might have been a better way to mike the instrument. (Dancing Hands)

Robin Tolleson

8 Steps Ahead: Part One, Rhythmic Studies For The Snare Drum and Part Two, Rhythmic Studies For The Drum Set

by Dave Brady

level: beginner to advanced, \$12.50 each book, \$20 for both

Drum students and teachers will enjoy these two study books. Young drummers will benefit from the logic and pacing of the beginning exercises, but the author expects quick advancement. By exercise 9 of *Part One* we're playing in 5/4 and well on the way to the detailed study of notes that the author prescribes—simple, tied, dotted, subdivided in rolls, and combined into triplets. Brady has a good ear for creating catchy cadences, and includes some fun duets as well. A group of exercises at the

Madness Across The Water

The Latest Most Burnin' import Drum Releases

Recommended by Mark Tessier of Audiophile Imports

Thierry Maillard *Paris New York*. French pianist Maillard plays some serious straight-ahead pop with John Patitucci on bass and Dennis Chambers on drums.

Jim Beard *Advocate*. Solo project from keyboardist who's played with them all. Features Jon Herington, Bob Malach, Matt Garrison, Tim Lefebvre, Zach Danziger, Gene Lake, and Arto Tunçboyacıyan.

Didier Lockwood *New World*. French violinist's solo project from 1979 features Gordon Beck, Niels-Henning Orsted-Pedersen, Tony Williams, John Etheridge, and Jean-Michel Kajdan.

Billy Cobham *Crosswinds*, *Total Eclipse*, and *Shabazz—Live In Europe*. Cobham's second, third, and fourth solo albums, recorded in 1974 and finally available on CD. Required listening for drummers of all ages. Features John Abercrombie, The Brecker Bros., Alex Blake, and George Duke.

To order any of these releases, contact Audiophile imports at (908) 996-731, www.audiophileimports.com.



back of the first book stresses dynamics and incorporating many of the earlier ideas into musical performances. *Part Two* focuses on applications of the rhythms onto the drumset. Brady begins with 8th-note rock beats, but is soon offering exercises involving 16th-note triplets, fills using the hi-hat foot, advanced rolls with kick drum and right hand, and Afro-Cuban 6/8 grooves. The books come in a plastic spiral binding, are easy to work with, and testify to the author's extensive teaching experience.

Robin Tolleson

Correction

The book review of *Zildjian: A History Of The Legendary Cymbal Makers* in the July issue of *MD* incorrectly stated that there is an accompanying CD.



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Pedal Technique And Seat Height

by Rick Van Horn

Modern Drummer reader Jun Madrid recently submitted the following questions to *MD's It's Questionable* department. They were excellent questions on subjects applicable to all drumset players. As such, they merited a more complete response than we could provide in *It's Questionable*. Let's begin with Jim's original inquiry.

The Question

"There seems to be two schools of thought on the subject of bass drum pedal technique: heels-up and heels-down. I tend to play quiet sections of the music with my heels down, since I can control the volume much easier that way. When I require power and projection, I go heels-up.

"However, there are certain peculiarities

with these two methods. I seem to play faster—especially for fills and double taps—with my heels down. I can't operate the quick triple with my double pedals using the heels-up technique. I'm not sure if this is due to lack of practice or lack of muscle development for this type of movement. The late Tony Williams seemed to have both speed *and* power while playing

with his heels down.

"Should I go heels-up all the way in order to gain power, and try to develop more speed and the ability to reduce volume if necessary? Or do I stay with my heels down, continue to develop that technique, and wait till my power comes up to par?"

"I'm also curious about the relationship between the height of my seat and the power and speed with which I play my pedals. My drum seat is adjusted so that my thighs are about parallel to the floor. I've noted that Tony Williams sat fairly high. And I recently read in a Pearl drum catalog that one should sit high to make one's self "light on one's feet" for faster playing. What is the advantage of sitting high as it relates to playing pedals?"

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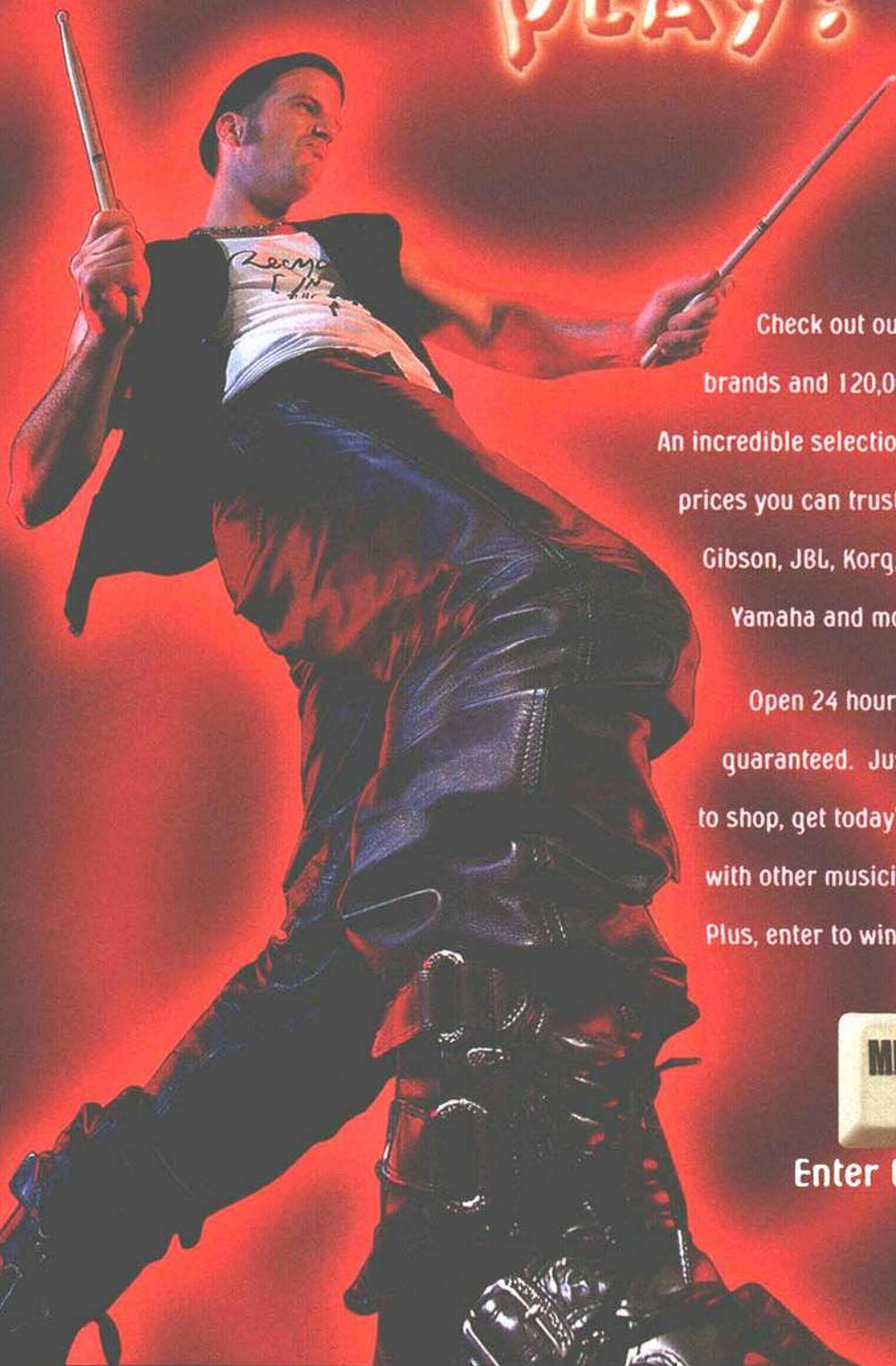
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Our Reply

The heels-down playing style dates back to days when control and dynamics were the major concerns for a drummer. Volume and speed were not required. Drummers were playing simple, four-on-the-floor time patterns until well into the late 1950s. Around that time they started "dropping bombs" with their bass drums in bebop music, which still didn't require tremendous power. Up-tempo jazz tunes could still be played flat-footed, since jazz drummers weren't too concerned with volume.

But everything changed with the advent of the musical instrument amplifier. While the bass, keyboard, and guitars of the rock bands suddenly got louder, it was a long time before anyone thought to put microphones on the drums. Drummers simply had to find ways of getting louder by them-

selves. So they started "kicking" their pedals (heels-up) in order to achieve sheer power. (This situation led to the creation of the term "kick drum.")

As is often the case in the evolution of a technique, the initial reason for playing heels-up was pure necessity; nobody saw it as a major technical *improvement*. But, as more and more drummers got into high-volume performance situations, the heels-up technique gained popularity and legitimacy. Many drummers *started* with it, and never learned any other way. Eventually, some heels-up drummers started focusing on technique-oriented issues like control, speed...and even dynamics (between the ranges of *f* and *fff*, that is).

Ironically, many drummers who are noted for their tremendous single- or double-bass-drum capabilities (including

speed, articulation, dynamic control, etc.) play their pedals in a very relaxed, heel-down style. But these drummers almost always perform in a totally miked-up situation, and can rely on amplification to get their sound out to the audience. On the other hand, some top drummers—especially rock drummers who came up through "street" bands—just attack their bass drums with heels up and knees bouncing. It works for them.

Our advice regarding *any* aspect of drumming has always been to do the least amount of work possible to get the job done. This, in turn, allows you to remain relaxed, maintain your stamina, and devote some of your energy to musical creativity. If this means using the heels-down technique (perhaps with the aid of a microphone), that's a very successful, time-test-

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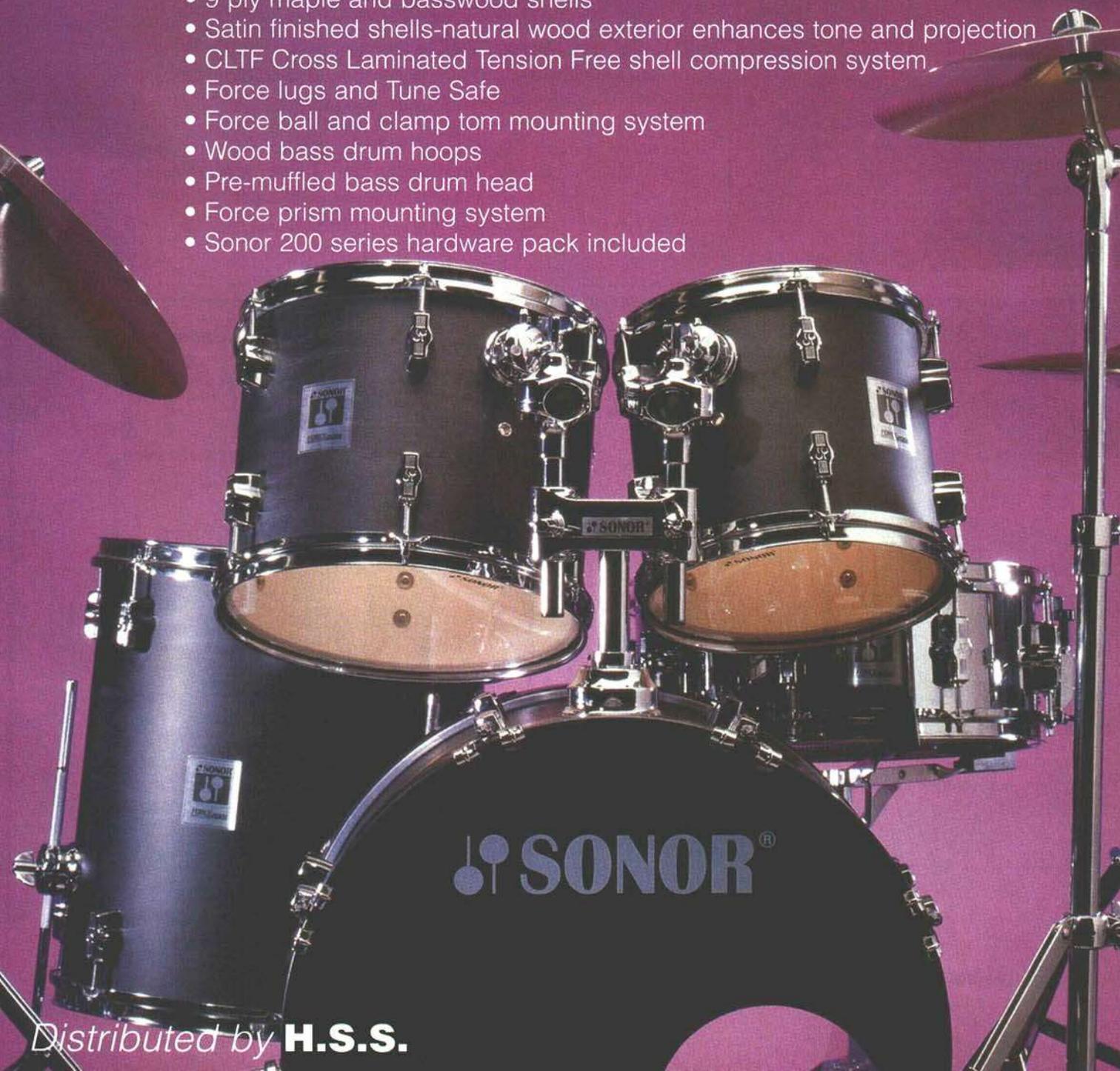
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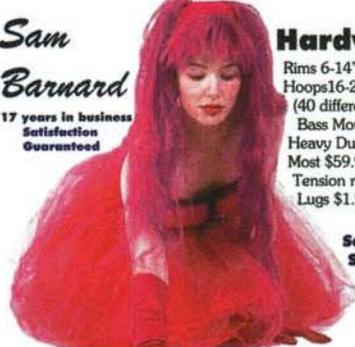
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Basics

ed way to play. If, however, you feel that you need to slam the drum a little harder for effect, go ahead and raise your heels. True, you might lose a little fine control that way, but the situation might not call for such control.

