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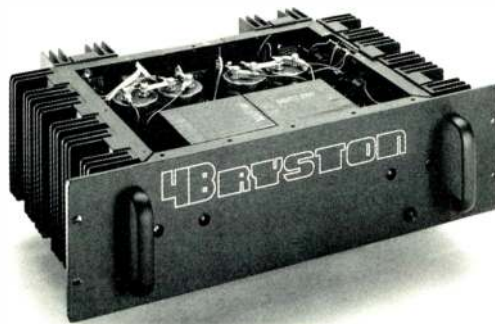
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CONTENTS

CANADIAN MUSICIAN JUNE 1990

VOLUME XII NUMBER 3

COVER STORY: ALANNAH MYLES HOW TO BECOME A LEGEND YOUR FIRST TIME OUT!

The story of an artist and her dream; By David Henman 44

FEATURES

PAUL JANZ By Ellie O'Day
Every little song you write..... 52

THE BOX By Glenn Reid and David Henman
The ecstasy and the agony of recording..... 56

**ARE YOU READY:
FOR MANAGEMENT?**
By David Henman
Advice from Canada's best managers..... 60

UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF LIVE SOUND
By Michael McClosky
Tips from the pros on what to use and how to use it.... 62



THE BOX

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ALERT RECORDS



DAVE TYSON, ALANNAH MYLES AND CHRISTOPHER WARD
BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE 1990 JUNOS.

PHOTO: SHUTTER PRIORITY

DEPARTMENTS

Inside CM Be careful of what you believe..... 9

Feedback War of the words; the virgin artist; Rush's worldwide sales; and more 10

First Takes EMI comes to Canada; two new record labels; songs needed for soundtrack; composers competition; and more..... 14

Product Reports Fender P-Bass Plus; Seymour Duncan 84.40; Maxima Gold bass strings; Drawmer M500 dynamics processor; and more 21

Centrestage Maestro Fresh-Wes; Frank Marino; Regatta; Tim Karr..... 24

Guitar Be kind to your soundman..... 26

Keyboards Blue Rodeo's Bobby Wiseman..... 29

Bass Learning from legends..... 31

Percussion Son of "Thrumming"..... 32

Brass A dental horror story..... 35

Woodwinds The right rig..... 37

MIDI Groovy machines..... 38

Vocals The power of preparation..... 40

Writing/Arranging Crafting a cool chorus..... 41

Imaging The sure-shot showcase..... 42

Live Sound Work when you get write..... 77

Recording Get the most from a four-track demo studio..... 78

Business Conquering the bar circuit..... 79

Product News Ludwig rockers; Kahler double whammy; Fender bass combo; Rumark videos; Samson wireless; TASCAM keyboard mixer; and more..... 81

Classified Buying or selling?..... 94

Marketplace Advertising section..... 97

Showcase Amazing discoveries..... 98

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ISSN 0708-9635

Indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index.

Getting MIDI under control

The Lexicon MRC and Sequencing

The MRC MIDI Remote Controller is a powerful and efficient tool for control and data input with virtually any hardware or software-based sequencing environment.

The MRC's 4 switches, 2 external inputs and 8 sliders (arranged on 2 pages of 4) can be configured to transmit almost any MIDI message you need. The examples here show just a few of the possibilities open to you once you get your system under MRC control.

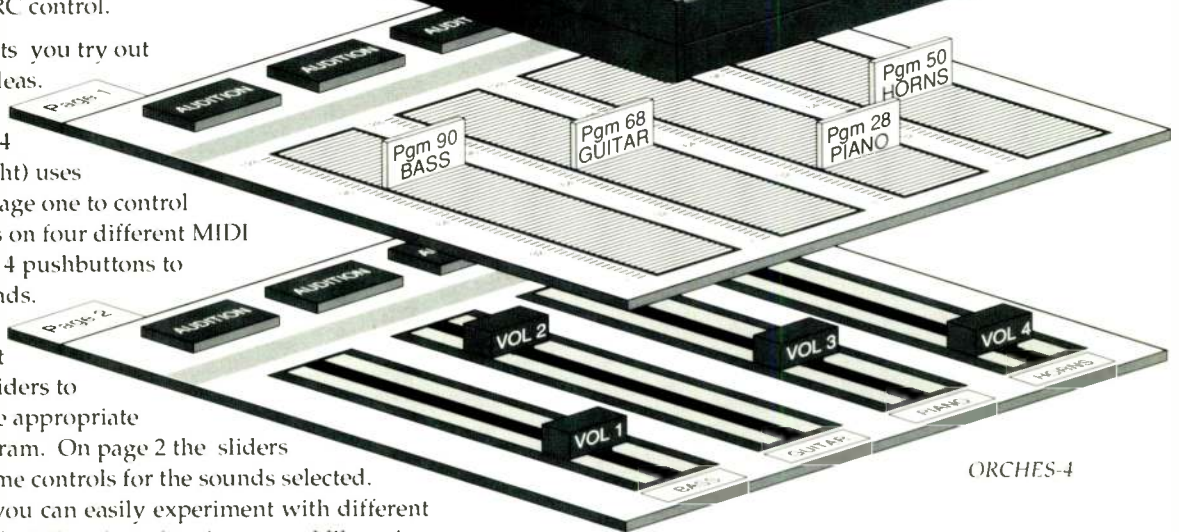
Sequencing lets you try out many different ideas.