As to seat height, most teachers and educators prefer the basic "thighs parallel to the floor" position. (This dates back to the origin of the drumset, when drummers often sat on regular chairs.) This position gives you excellent balance, back support, and foot flexibility.

Over the years some drummers have elevated their seats a bit, allowing their knees to be a little lower than their hips. This provides them the feeling of "extending their legs" a bit toward their pedals. This, in turn, seems to free up the lower legs a little more, allowing the feet to "dance" on the pedals. Many big band drummers adopted this style, including Sonny Payne and Louie Bellson. The late Larrie Londin also sat fairly high, at 23". The exact height depends on your leg length.

When I was playing club gigs in the 1970s, I needed to get more volume out of

my unmiked bass drum. By raising my seat a bit, I could flex my foot down and forward more easily, giving me more "push" into the drum when playing heels-down, and an easier opportunity to raise my heel off the pedal when I wanted to.

There's no question that some very talented drummers sit quite low. Some have said that sitting low allows them to raise their leg up and get it back down again on the pedal for extra power. Vinnie Colaiuta sat *very* low early in his career. In fact, he used to cut 2" off the legs of the shortest drum stools! But more recently Vinnie has been quoted as saying that the low seat caused him some back problems. He has been raising his seat over the years, and now sits much more in the "traditional" position.

There is rarely a "right" way of doing *anything* on a drumkit—at least not one that applies to everyone. However, it's safe to say that the vast majority of drummers find success with one of two seat heights: a setting that puts their thighs parallel to the floor, or a setting 1" to 2" higher.



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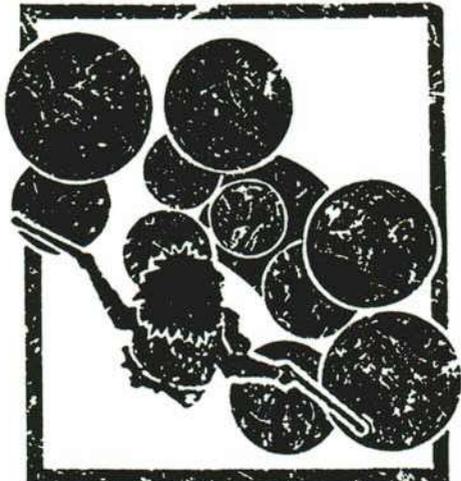


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SUPERIOR SOUND. HANDS DOWN

Blue Man Group

UFO Percussion

Story by Ken Micallef

Photos by Paul La Raia



Nothing can prepare you for the performance-art assault that is Blue Man Group. Running at New York's Astor Place theater since 1992, and now at venues in Boston, Chicago, and Las Vegas, Blue Man Group confound and entertain unexpected audiences with a blitzkrieg of cutting-edge art parody disguised as the antic-filled, multimedia journey of three alien-looking bald and blue-painted men.

The three primary players, Chris Wink,

Matt Goldman, and Phil Stanton, beat, drum, and wail on a wide variety of original industrial instruments, made primarily of PVC piping. The show revolves around the trio drumming on cans, pipes, walls, and tubes (also the name of the show), as *Twinkies*, *Captain Crunch*, toilet paper, and marshmallows fly off the stage.

Blue Man Group's recent CD, *Audio*, is altogether different from the show, featuring the Group's instruments within compositions that reflect the fusion and tribal

material of the Blue Man Group pit band, which features drummer Ian Pei. Playing unique PVC-derived instruments such as Tubulum, Drumbone, Backpack Tubulum, and Air Poles, *Audio* sounds a bit like King Crimson, with the tribal feel of an African drumming troupe with rock aspirations. Live, the band, led by Pei, is a drummer's feast of grinding grooves and haunting atmospheres. It's fusion for alien arrivals, mood music for demented comedians everywhere.

Blue Man Gear

Air Poles are a series of flexible fiberglass rods that make a satisfying "swoosh" as they slice through the air.

Angel Air Poles are made by connecting two poles at their thick ends. The result is a balanced instrument that can reach extremely fast tempos.

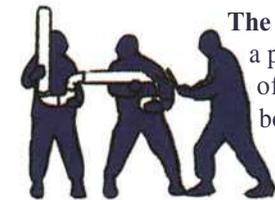
The Backpack Tubulum

allows Blue Man Group to move around and launch rockets while playing.



The Big Drum is a really big drum that is hit with a really big mallet.

The Cimbalom is an antique instrument from Hungary. It is similar to a hammer dulcimer except that it is larger and has thicker strings, giving it a deeper, more resonant timbre. It is normally played gently with soft mallets, but Blue Man Group hits it aggressively with drumsticks, giving it an edgier sound.

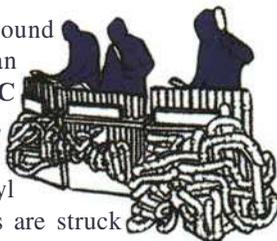


The Drumbone is a percussive spin-off of a trombone; its sliding tube-within-a-tube design allows it to be lengthened and shortened during performance, thus creating a variety of pitches. It can also be taken apart and used as two separate instruments that harmonize with each other.

Gary Strips are long, flat, aluminum sheets that create a thunderous, high-frequency alternative to snare drums. Unlike the Gyro Shot (below), Gary Strips sound pretty good, but they still did not end up on the recording. No one knows why.

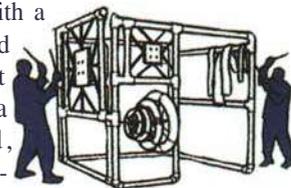
Gyro Shot contains spinning, circular rings filled with ball bearings of varying sizes. Although it looks really cool and industrial, no matter how hard Blue Man Group tried, the Gyro Shot ended up sounding like a wimpy "rain stick." As a result, this instrument does not appear anywhere on the recording.

The unique sound of Blue Man Group's **PVC Instrument** is achieved when polyvinyl chloride pipes are struck



with closed-cell foam rubber paddles. The pitch of each note is determined by the length of the tube.

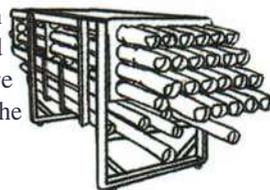
The Shaker Gong is a metal-encased matrix of ball bearings that is suspended from tightly stretched surgical tubing. When hit with a large, padded mallet, it produces a sustained, metallic, rattlesnake-like sound.



Sword Air Poles are short and thin, making them lighter and easier to control than the other Air Poles. They are used to create syncopated rhythms.



The Tubulum (pronounced "tube-you-lum") is similar to the PVC Instrument but has more of an 'OOs sound. It is struck with sticks rather than paddles, and its notes are primarily in the bass range.





MD: When performing live as Blue Man Group, you play a diversity of original instruments. Was it difficult to translate that to CD?

Chris: Our philosophy is to make all the weird instruments but then write good songs for them. There's a whole musical genre of exploring percussive sounds. I enjoy going to those kinds of shows, but I

don't put that music on my stereo and listen to it.

There's a tendency within this small sub-culture of experimental musical instruments to have not only innovative tastes in instruments but innovative tastes in music. So you get some crazy mad scientist making a really cool instrument, but when he plays it, it sounds crazy and becomes an oddity.

Our feeling is that the spirit of rock 'n' roll is the spirit of constant innovation. Think about the drumkit—the first guy who put together a drumkit was a nut. The hi-hat is a gizmo. The drumset is a contraction from New Orleans, and there were a few more innovations along the way. But at a certain point the drumset became institutionalized and it stopped evolving. It's strange for rock people to play by these rules.

MD: But many drummers are adding unusual percussion to their drumsets.

Chris: We wanted to avoid going on a cultural search. We'll use a talking drum, a doumbek, and cymbals from around the world. But we're looking for new music that's indigenous to nothing.

Matt: The instruments are made from warehouse industrial stuff. Once we make them, we go about the business of writing songs. We don't try to reinvent everything.

Phil: We like [song] hooks. You can picture somebody coming to all those weird instruments and not thinking about writing catchy music with harmonies. We like melodies, but with an edge.

Chris: The Kodo drummers are cool.

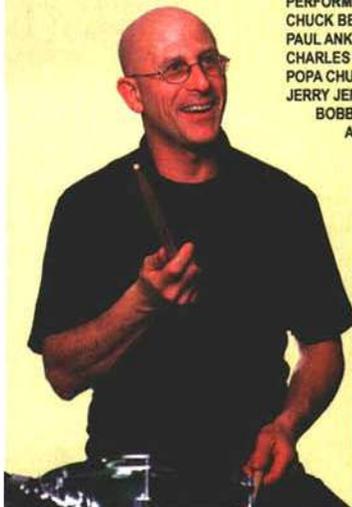
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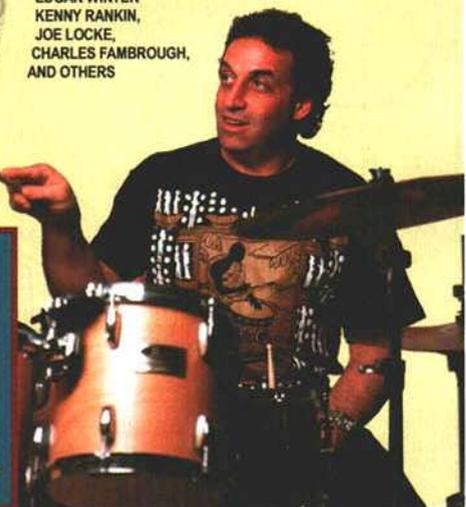
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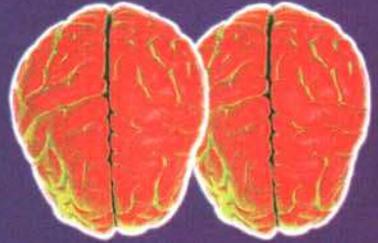
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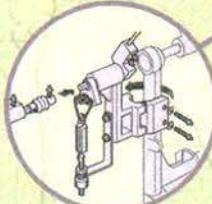


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"Our constant quest for a bigger drum has almost become a joke. We're begging different drum companies to make a drum bigger than 60". We want one the size of a building."

MD: But they can be boring for drummers to watch.

Chris: They can be boring. They are ego-less, but that's a good element. It's all about the pocket they create together. We've been influenced by that. That is profound, actually, because there's that Western thing of wanting to show off your chops. We're trying to avoid that. And they have respect for their instruments.

MD: You don't have any respect for the PVC pipe.

Chris: Yeah, we smack the crap out of it. We'll put a big mic' in there and put it through a subwoofer and make the audience bounce out of their seats. Our constant quest for a bigger drum has almost become a joke. We're begging different drum companies to make a drum bigger than 60".

Phil: We want one the size of a building.

MD: Were you all drummers before you were Blue Men?



An advertisement for Istanbul Agop cymbals. The main image is a close-up of a cymbal with a reflective surface. The text "i AM alchemy series" is written in a stylized, red, outlined font across the top. Below it, "i AM istanbül Agop" is written in a similar font, with a star over the 'ü'. Underneath, it says "Handmade cymbals from Turkey". At the bottom, there is a line of text: "Look for the Genuine 'Agop' name - Accept no substitute". At the very bottom, there is a small line of text: "Distributed by DR Music phone: (800)-782-1901 e-mail : istanbul@drstrings.com www.istanbulcymbals.com".

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Ian Pei

Laying Traps Far Blue Men

As the long-time drumset player for the New York production of Blue Man Group's show, *Tubes*, Ian Pei has the responsibility of providing almost non-stop energy to the insanity that's happening on stage. Performing the show week in and week out can take its toll, but it's obvious Pei is enjoying the gig.

Ian: This is the best gig you can have as a drummer! The drummer is basically the conductor of the show. Plus I get two hours to go bananas. I have to hit the cues in a framework, but the concept is open. My goal, though, is to sound like fifty guys banging on hand drums. I don't want to sound like one guy with a really big kit. I'm trying to have a bigger-than-life sound. In order to do that you have to hit hard, hit a lot, and hit fast.

MD: The drumming is busy in the best sense of being busy. It's very intense, and the charts you play are so elaborate. Why did BMG want a more fusion approach?

Ian: We didn't choose to make it that way. The funny thing is that when the drumming began I wasn't playing at the best of my ability. Drumming was the last thing I was thinking of doing at that point. We were building the instruments, and then we had to play music. We hadn't written anything. The music devel-

oped organically.

I had no intentions of being a working drummer. When the show was being developed I was working as an artist. I met Danny Gottlieb the first couple of weeks of the show, and he really helped me focus on my drumming. He told me I didn't need lessons, I just needed to get my head checked out.

MD: What did that mean?

Ian: He said I have to play with confidence. He said I was already delivering a unique message. If I just kept going on the freeform thing, I would probably go some places other people wouldn't.

MD: Can anyone sub on this gig?

Ian: Not really. Most guys can't even play the basic beat. It's kind of a jungle thing, but it has a lot of different influences. We want it to be kind of tribal and primitive—all those things about drums that get people excited. But it's not an actual Cuban, Brazilian, or Afro-Cuban beat.

MD: So you breeze through the show now?

Ian: It's a *lot* of work. I did 1,600 shows in a row at one point, and my body practically collapsed. We do weekdays, two shows on Friday, and three shows on Saturday and Sunday.

Now I have two subs who also do the show, Josh Matthews and Clem Waldman. They had

to learn my quirky way of playing. It's like studying a whole different technique.

I didn't think it was gonna be that hard, but I do these weird things. Some of the drummers who have come in to audition for the show over the years have been really great, but they've had trouble. I use my feet a lot. I use a double kick pedal and two hi-hats. I ride on one hi-hat and use the other for accents. One hi-hat has a tambourine, the other has a tambourine and a Crasher. I've come up with some strange patterns.

MD: Do a lot of drummers audition?

Ian: We auditioned hundreds of drummers in six different cities when we were opening our different productions. With all of that we were only able to find six guys.

For the auditions we had the guys who seemed really skilled play the dumbest songs—we just wanted to see them rock. Then we tried them on the other stuff to see how quickly they learned the weird beats.

I've seen guys who were great drummers, but when you tell them to let it all go and rock out they can't do it. All of that control and discipline got them to where they are. But that alone doesn't make it. I come from the Keith Moon school, and that's what works for this show.

Ken Micallef



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Blue Man Group

Matt: I didn't originally train as a drummer.

Phil: I had a musical family background but I never played drums.

Chris: I have the drumming background. These guys were builders and actors, and they worked in computers. And we're all comedians.

Phil: We've had fun teaching each other things. Again, to be a Blue Man you have to know how to play a certain way, but you don't need to know how to play a drumkit. As long as you have your 16th notes and accent patterns together, you can do it.

Matt: Also, as a group the goal is often to have really simple parts. They support the more complicated parts. If you don't structure things just right, the melody will never come through.

Chris: It also relates to the comedy. I was a mediocre drummer even though I studied with Joe Cusatis at the Modern Drum Shop. He always complained that I didn't practice enough. I was the last guy he thought would have done well with drumming. If I had been a real star my approach would have been, "Hey, look what I can do." But the audience would rather see us

drumming, communicating, and having little accidents and miscommunications.

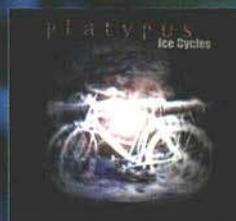
MD: You must all have theater backgrounds, because your stage timing is so good.

Chris: At first we did almost 1,300 shows in a row by ourselves. We learned it. That's the contrast between doing the show and recording a CD. We made changes to every show, every night. We would sit and



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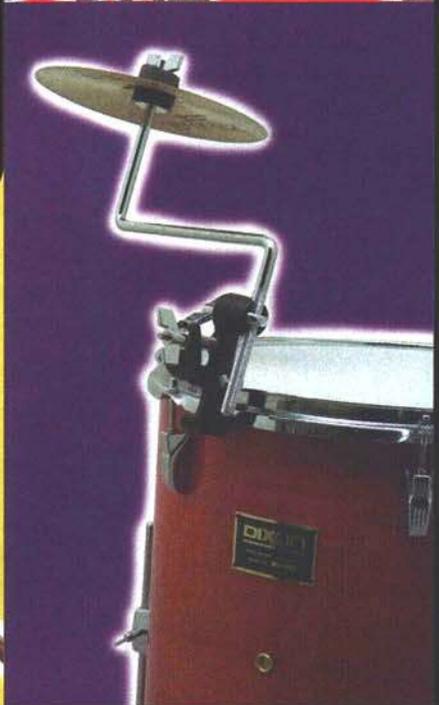
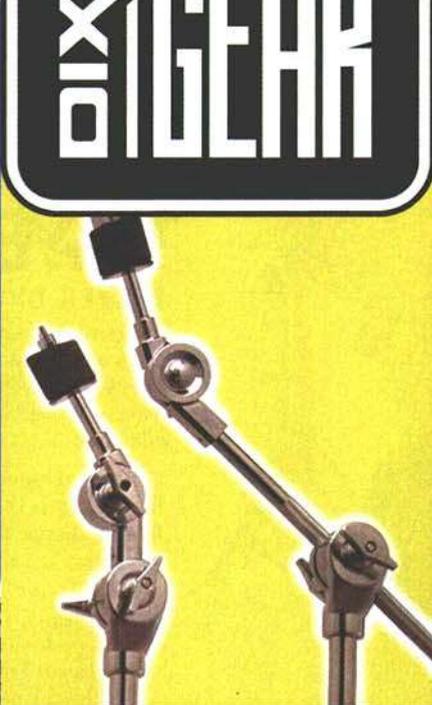
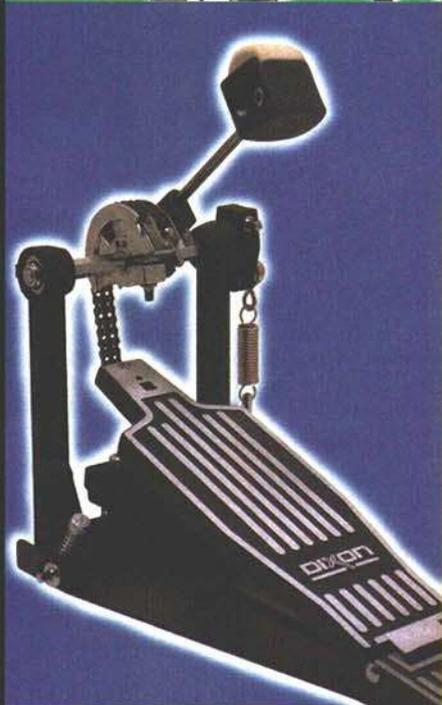
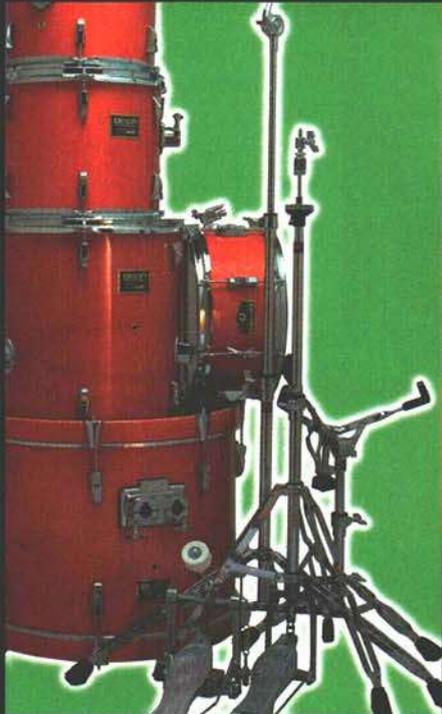
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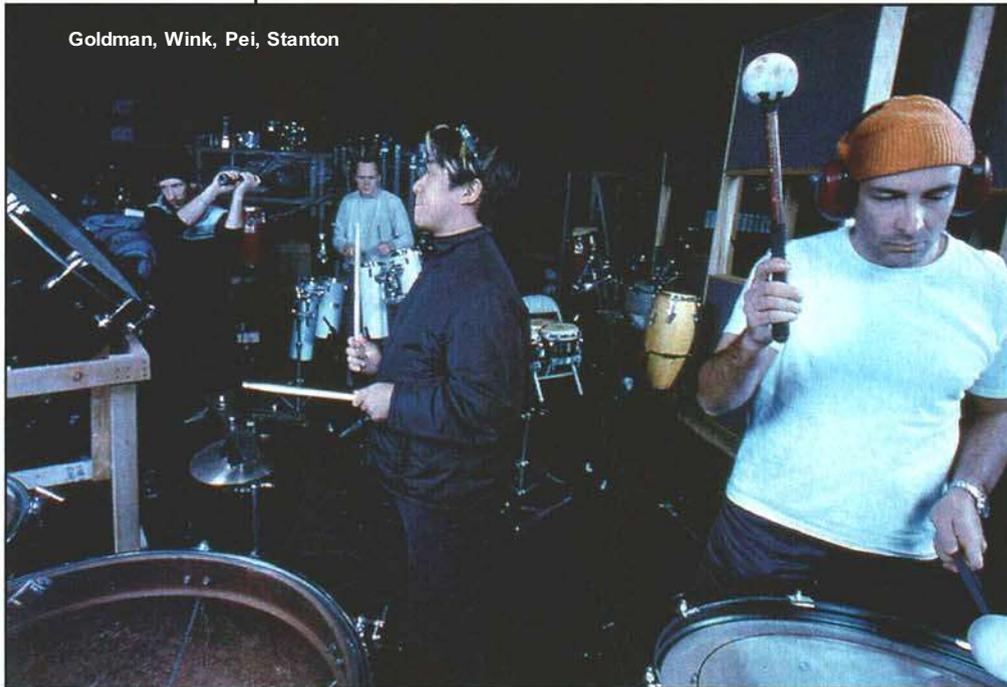
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Blue Man Group

Goldman, Wink, Pei, Stanton



MD: A lot of tourists come to your show, and some of the subject material is pretty intellectual, with your take on contemporary art and consumer culture. It's not a dumb-ed-down show.

Chris: At first we didn't think that a lot of tourists would like it, but now 2,400 people come every week. So we feel really good that we don't have to do a lowest-common-denominator type of show.

MD: Do you think the audience gets the modern art allusions?

Chris: I'm not sure what everybody gets. There's a level that most people can understand.

MD: What was the original idea for the show?

Phil: We had five minutes of material, then a few months later we had twenty minutes. It just grew. One of the things that united us was that

do an hour's worth of notes after every show, critiquing what we did. With the CD, you put that sucker down and that's it. It's there forever. It's like two different lives. I don't think that it's an accident that

it took us three failed attempts to fill in all the holes and complete the CD.

Phil: So when you talk about timing, when you do it over eleven years, you get to try every permutation.

we had a disparate range of interests. We did have this thing where we would make stupid paintings on a drum. We pushed the art parody. The comedians of the ages tend to tear down pomposity. Their job is to



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Blue Man Group

look at the leaders and say the emperor is naked.

We have an element of science in our show, including fractals, LED signs, and basically information overload. But we also have tribal drums for contrast.

MD: Are the Blue Men from another planet?

Chris: We don't think of them as aliens. We think of them as...well...just *other*. But they are human, you know how they feel, and you know what they're thinking. They're enigmatic.

MD: What influenced the music on the CD?

Chris: Some choices are conscious, some are not. We didn't worry about presenting complex chord changes. We were looking to see what we could get out of three chords. The first song on the album starts with the Air Pole, then the Tubulum comes in.

We haven't created the ultimate drum album, but we feel we're close. We'll keep at it, though. That's one of our goals. Percussion hasn't done that thing we all know it can do.



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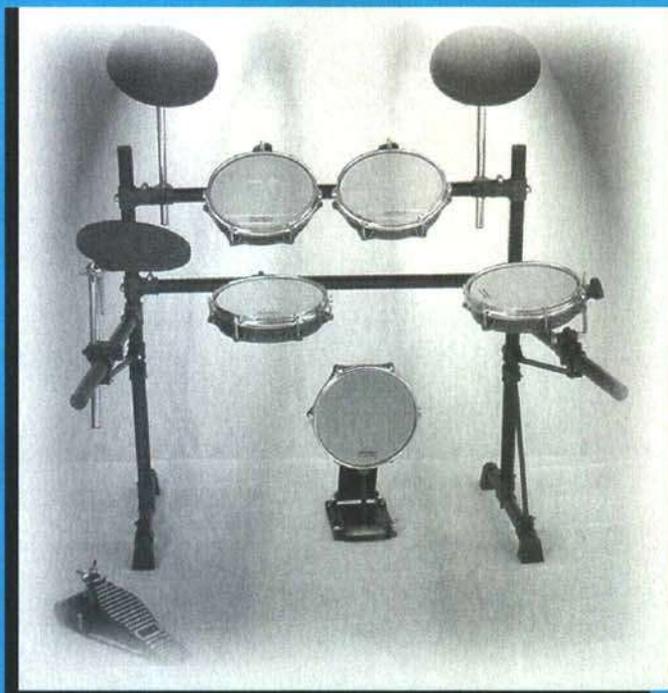
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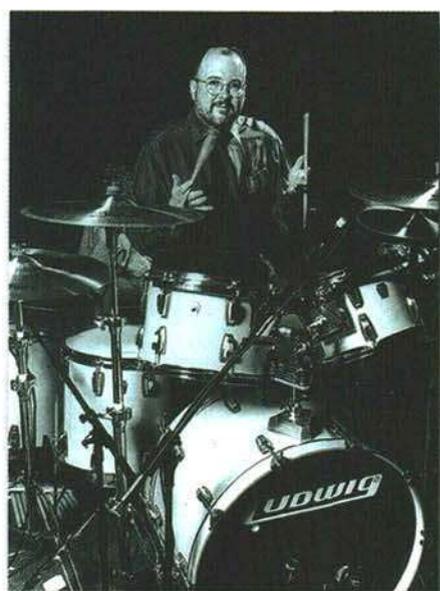
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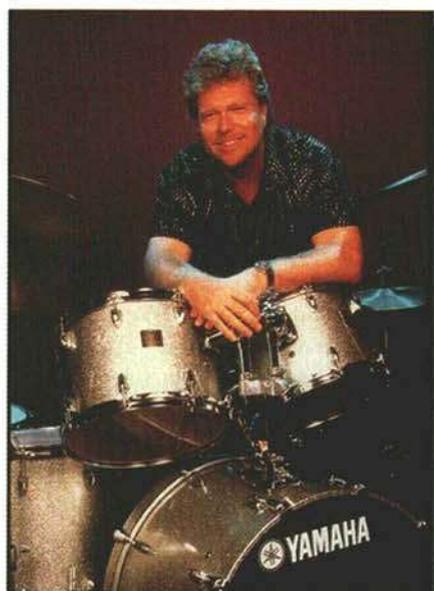
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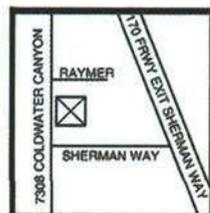
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Uwe Peterson

"Versatile" is the word for Hamburg, Germany's Uwe Peterson. In his fifteen-year career he's played with traditional dance bands, '20s/'30s jazz bands, TV show orchestras, nightclub house bands, and backup groups for several different cabaret and recording artists. But perhaps his most colorful gig has been as the drummer for two European tours of "The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical," better known to Americans simply as *Hair*.

"I was touring Germany with organist Jon Hammond in 1996," says Uwe. "We were booked in a club next door to the the-

ater in which *Hair* was playing. The show's band came in one night, and after hearing me play, the drummer asked me if I'd like to go on tour for him. That led to over six hundred fifty performances in two years, including shows in eight countries." Recordings from some of those *Hair* performances—along with several other projects—reveal Uwe to be a drummer of



taste, skill, and immense musicality.

Uwe endorses Yamaha drums, Zildjian cymbals, and Vater sticks. He also uses a Roland V-Custom electronic kit on his current gig, a Hamburg Top-40 band. "When you come home from being on the road, you have to start over," says Uwe. But he's not worried. Besides playing around town, he also maintains a busy teaching schedule. Meanwhile, he's awaiting the call to go back on the road with *Hair*, The Blues Brothers Show, or another major European touring act.

Derek Cintron

Miami's Derek Cintron is a multi-threat musician. He's a very versatile drummer who has toured and recorded with MCA Latino recording artist Rosco Martinez, alternative rock group Trophy Wife, rap/hardcore group Madhandle, jazz/classical ensemble Noodles On Jupiter, R&B production house Greenstreet, and power-pop band Humbert. But Derek also sings, plays guitar, bass, and keyboards, and composes. He has combined these skills on two self-produced solo CDs. *Mantra*, released in 1996, won *Jam* magazine's "Jammie" award

for best independent release, and was named best solo album by the Miami *New Times*. March of this year saw the release of *Ohh...The Drama*, which again showcases Derek in all his musical capacities. It's an impressive work, worth inquiring about at www.derekcintron.com.

Derek cites Keith Moon, Stewart Copeland, John Bonham, Dave Abbruzzese, and Manu Katche among his drumming influences. He endorses Fibes drums and Paiste cymbals.

Considering his interest in all aspects of

music, it's not surprising that Derek's career goal is to be "a hard-rockin' Phil Collins," as he puts it. "I'd love to be a musician capable of doing sessions and/or concerts with other artists and groups, while pursuing my own career as a solo artist/songwriter."



Mike Rowland

Thirty-year-old Mike Rowland has an alter ego: Mike Mulligan, drummer for The Mulligans. The members of the Green Bay, Wisconsin-based group aren't actually related, but they take the "family name" when on stage—partly as a reflection of the way they get along, and partly to avoid a name that labels their music. The band plays Midwest clubs and festivals, combining rock originals and cov-



ers in an aggressive but melodic pop style.

On his role as a drummer, Mike says, "I've always thought it's important to be able to execute on your instrument well. But it's *just* as important to approach drumming from a melodic point of view, and to provide a foundation that's not only solid, but also complements what a singer is doing. If you can achieve that, you have something special. Besides, there's not a lot of demand for four-minute drum solos on the radio these days!"

Mike's philosophy is evident on The Mulligans' CD, *Real Virtuality* (www.the-mulligans.com). The tunes are

radio-friendly and energetic, blending melody with a contemporary edge. The influence of drummers like Steve Smith, Liberty DeVitto, Kenny Aronoff, Joey Kramer, and Peter Criss helps Mike to lay down a solid foundation while adding some catchy licks and patterns that let you know he's thinking all the time. He does it all on Pearl Masters Custom drums, Zildjian cymbals, and DW pedals.

Mike hopes to continue touring, writing, and recording with The Mulligans, and to see the band's career expand. As for a personal goal, Mike says, "It's to wake up tomorrow and realize that I'm a better drummer than I was yesterday."

If you'd like to appear in *On The Move*, send us an audio or video cassette of your best work (preferably both solo and with a band) on three or four songs, along with a brief bio sketch and a high-quality color or black & white close-up photo. (Polaroids are not acceptable. Photos will not be paid for or credited.) The bio sketch

should include your full name and age, along with your playing style(s), influences, current playing situation (band, recording project, freelance artist, etc.), how often and where you are playing, and what your goals are (recording artist, session player, local career player, etc.). Include any special items of interest pertaining to what

you do and how you do it, and a list of the equipment you use regularly. Send your material to On The Move, Modern Drummer Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Material **cannot** be returned, so please **do not** send original tapes or photos.



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Rhode Island Will Never Seem The Same

by Bob Cianci

Several years ago my band was graciously given a block of studio time at no charge by the owner of a recording studio in Rhode Island, who was a friend of our bass player. Our plan was to record two originals and one cover tune. The way I understood it, the session was to be strictly low-pressure and fun. The goal was to cut a basic demo tape. At the time, my recording experience was limited to a couple of demo sessions and some rough basement tapes.

Our keyboard player and I drove up to Rhode Island, met the rest of the band there, and stayed overnight in an apartment above the studio. The next morning we met Bill, the owner, at the studio, and set up our equipment. It was a beautiful facility.

Billy Cobham had even signed his name on the wall of the drum booth. I brought my '65 Slingerland set since Bill didn't have a drumset of his own (a fact that would later prove to be a problem).

After the mic's were in place, it was time to get a drum sound. Four hours later, after slamming unceasing quarter notes on snare, toms, and bass drum, oiling my pedals, and making a trip to the local pharmacy to procure cotton balls for the toms, we were finally ready to begin tracking. The fun had just begun.

"I want you to hit the snare, kick, and hi-hat as hard as you can and as consistently as possible, and keep up with the click," stated Bill. Keep up with the click? I'd never played with a click in my life. I was the product of an old-school teacher who never used a metronome. Over the years, a few people had told me that I had a time problem, but I always shrugged it off or blamed them. After all, I was a good drummer, wasn't I? Unbeknownst to me, judgment day had arrived.

As the tape began to roll, I did my best to play with the click. But after four or five aborted takes, it became apparent to everyone that I couldn't cut it. "Alright, I'll turn off the click. You'll just have to work without it," shouted Bill. With the tape again rolling, I tried my best to slug the snare, hats, and bass drum with all my strength. But Bill kept stopping us and screaming at me, "I said hit the drums as hard as you can *consistently*. Why can't you do that?"

This scene was repeated five or six more times. I felt humiliat-

ed, frustrated, angry, and totally inadequate. I didn't know whether to break down in tears, walk out, or burst into the control room and strangle Bill. Somehow, I remained calm and collected, though I could see Bill waving his hands around in the control room and gesturing to our bassist. I imagined he was saying, "Get another drummer, for God's sake." Later, I found out I was right.

So here I was, screwing up our big session and wasting everyone's time. Realizing that if I walked out, I would *really* waste the band's time, I decided to bear down and just do the best I could. "If you're so unhappy with what I'm doing, hook up the drum machine and use that," I said. "I'm doing my best. That's all I can do."

That's all I can do."

"No, no" our bassist chimed in. "We want to use you. Let's take a break and try it again later." The keyboard player, a serious pro with many years of experience, exclaimed, "Just let him play the way he's used to playing." I guess that broke the ice as far as Bill was concerned. From that point on, he left me alone. Or perhaps he just gave up on me.

After a twenty-minute break and a pep talk from the band, I gave it another shot. Bill started tracking again, and two takes later we had something that everyone was relatively satisfied with. From that point on things went smoothly. We cut a funk original next, and I nailed it in two takes. The final

track was a power ballad, and although my time was questionable throughout the session, at least the two originals felt pretty good overall.

At 1:00 A.M., emotionally and physically exhausted, I collapsed on the waiting-room couch while the vocals were laid down. At 4:00 A.M. we packed and left for home. The entire experience really shook me up. I had been playing drums for over twenty years, and the realization that my time stunk was a painful, bitter pill to swallow.

The next month, I attended a *Modern Drummer* Festival Weekend, where I had an opportunity to speak with Gary Chester backstage. Sensing that Gary was a kindred spirit, I poured my heart out to him. "I understand what happened, and I feel for you," said Gary. "My advice is to buy yourself a drum machine, learn to program it, and practice with it until you turn

**"I
had been playing
drums for over
twenty years, and the
realization that my time
stunk was a painful,
bitter pill to
swallow."**

blue. Believe me, it will work."

Three days later I bought a Roland TR-505, programmed a cowbell/bass drum click, and followed Gary's directions. At first, staying in sync with the click was extremely difficult, even after playing the simplest fills. But eventually I got it. I kept working with the click for nearly two years. The hardest part was convincing myself that the machine was my friend. Even though it was a precise, heartless, unfeeling tool, it was to be used to accomplish a goal. It wasn't my enemy. Hell, it wasn't even an opponent.

Just as Gary had predicted, my time eventually improved to the point that the guys in the band actually began to compliment me. I gradually regained my confidence in my drumming—and that felt mighty good. Three years later, we once again entered the studio to lay down some demos. We decided to use a click on all three tunes: two rockers and an R&B ballad. This time I was ready, and everything went smoothly. I played with the click flawlessly, and I still managed to make each tune feel good. I was happy, the band was happy, and the engineer was happy. We even garnered a little local radio airplay with the ballad.

Over the years, I remembered reading about drummers who struggled to make the best of a bad situation. I finally knew what it felt like. Only one problem: Rhode Island will never see the same to me. But thanks for the favor, Bill!



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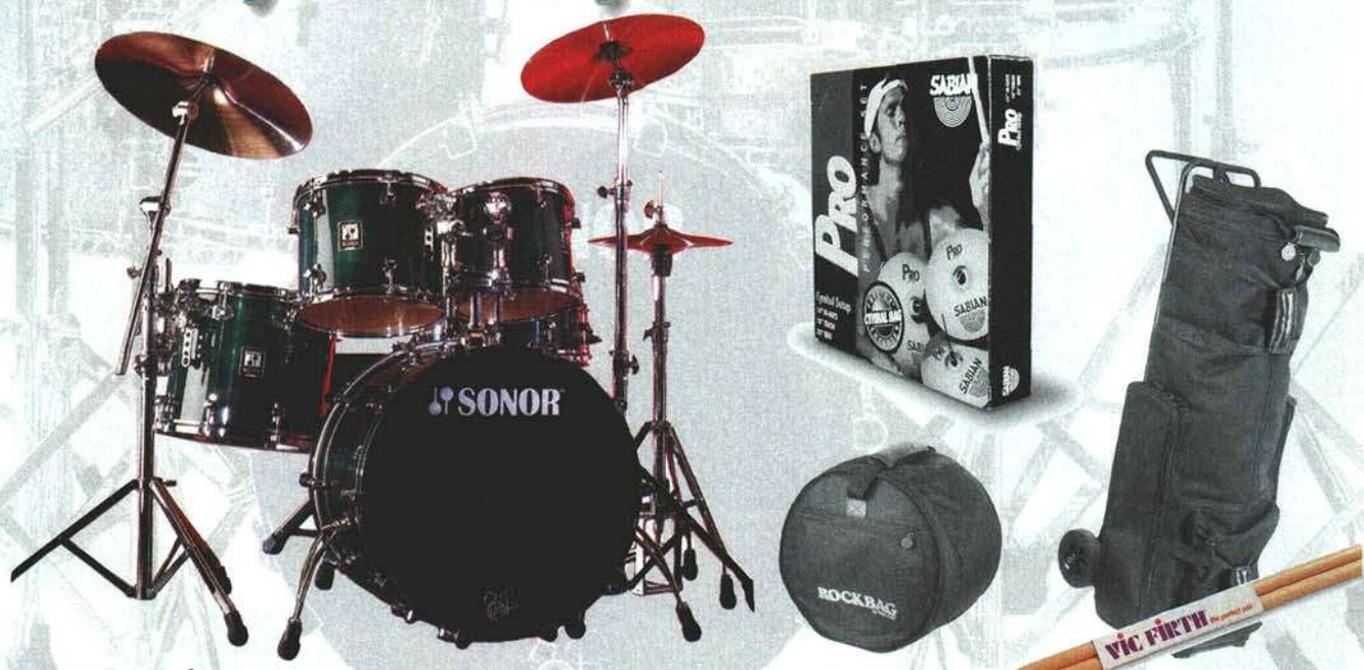
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“Gene was the first one who made it possible for guys like me to become popular—to be noticed. We all owe him a great deal of gratitude.”

Buddy Rich

If anyone can be considered the founding father of modern drumset playing, it's Gene Krupa. Krupa legitimized a collection of instruments known as the "traps" at a time when both the instrument and its players were barely tolerated. Krupa led a revolution against this prevailing attitude that put the drumset on the musical map.

Born in Chicago in 1909, Gene came to play drums because they were the cheapest instrument in the catalog. Perhaps it was providence that happened to make the drumset so cheap, but it was Gene who practiced constantly and brought himself up to a professional level.

Gene's main influences were Baby Dodds and Zutty Singleton. Dodds' style was based primarily on snare drum, bass drum, cymbal, and tuned cowbells and woodblocks. He never used a hi-hat, and he was an expert at keeping time on the snare drum. Singleton was more modern than Dodds, and was known to use hi-hat and wire brushes. The influences of both of these men on Gene can be heard on *The Sound Of Chicago* (Columbia). This compilation features some fiery playing by Gene, and serves notice that a new and

very original talent was about to emerge on the scene.

It was in New York City that Krupa would enjoy his greatest period of growth and begin his climb to fame. At that time, Harlem was considered the most significant African American community in America, and the "uptown" scene was literally owned by Duke Ellington's orchestra, with Sonny Greer on drums. Greer's style was African-based, and his playing influenced Gene to study the rich music of Africa and to apply those ideas to jazz.

Drummer/bandleader Chick Webb was another of the most influential drummers of his time. He introduced many of the concepts that are a part of every big band drummer's vocabulary. Chick's crystal-clear playing and explosive fills and solos not only influenced Gene, but every other drummer who came under his rhythmic spell. Later, following the famous "battle of the bands" between Benny Goodman and Chick Webb at Harlem's Savoy Ballroom, Gene would say, "I was never cut by a better man."

Before joining Benny Goodman, Gene played in the pit bands of *Strike Up The Band* and *Girl Crazy*, two popular Broadway

musicals. Later he admitted that he couldn't tell a quarter note from an 8th note, and that he'd pass his part to fellow pit-band player Glenn Miller, who would hum the part for him until he got it in his head. Without the necessary technique and reading ability, Gene decided to solve the problem by studying with Sanford Moeller, one of the finest teachers of his time. Moeller taught classical snare drum technique, and it was this technique that Krupa ultimately perfected and modified for the drumset.

Benny Goodman and Gene Krupa will forever be linked in the history of American music. They were natural musical partners, though different as night and day. Goodman was one of the most difficult and complicated men in jazz, while Gene was kind, generous, and unflappable. Interestingly, Gene was originally very reluctant to join Benny's band, after hassling with him on previous gigs over money and musical interpretation. It took major persuasion from record producer John Hammond to get Gene to join Benny's band.

Gene joined the Goodman band in 1935, just as the band had landed an important radio show called *Let's Dance*. The *Let's*

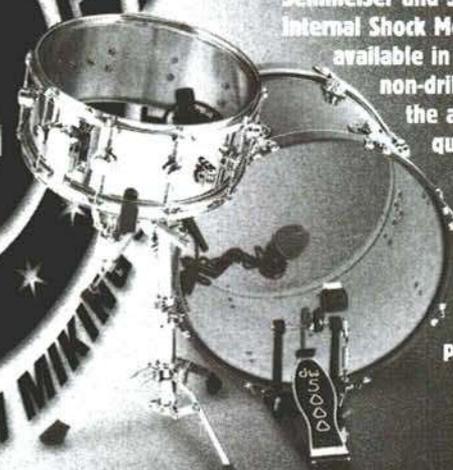


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Gene Krupa

Dance program and the band's subsequent performance at the Palomar Ballroom in southern California are still considered the launching of the swing era. Benny's book had a number of charts by master arrangers like Fletcher Henderson, Deane Kincaide, and Jimmy Mundy. Most of the arrangements gave Gene plenty of room.

During his tenure with Benny, Gene made a number of wonderful recordings, many of which are available on numerous anthologies. Some of his best work can be heard on Volume 3 of *The Anthology Of Jazz Drumming* (Masters Of Jazz). Among the tracks on this recording, "I Hope Gabriel Likes My Music" is indicative of the Chicago style, with a drum break right out of Baby Dodds. On "Nobody's Sweetheart," Gene's opening solo on hi-hat is quite modern for its time. But the best track on this anthology is the Benny Goodman band playing "Swingtime In The Rockies." It's Gene at his very best: understated at the outset, and intense and driving at the end.

It was during his time with Goodman that Gene began to revolutionize drumset playing. He soon eliminated cowbells, temple blocks, woodblocks, and gongs, and adopted what today stands as the standard

drumset configuration. Krupa was also a natural showman, and his flair for the dramatic kept the drums in the spotlight. He used that spotlight wisely, and firmly established the drummer as a prominent member of the ensemble.

The Goodman band's concert at Carnegie Hall in New York still stands as the pinnacle of both Benny and Gene's careers. *The Famous 1938 Concert At Carnegie Hall* (Columbia) includes Gene's famous solo performance on "Sing, Sing, Sing," along with great solos from many of the guest stars that appeared with the band on that memorable evening.

The walls came tumbling down for Benny and Gene at a theater in Philadelphia later in 1938. Gene's increasing popularity began to grate on Benny's nerves, while Gene was growing tired of being reined in. After they parted ways, Gene went on to lead his own band, beginning another period of growth, controversy, and a new musical direction.

Gene's new band debuted in the spring of 1938, with the entire book built around him. The band had some fine players and good charts by Chappie Willet, George Williams, and Benny Carter. Carter's "Symphony In Riffs" was one of the best

things the first band recorded, and can be found on *Gene Krupa's Sidekicks* (Columbia Special Products). Gene's band was a hit, but it didn't come into its own until 1941, when he added vocalist Anita O'Day and trumpeter/singer Roy Eldridge. Eldridge was a formidable soloist, and his performance on the band's recording of "Rockin' Chair" is spectacular.

Krupa's biggest hit was "Let Me Off Uptown," featuring a vocal duet between Eldridge and O'Day and a buoyant arrangement by a young Quincy Jones. The recording can be found on *The Essential Gene Krupa* (Verve), as well as on a video version called *Gene Krupa, Jazz Legend* (DCI Music Video).

Krupa's career was interrupted in 1943 by a drug bust that was a major blow to his reputation. Although the conviction was reversed on appeal, the embarrassment would plague him for the rest of his life. But Gene would rise from the ashes musically, first with Tommy Dorsey's band, and then with another version of his own band that featured a string section. The concept, though interesting, earned mixed reviews, and unfortunately was a financial disaster.

The band that Gene fronted between 1944 and 1951 was his youngest and most



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Gene Krupa

modern, coinciding with the declining years of swing and the birth of bop. Arrangements were by George Williams, Eddie Finckel, and Gerry Mulligan, and the band included sidemen like Buddy DeFranco, Charlie Kennedy, and Red Rodney. Gene also had to deal with the problem of trying to merge his Chicago style with the more rhythmically complex style of bop. Much of the music of that era can be found on *What's This—1946—Volume 1* (Hep CD), where Gene is heard using a more legato approach to time playing, minus the forward edge that had so identified him. Another example of his modified bop approach can be heard on Gerry Mulligan's "Disc Jockey Jump" on *The Essential Gene Krupa* (Verve).

Gene gave up his big band in 1951 and became a star member of *Jazz At The Philharmonic*. The brainchild of record producer Norman Granz, the *JATP* concerts were floating jam sessions that toured the world and featured some of the best musicians of that period. Buddy Rich was also a member, and one of the highlights of the evening was a drum battle between Buddy and Gene. These drum battles were recorded and released as *Burnin' Beat* and

Krupa And Rich (Verve).

From the early 1950s through 1967, Gene led a variety of small groups. He also appeared in the feature-film biographies of Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller. Though many critics stated that Krupa had stopped growing during the '60s—particularly after he suffered a heart attack—Krupa fooled them again with his finest recording of that period. *Great New Quartet* (Verve) was recorded in 1964, with Charlie Ventura on sax, Knobby Totah on bass, and John Bunch on piano. Though sometimes a bit too stylized, the album nonetheless swings from beginning to end, and is a prime example of how well Gene balanced traditional and modern drumming styles with taste and musicality.

The last four years of Gene's life were still musically productive, despite his being diagnosed with leukemia. He returned to his roots, performing often with Benny Goodman, Teddy Wilson, and Lionel Hampton. He died on October 16, 1973.

Gene Krupa placed the spotlight not on himself, but on the instrument he loved so much. Thanks to Gene, drummers today are among the world's most respected musicians.



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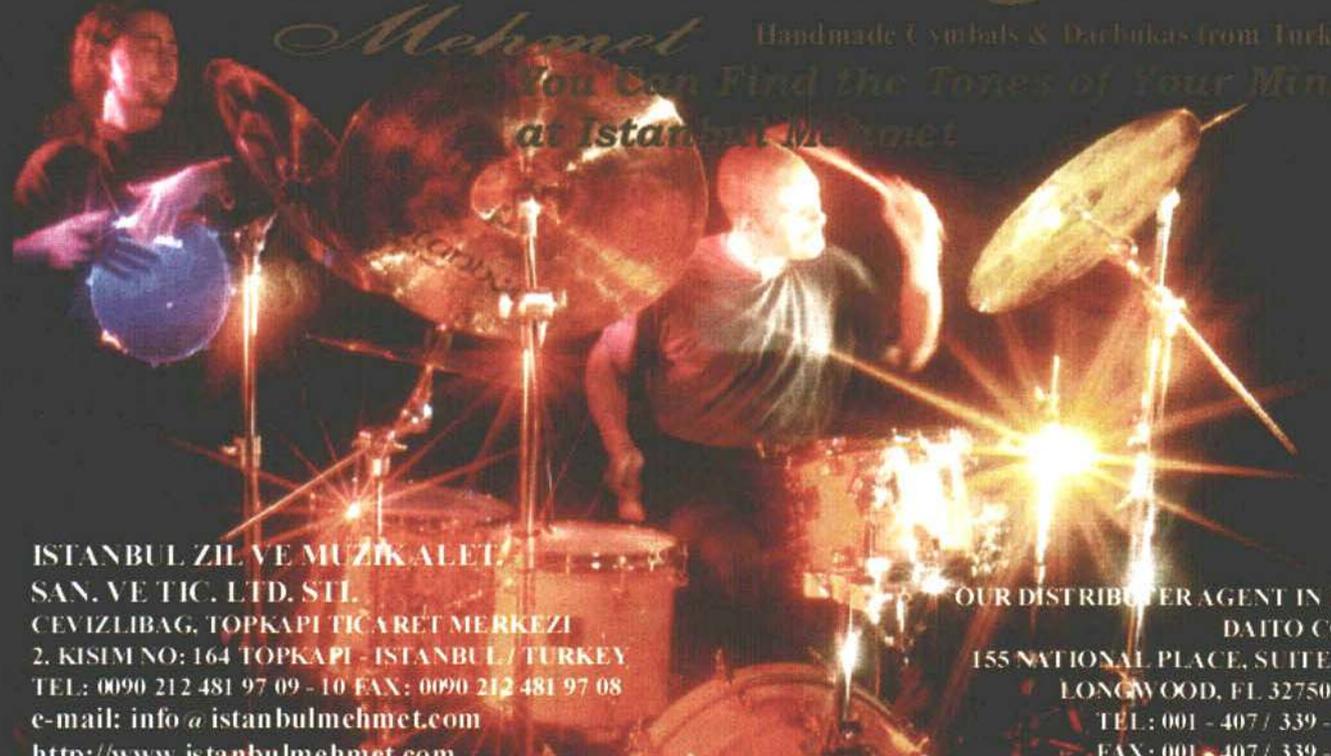
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Dynamics

The Underused Musical Tool

by Ted Bonar

Over the past few months, we've discussed how drummers can use music theory to improve their overall musicality. We've looked at chord progressions and song forms on a general basis, and we've explored how a knowledge of the way music is created can help us rehearse more efficiently, learn more quickly, and play more appropriately.

This month, we're going to change gears slightly and explore an unsung and underused musical tool: dynamics. Many drum-

mers who are learning the instrument are restricted from discovering the effective use of volume, or from discovering the range of his instrument. A clarinetist must know the range of notes on the instrument: lowest note possible, highest note possible, and the number of octaves in between. Drummers must be allowed to find out the range of their instrument as well. In a school band situation, the drummer must be able to know how quietly—and how loudly—he or she can play to be effective.

your instrument. Drums and percussion instruments (excluding keyboard instruments like marimba, vibes, xylophone, etc.) have ambiguous pitches. Bass drums are low in pitch, toms are a bit higher in pitch, the snare is usually a medium-high pitch, and the cymbals are the highest pitches on the instrument. But we don't use the drums' pitches the way other instruments use pitch. We can use the same drums on virtually any song, in any key signature, with any chord progression. We use the combination of

"IN THE COURSE OF ONE SONG I LEARNED MORE ABOUT
DYNAMICS THAN I HAD IN FOUR YEARS OF MUSIC SCHOOL."

mers are forced to learn dynamics via an unfortunate method at an early age, when the school band director yells at the percussionists, "You're playing too loud!" If not that, then young drumset players are restricted from playing in their rooms or their basements after a certain time at night because their instrument is "too loud."

The fact is, drums *are* loud—but generally no louder than any other instrument. Drums are certainly not louder than amplified guitars or basses, nor are they louder than saxophones, trumpets, or even clarinets. (If you doubt this, you haven't been around many beginning clarinet students!) However, by definition, drums are percussive, and therefore the dynamics of our instrument work differently from those of other instruments.

A common problem with drummers who are constantly chided for being too loud is that they are unable to explore the range of dynamics on the instrument. If a band director (or a parent) constantly puts a cap on the volume of the drums, the student

Since many drummers are not allowed to discover this dynamic range at a young age, it's true that many drummers "forget"—for lack of a better word—to play dynamically.

Let's get something out of the way: volume—big volume—is important. Obviously, many rock drummers have learned to slam backbeats, bash cymbals, and pound bass drums into submission. Many times, rock music + drums = very loud. The drums are physical, and they need to be played with a vicious backbeat if and when it is required. So why are some drummers more effective at playing loudly than others? The answer is that there are drummers who play very loud who also understand the concepts of dynamics and using a *range* of volume. Conversely, there are drummers who *only* play very loud—virtually ignoring any dynamic change in the music.

When thinking about the concept of "loud," you must also consider the concept of "soft" or "quiet" to balance the range of

drums (and their pitches) to lay down beats, but the drummer's secret weapon is to use these combinations in varying degrees of soft and loud. We must be able to use the full range of dynamics on our instrument to play effectively.

I can distinctly recall two musical situations where I learned about using a "range of dynamics." As a rock drummer, I had always had tremendous pride in my backbeat and my kick drum. In my development as a drummer, I realized that I had more of a gift for laying down a "2 and 4" on the snare than I did for learning how to play "crazy independent odd-meter stuff." So I leaned on the "2 and 4" regardless of the situation. Even though people complained about the volume every now and then, I figured the backbeat was worth it and that the volume was necessary for my backbeat to be effective.

One night I was at a world-famous jazz club in New York City watching a show. This was a club that has seats right next to the drummer, and I was sitting (literally)

two feet from this drummer's hi-hat. The show was moving along, the drummer was great, and everything was fine. All of a sudden, the band started playing a ballad, and the drummer started to use a cross-stick on his snare on 2 and 4. No big deal. Happens all the time, right? Wrong. This drummer played his cross-stick—an extremely sharp, cutting sound—so incredibly quietly that I could barely hear him—and I was closer to him than anyone in the room! The club, which must have held a hundred fifty people, was whisper-quiet and absolutely captivated. That was the quietest backbeat I had ever heard, and it was as effective as any slammed-out 2-and-4 rock or funk pattern. In the course of one song, I learned more about dynamics and playing with a range of volume than I had in four years of music school. (Side note: Listening is always the best way to learn.)

Not to say that I didn't learn about dynamics in music school. In fact, my other personal experience of learning how to play with a range of dynamics came

while I was rehearsing with the symphony orchestra at school. Again, I was primarily a rock/set/backbeat guy, and I was always in my comfort zone when cranking out a good, ear-splitting 2 and 4. But one semester the orchestra was playing Stravinsky's "Rite Of Spring" (which should be on every drummer's "must listen to" list), and I was assigned the tambourine and bass drum parts. At one point in the piece, the tambourine is written with a dynamic marking of *ppp*, or *pianississimo*. The piece calls for quarter notes to be played on the tambourine as quietly as possible. I had to find a way to simultaneously be barely audible, yet distinctly musical and "present" to the listener.

During the same piece there is a famous passage where the part calls for eleven straight strikes on the bass drum with a dynamic marking of *ffff* (quadruple *forte*), with accents written above each note. Simply put, the bass drummer is instructed to play a 38" bass drum with wooden mallets, and to hit the drum dead center as hard as he or she possibly can. (Talk about fun!)



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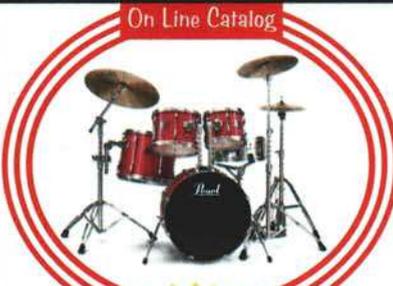
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The Musical Drummer

The point is that by playing this piece, I was able to experience the true range of dynamics available to a percussionist. This range of dynamics is equally available on the drumset, and can be used in all types of music.

John Bonham and Dave Grohl are two obvious examples of drummers who play with a wide range of dynamics. Think of Bonham's "Dazed And Confused" drum part, where the bridge section has double-stop 16th notes on his toms and snare. That drum part is whisper quiet—so much so that you can hear the tone of all of his drums change as his approach to that part of the song changes. When the bridge ends and he kicks back into the main "head," Bonham cranks out some monster, signature fills. And then there is no mistaking the effectiveness of his huge backbeat. Would that bridge and transition have been as effective had he bashed his way through without regard to dynamics? Certainly not.

Dave Grohl is one of the modern masters of the soft-verse-into-loud-chorus, as any of his recordings will show you. Can any-

one doubt the effectiveness or sincerity in which he plays an almost-not-there cross-stick on a verse, and then flails away at the ride (or crash) and snare on choruses? Grohl's recordings are proof that sometimes "quiet" can rock. His recordings also prove that sometimes drums can never be loud *enough*—when they're played appropriately, and if there are dynamics within the song and drum part to balance out the volume.

The concept of using a range of dynamics is easily (and necessarily) combined with the concepts of theory and song structure, which have been covered in previous columns in this series. Playing for the song, being aware of key changes, noting where the tension and release points are within a song, song structure, melody, harmony... every single one of these disciplines or parameters affect how a drummer will play, and how the dynamics will work.

The ability to play crescendos (playing soft to loud over time) or decrescendos (playing loud to soft over time) is vital to the effectiveness of a change within a song.

Drummers must practice changing volume just as they must practice rudiments, control, or independence. A common mistake is that when playing quietly, the drummer tends to slow down and drag the tempo. The reverse is also true, where the tendency is to speed up as the volume increases.

Tempo and dynamics are separate, distinct disciplines, and drummers must be aware of both. Dynamics affect every aspect of the music, and the effect of playing with a range of dynamics cannot be undervalued. Experiment, listen to your favorite music, and focus on the changes of volume. Explore the range of your instrument. Find different combinations of dynamics on the drumset (loud bass and snare with quiet cymbals, or the other way around). And learn how to apply the use of dynamics to your music. You'll turn into a brand-new drummer—and a more effective musician—once you discover the endless possibilities provided by your new sense of dynamics.





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All-Starr Lineup

Ringo Starr was at New York's Plaza Hotel recently to announce the lineup for his sixth All-Starr Tour. Shown below at the tour-launch press conference are (from left) legendary Cream bassist/vocalist Jack Bruce, Eric Carmen (of The Raspberries and solo fame), Ringo, guitarist/songwriter Dave Edmunds, multi-instrumentalist Mark Rivera, and Bad Company drummer Simon Kirke.



The tour is sponsored by Century 21 Real Estate, and Ringo and his bandmates can be seen in a current TV commercial for the company. In related news, it was announced that a box set of previous All-Starr shows is planned for release later this year.

LP At The Smithsonian

A variety of percussion instruments manufactured by LP Music Group are included in a new exhibit organized by the Smithsonian Institution's Center For Latino Initiatives. Entitled "Ritmos Di Identidad" (Rhythm Of Identity), the exhibition includes Fernando Ortiz's Legacy and The Dr. & Mrs. Joseph H. Howard Family Collection of Percussion Instruments.

Fernando Ortiz (1881-1969) was a Cuban anthropologist and social justice advocate who published extensively in the field of Afro-Caribbean folklore and music. Dr. Joseph Howard (1912-1994) was a Californian of African, European, and East Indian ancestry who scoured the world for instruments meeting his criteria of historic, cultural, and aesthetic significance.

On display from the Howard collection are over a hundred fifty sacred and secular instruments from Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas. They serve as an adjunct to Ortiz's work, offering a visible and tactile map of the travels of African culture across land and sea.

Displayed alongside the ancient drums, odd-shaped guiros, and shakers are twenty-four of their modern LP counterparts. Ironically, when LP founder Martin Cohen began shaping bells, the market was limited to fragile instruments such as those populating the Howard Collection. Cohen resolved that LP's mission would be to provide a range of durable modern instruments with authentic sounds. In doing so he has helped preserve endangered folkloric instruments such as those on display.

In Memoriam

Tito Puente

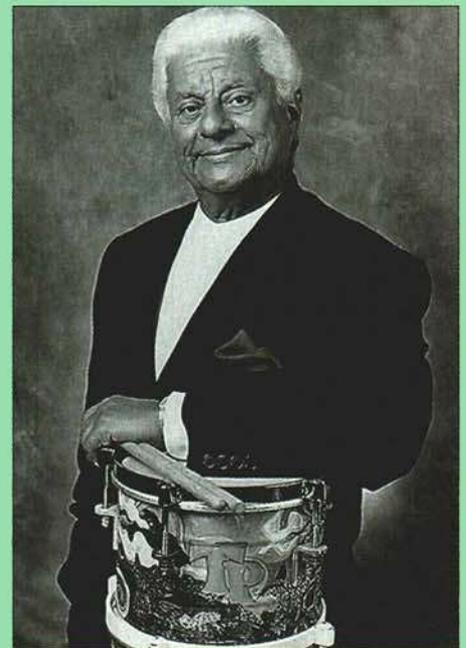
As we went to press for this issue, we learned of the passing of Latin jazz legend Tito Puente. Tito died on May 31, at the age of seventy-seven.

Tito was a major figure on the Latin and jazz scenes for over fifty years. As a bandleader, he recorded over one hundred albums and earned several Grammy awards. (The latest came just last year.) As a timbale player, Tito was widely regarded as a dynamic soloist who used musicality, showmanship, and sheer enthusiasm to excite his audiences. And as a songwriter, Tito made a cross-cultural impact achieved by few, if any, other artists. His compositions have been recorded by dozens of other stellar musicians over several generations. Ironically, one of his most famous tunes was made popular not by a jazz artist, but by a leg-

end of the rock idiom. Carlos Santana's rendition of Tito's "Oye Como Va" made lots of money for them both.

Tito was constantly being re-discovered by new generations of fans. His appearance in the film *The Mambo Kings* lit up the screen, and helped to launch what has become a full-blown crossover of authentic Latin music into mainstream pop culture. Following the film, more and more young people attended Tito's shows. They had plenty of opportunity, since he toured tirelessly, up to within a few weeks of his passing.

Modern Drummer will present a major tribute to Tito Puente in the November 2000 issue. In the meantime, we offer our condolences to his family, friends, and countless fans.



The Ritmos De Identidad exhibition will be open through August 1, 2000 at the Smithsonian's Arts & Industries building in Washington, DC.



Indy Quickies



Yamaha has become a corporate sponsor of the prestigious Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance program at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. The company will

provide the Institute with an assortment of instruments from the Band & Orchestral division, including drumsets and mallet keyboard instruments. The Institute was founded in 1986 as a tribute to the memory of jazz legend Thelonious Monk. It offers promising young musicians intense college-level training, and presents multi-faceted school-based education programs worldwide.

Drum Workshop has moved to a larger facility in Oxnard, California. The new building will house DW's manufacturing and administrative offices. The new address is 3450 Lunar Ct., Oxnard, CA 93030, tel: (805) 485-6999, fax: (805) 485-1334, www.dwdrums.com.

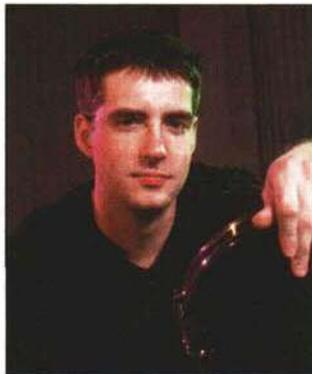
If you're interested in a custom drumkit from **Pearl's** Masterworks series, you'll want to contact their new Masterworks technical specialist, **Carl Peterson**, (left) Carl's an accomplished drummer and a veteran of Pearl's customer service department. Peterson's email address is mw@pearldrums.com.



QUICK BEATS: CHAD GRACEY (LIVE)

1) What are some of your favorite recorded grooves?

Some of my favorite grooves are just about anything by Stewart Copeland and Matt Cameron. I've also been enjoying Josh Freese's drumming on Chris Cornell's *Euphoria Morning*, especially the groove on "Can't Change Me."



2) If someone wasn't familiar with your drumming, which recording would you recommend they listen to that best represents your playing?

I would have to say the best representation of my playing would be Live's latest, *The Distance To Here*. It really represents the culmination of everything I've learned from other drummers as well as being in Live for fifteen years.

3) What records and books did you study when you first started playing?

I didn't use any books simply because I can't read music. I learned everything in my formative years from playing to records. The first record I played to was a Beatles record. After that

I moved on to U2 records like *War*, *Under A Blood Red Sky*, and *The Joshua Tree*. Then it was early Red Hot Chili Peppers (*Freaky Styley*), Power Station, and Sting's *Dream Of The Blue Turtles*.

4) Who are some of your influences?

My influences are pretty broad. In my early years, drummers like Tony Thompson, Jack Irons, Larry Mullen Jr., Stewart Copeland, and Manu Katche really helped shape my style. Modern-day influences would have to include Matt Cameron, Chad Smith (What up, Chad?!), Eric Kretz, and Dave Grohl.

DRUM KICKS



"That was supposed to activate the sampler!"

1) What are some of your favorite record-grooves by other drummers?

Steve Gadd on "Nite Sprite" (Chick Corea), Tony Williams on "Freedom Jazz Dance" (Miles Davis), John Bonham on "Whole Lotta Love" (Led Zeppelin), Jeff Porcaro on "Rosanna" (Toto), Billy Cobham on "Spectrum," and Buddy Rich on "West Side Story."

2) What are some of your favorite grooves that you've recorded?

Steve Winwood's "Higher Love" and "Split Decision," Rufus's "Ain't Nobody" and "Do You Love What You Feel," Lionel Richie's "All Night Long," David Lee Roth's "Just A

Gigolo," Quincy Jones' "Ai No Corrida" and "Just Once," Michael & Jermaine Jackson's "Tell Me I'm Not Dreamin'," and Michael Jackson's "Rock With You."

3) What books and records did you study when you first started playing?

Books: Ted Reed's *Syncopation*, George Stone's *Stick Control*, and W.F. Ludwig's *Rudiments*. As for records, early on I liked Buddy Rich's *Live At The Chez*, Louis Armstrong & Danny Kaye's version of "When The Saints Come Marching In," The Beach Boys' "I Get Around," and multiple Count Basie recordings.



Taking The Stage

Festivals, Upcoming Drum Clinics, Concerts, and Events

Atlanta Vintage & Custom Drum Show
9/16 — Second annual show. Buy, sell, or trade. Ludwig snare raffle, door prizes, drum clinics, booths with John Aldridge and *Not So Modern Drummer*, and Ludwig Industries. Vintage drum exhibit by collector Bill Pace. For more information contact Billy Jeansonne, (770) 438-0844, billyjeansonne@earthlink.net, atlantavintagedrums.com.

Ignacio Berroa



7/22 — Verbier Jazz Festival, Verbier, Switzerland.
7/27 — Boulder Theatre, Boulder, CO.
7/29 — Centrum Jazz Festival, Port Townsend, Washington.
7/30 — Jazz and Blues House, Carmel, CA.
7/31 — Kumbwa Jazz Center, Santa Cruz, CA.
8/1-6 — Yoshi's, Oakland, CA.
8/8-13 — Jazz Alley, Seattle, WA.
8/15-20 — Blue Note, New York, NY.
10/13-14 — Kaplan Penthouse, with guest Joe Lovano, New York, NY.
10/26 — Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.
10/27-28 — Hampton Arts Center, Hampton, VA. For all shows contact Janet Williamson, (323) 663-4447.

CMJ Music Marathon 2000

10/19-22 — Exhibit, music business topics on radio promotion, artist management, digital downloading, Webcasting, film soundtracks, and more. Night-time performances by more than a thousand bands in fifty of New York's greatest venues. New York Hilton and Towers, New York City. For more information and registration, contact CMJ events department, (877) 633-7848 or email marathon@cmj.com.

Hollyhock Percussion Workshop

7/19-24 — Afro-Cuban Percussion featuring Armando Peraza & Trevor Salloum. Co-sponsored by LP Music Group, Cortes Island, Vancouver, BC. Contact Hollyhock, (800) 933-6339 or www.hollyhock.bc.ca/main.html.

Interactive Music Expo

10/3-4 — Keynote/conference, exhibits, Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles, CA. For info & registration call (203) 256-5759 or surf to www.imusicxpo.com.

Journees De La Percussion

11/2-4 — Artists include Evelyn Glennie, Neil Grover, Billy Cobham, Luis Conte, Bob Harsen, Dom Famularo, John Bergamo, Giovanni Hidalgo, and many more. France Festival, Paris, France.

KoSA 2000 Drum & Percussion Camp

7/31-8/6 — Castleton State College, Castleton, Vermont. The fifth-edition workshop will feature Steve Smith, Glen Velez, Dom Famularo, Aldo Mazza, Marco Lienhard, Gordon Gottlieb, George Gaber, Paul Picard, Giovanni Hidalgo, Repercussion, Efrain Toro, Frank Belucci, Walfredo Reyes Jr., Adarn Nussbaum, Rick Gratton, Johnny Rabb, Charlie Adams, Rick Van Horn, and Leigh Stevens.

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Ricky Lawson

7/26 — AJ's Pro Percussion, Tampa, FL. Contact (800) 545-7668.

MidWest Drum and Dance Festival

8/11-13 — Oakwood Farms Retreat Center, Selma, IN. For more information, contact www.pas.org.

Thelonious Monk Institute Of Jazz

9/10-11 — Afro-Latin Hand Drum Competition. Audition tapes are due by July 5. Judges include Candido, Giovanni Hidalgo, Milton Cardona, Babatunde Olatunji, Poncho Sanchez, Big Black, and Ray Baretto, artistic director. Johnny Almendra and his band will back up the semifinalist. Kennedy Center, Washington, DC. For application and details visit www.monkinstitute.com or call (202)364-0176.

Montreal Drum Festival 2000

11/3-5 — Zoro, Richie Garcia, Gregg Bissonette, Tommy Igoe, Alex Acuna, Nathaniel Townsley, and more, Montreal, Canada.

Mt. Hood Jazz Festival

8/4-6 — Featuring The Duke Ellington Orchestra, under the direction of Paul Mercer Ellington. Also appearing, McCoy Tyner, Michael Brecker, Tower of Power, The Yellowjackets, and more. Special per-

formance by jazz Times 30th Anniversary Super Band, featuring Randy Brecker, Bob Berg, Joey DeFrancesco, and Dennis Chambers. Portland, Oregon. Reserved and general-admission tickets available by calling (800) 992-TIXX or visit www.mthoodjazz.com.

Nashville Percussion Institute

7/22 — Sixth annual percussion extravaganza hosted by *Modern Drummer's* senior editor, Rick Van Horn. Mitchell Barnett Theater, Nashville, TN. For more information, contact N.P.I at (615) 340-0085 or www.NPI.homepage.com.

Ndugu Chancler

7/17-19 — C.M.U. workshop, Central Michigan.
7/29-8 — Stanford Jazz Music Camp, Stanford, CT.
11/15_18 — PASIC 2000, Dallas, TX.

Pro-Mark Online Chats

www.promark-stix.com
7/20 — Steve Ferrone.

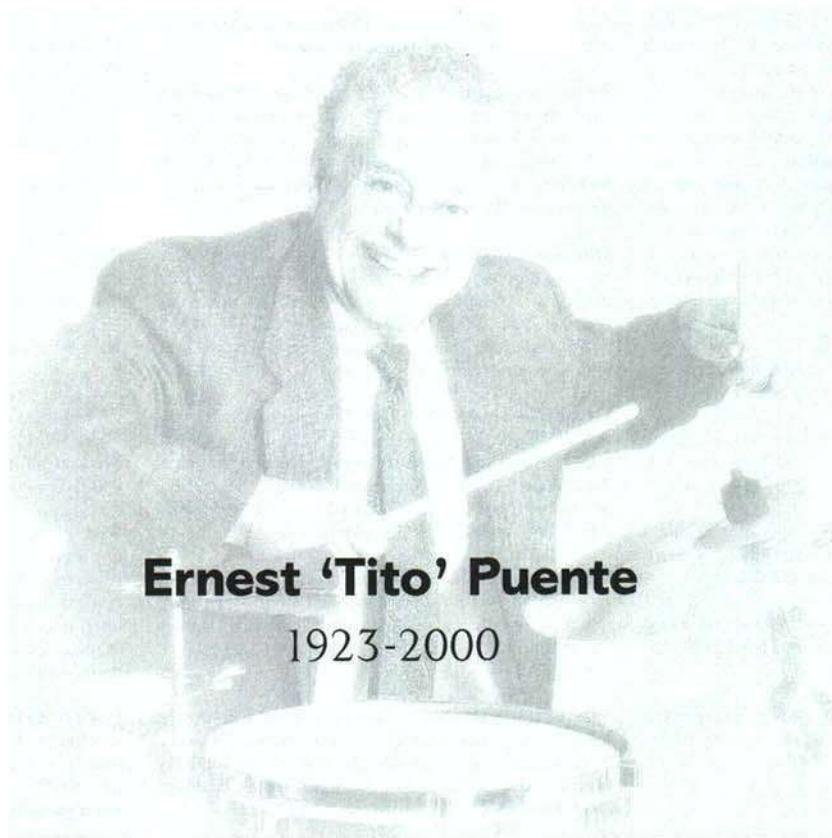
Rhythm Sticks Festival

7/15-23 — Artists include Zakir Hussain, Giovanni Hidalgo, Horacio Hernandez, Dave Weckl Band, Jeff Watts, Evelyn Glennie, and many more. Alessandra Belloni, Glen Pattison, Taiko, Iranian and drum kit (with Planet Drum) workshops. London, England. For information contact www.pas.org.

Y2 Africa: Exploring the Routes of West Africa

8/6-12 — Five-day seminar with Michael Spiro of Talking Drums and Dane Richeson from Lawrence University. Drumming styles of particular regions from Ghana, Brazil, and Cuba. Bjorklunden, Baileys Harbor, Wisconsin. Contact Mark Breseman, (920) 839-2216.





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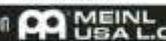
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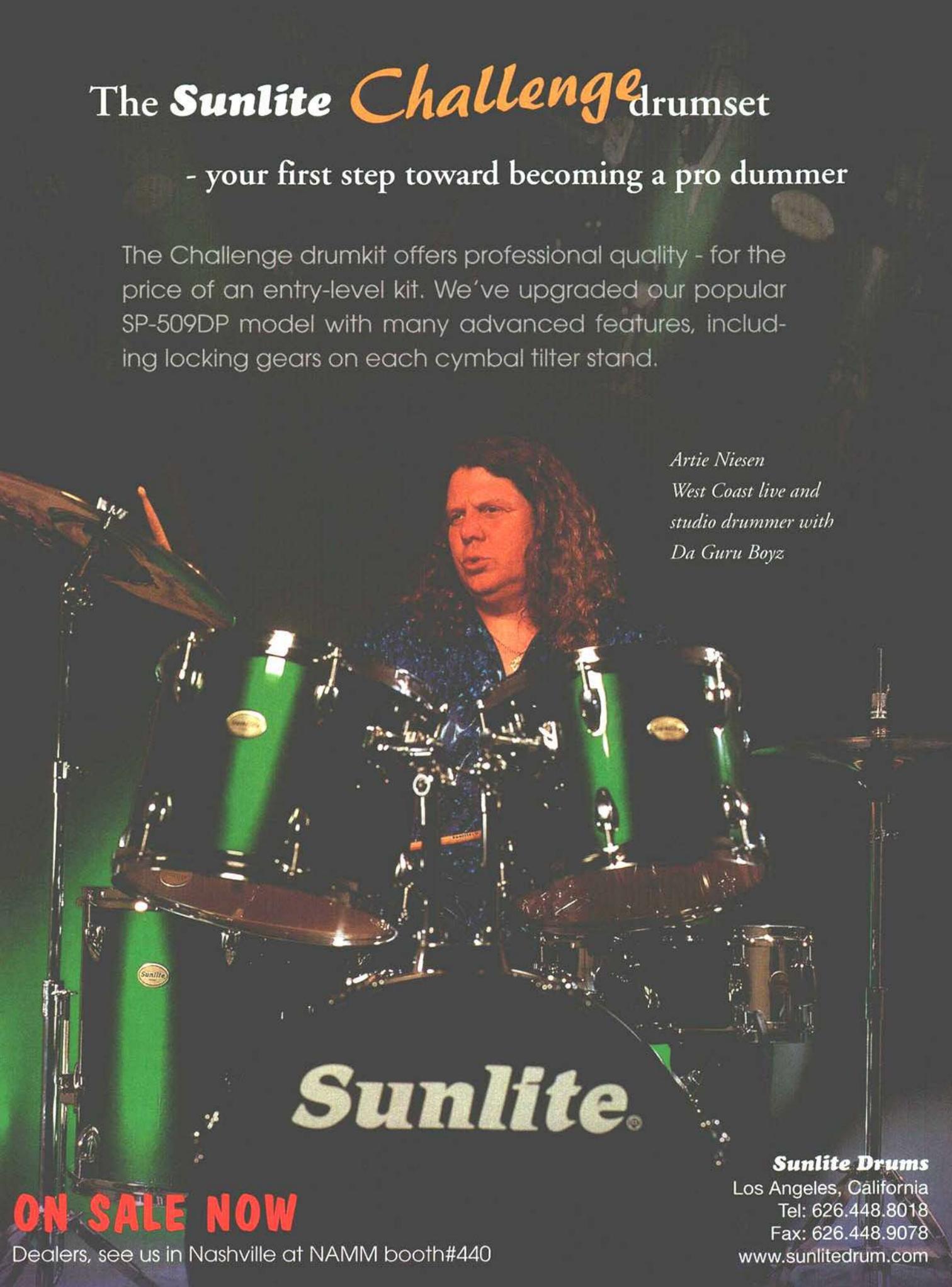
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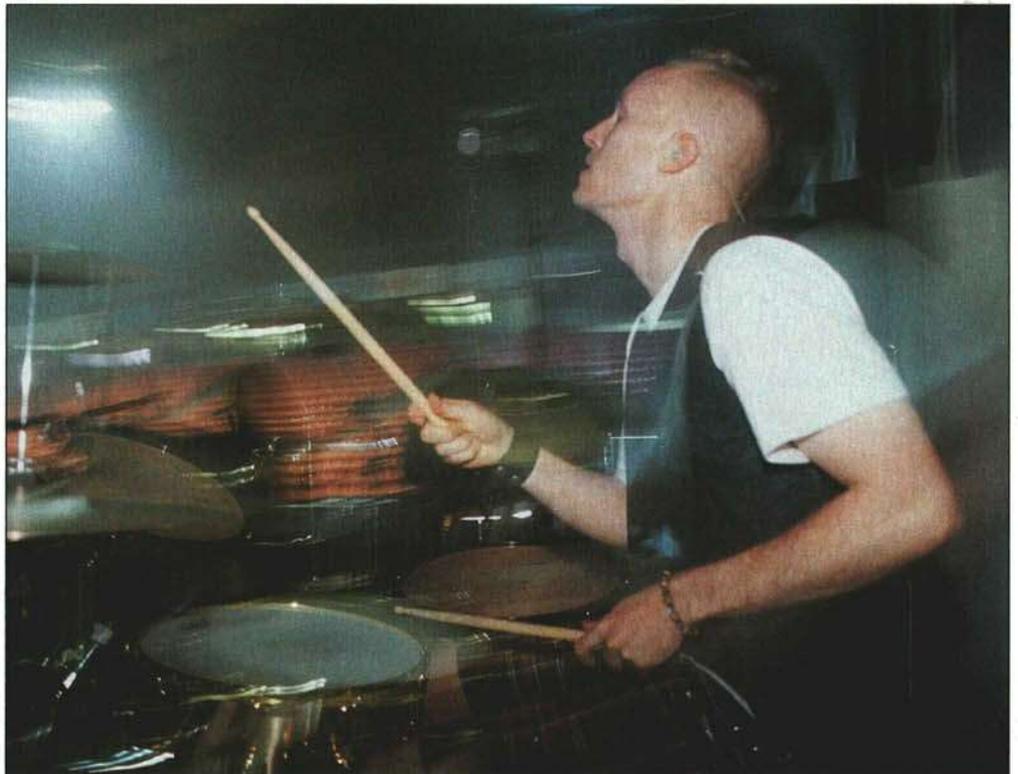
Artists: Billy Howerdel (gtr), Maynard James Keenan (vcl).
Troy Van Leeuwen (gtr), Paz Lenchantin (bs)

Josh Freese didn't need to form a band and go on tour. He was sitting pretty, recording tracks for name acts, then getting home for a good night's sleep. But while doing session after session for the on-again/off-again Guns N' Roses, something happened.

"There was this whiz-kid guitarist, Billy Howerdel," Josh recalls. "And his roommate was Maynard, the singer from Tool. We all hit it off, so we decided to do some recording to see what might happen. It was pretty loose in the beginning, because none of us could dedicate seven days a week to the project. Slowly, though, it became our first priority." A Perfect Circle was born. (After seeing the lineup and hearing the material, Virgin Records reportedly offered the band the largest advance in their history.)

Given Howerdel's technical wizardry, they could have summoned the full force of ProTools software. "I hear producer friends tell horror stories of how they have to sit for two days and fix drummers' every kick and snare note," says Josh. "The only times I've used ProTools were when we wanted to splice together the intro and outro of two different takes. Otherwise, it's been all natural drumming, live off the floor."

The current single, "Judith," is one of Josh's favorites. "There's definitely overplaying on it," he admits. "I really went



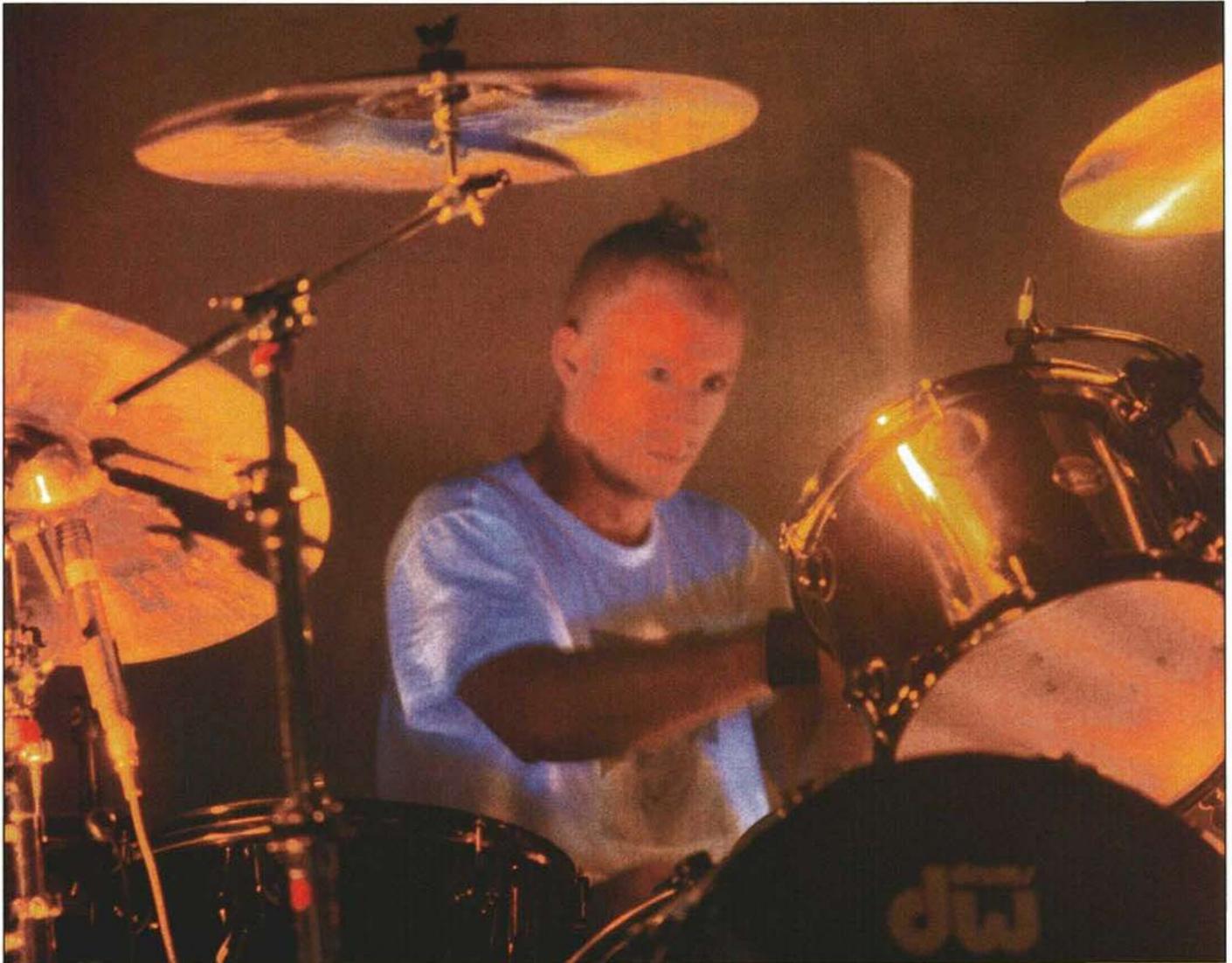
for it. I hadn't even heard vocals when I recorded the drums. Towards the end of the song, I intentionally turn the beat around. It's simple things like that that I dig a lot. Billy told me later, 'Man, there's not one edit from top to bottom, and this is the first take you did!' I like to listen to something a little bit rougher around the edges. It sounds like it has more guts."

Inside Scoop: "On a few songs, I ended up using one of Tommy Lee's drumsets that just happened to be at the studio," Josh says. "He had this great-sounding,

mirror-balled DW kit there. And using it meant I didn't have to bring in my drums! Those drums were used on the tracks 'Orestes' and 'Brena.'

"We didn't have finished songs when we went in to record," Josh admits, "so I had a tendency to jam out. In a verse I would play some kind of fill that shouldn't have been there. But it was cool, we adapted to it. It was definitely a different kind of drumming from what I would play if Joe Shmo producer was hiring me to do a session."

T. Bruce Wittet



SESSION GEAR

DRUMS: DW

- A. 8x14 bell brass snare drum ("It weighed 30 pounds. I'm *not* a piccolo guy.")
- B. 9x12 tom
- C. 10x13 tom
- D. 16x16 floor tom
- E. 16x18 floor tom
- F. 18x22 bass drum

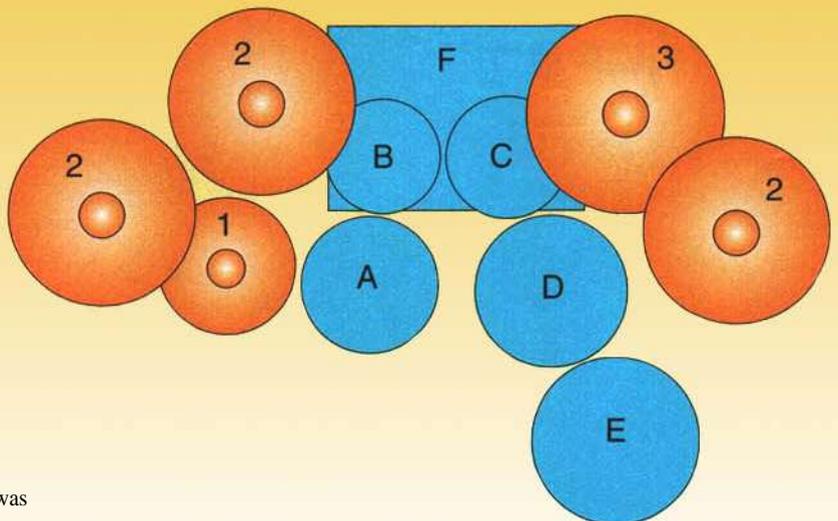
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- 1. 14" New Beat hi-hats
- 2. 20" crash (various models)
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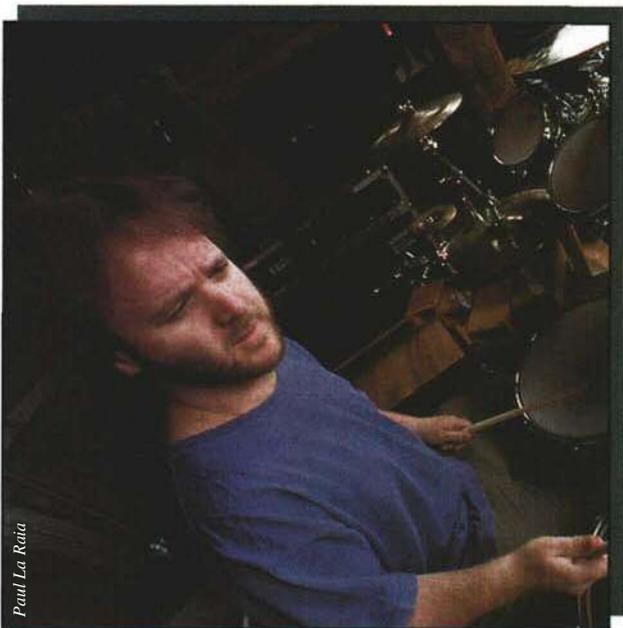
HEADS: Remo CS Reverse coated on snare batter, clear Powerstroke 3 on bass drum batter with standard DW front head with hole, clear Emperors on tops of toms with clear Ambassadors underneath.

TUNING & APPROACH: Tensioning of heads was moderate, the snare anywhere between loose and tight. Minimal muffling.

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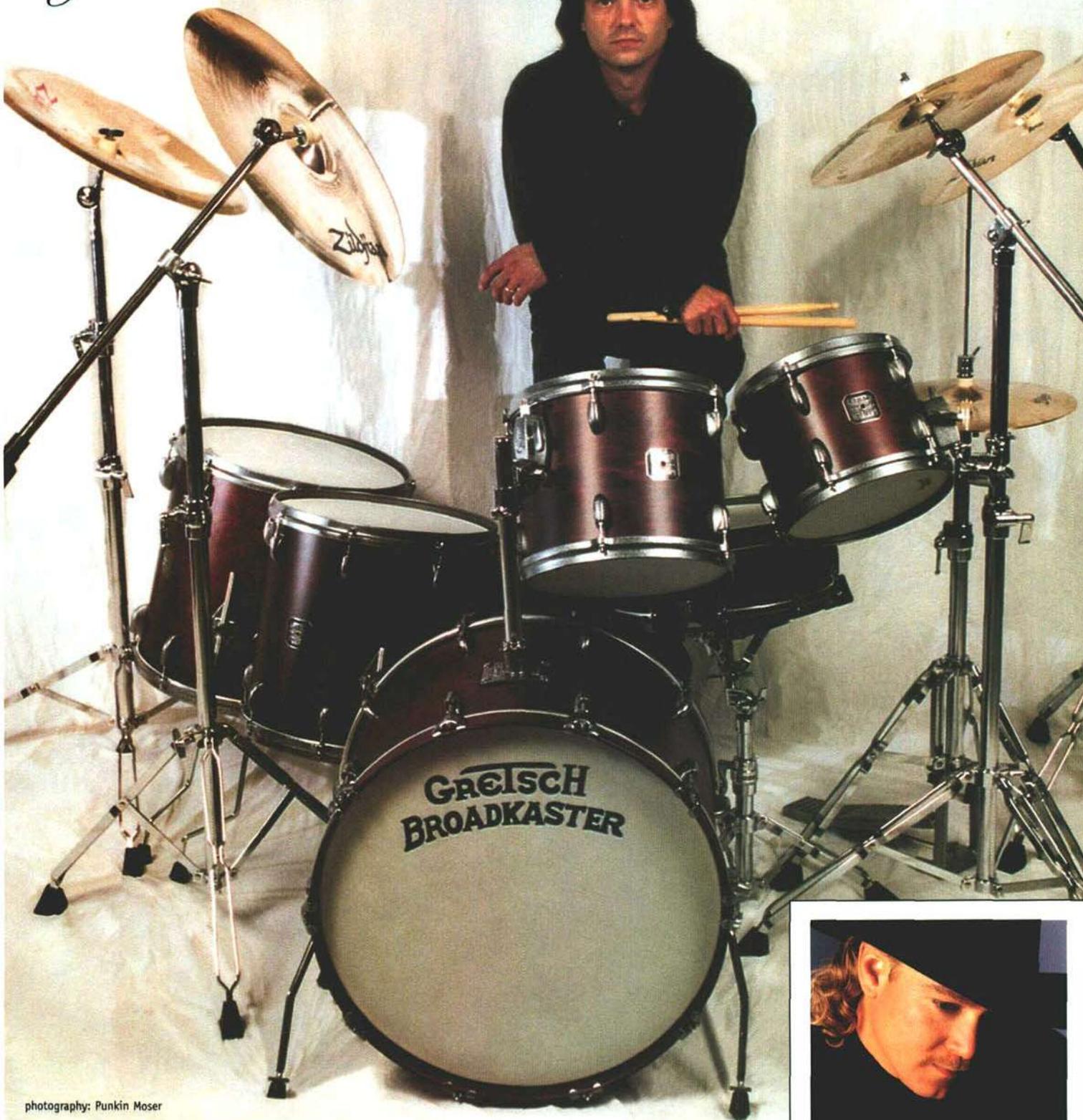
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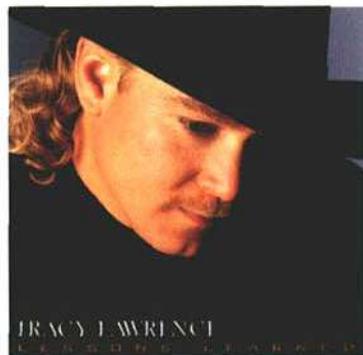


Jack Gavin



photography: Punkin Moser

Natural musical talent and solid prolific performance experience that comes from touring with world renown bands combined - make Jack Gavin a prized drummer in today's music industry. His versatility and excellent classical training (Kent State University Graduate, Percussion Performance, Magna Cum Laude) have established him with tremendous musical discipline and range of performance. Gretsch Drums leads the way in quality, responsiveness, and dependability for Jack to deliver a high energy performance along with his enthusiastic, dynamic on stage presence which ignites listeners night after night. Jack is currently Musical Director/Band Leader with Tracy Lawrence.

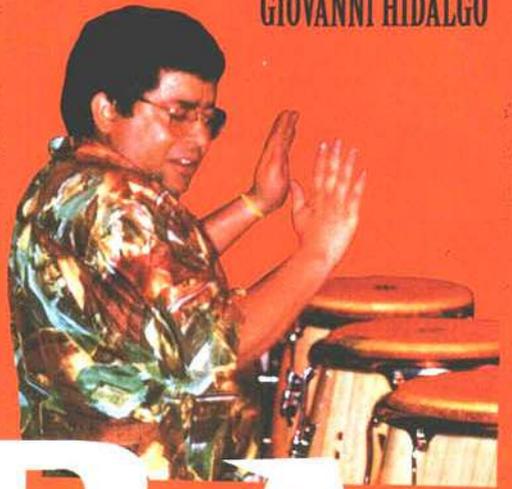


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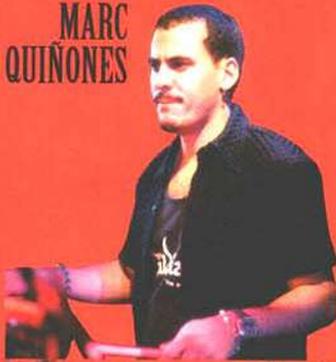


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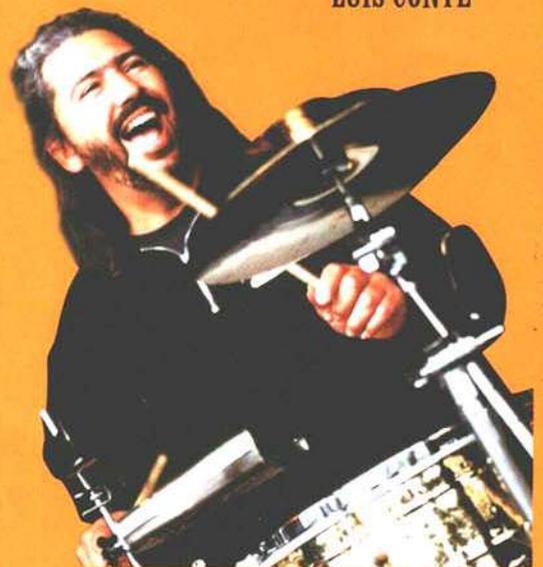
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