An MRC preset called ORCHES-4 (shown to the right) uses the 4 sliders on page one to control program changes on four different MIDI channels and the 4 pushbuttons to audition the sounds.

Select any voicing you want by moving the sliders to correspond to the appropriate synthesizer program. On page 2 the sliders are used as volume controls for the sounds selected.

With this setup you can easily experiment with different voicings on-the-fly. What does the piece sound like using steel drums in place of pizzicato cellos? It could be great!

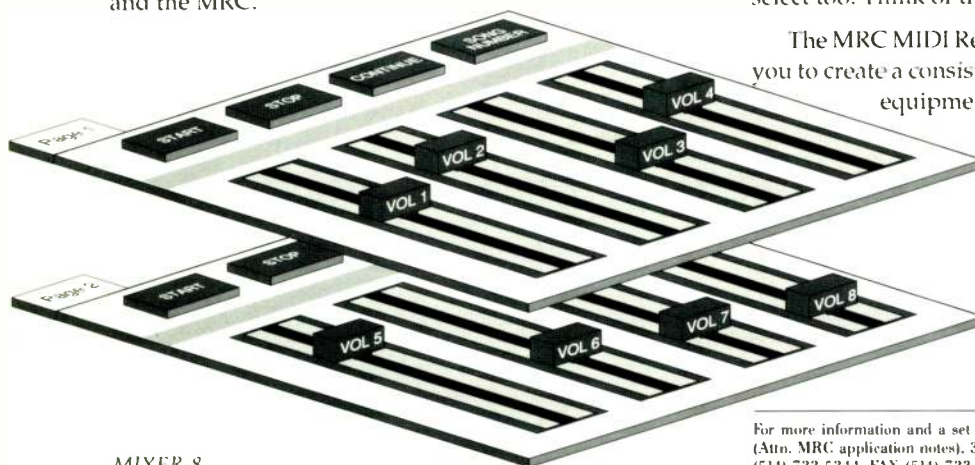
Another useful setup included in MRC V3.0 software is MIXER-8 (shown below). It uses both pages of sliders to control 8 MIDI volumes. The 4 pushbuttons are assigned to Stop, Start, Continue and note C4 (on ch1). Automated mixing can easily be accomplished with your sequencer and the MRC.



ORCHES-4

Did you ever want to cross fade one sound into another? Its easy, you can even assign it to one fader. Grouping — no problem — up to four controls can be slaved together. Mutes — once again, easily accomplished with the MRC. You can have remote Start, Stop, Continue and Song Number select too. Think of the possibilities!

The MRC MIDI Remote Controller is designed to allow you to create a consistent control surface for all your MIDI equipment. Investing a little time interfacing the MRC to your system can free you to use it for what you bought it for — making music!



MIXER-8

For more information and a set of MRC application notes, contact: S.F. Marketing Inc., (Attn. MRC application notes), 3524 Griffith, St. Laurent, PQ H4T 1A7, (514) 733-5344, FAX (514) 733-7140.

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It's All In Your Mind

Virtually every male, at some point in his life, experiences doubt, apprehension or what have you about his ability to perform sexually. Consequently, he finds himself unable to perform sexually, or at least not without some degree of difficulty. Survivors of such an ordeal quickly learn to think positively about their sexual powers. The non-survivors, of course, go into politics. (Dept. of cheap shots.)

I always marvel at people with a self-imposed limited diet, my favourite being the ones who refuse to go near spicy foods. (One blandburger please, hold the flavour.) I believe that if you convince yourself that you can't handle spicy food, then (surprise!) that's exactly what happens. It has been scientifically proven that spices (and I'm not referring to those indigestible powders that come in little jars and probably form strange, insoluble crystals in your kidneys or gall bladder) are harmless—they do not eat away at the linings of your stomach. (*Toronto Star*—food section—February 20, 1990.)

Perhaps an even better example of the power of positive thinking is the use of placebos. If you really believe or can be convinced that this harmless little sugar-pill will cure your headache, it will. The science of hypnotism provides the most convincing examples of the amazing powers of the mind.

So, what has sexual dysfunction, spicy food, sugar-pills and hypnotism got to do with your musical career? Just about every musician I've ever met is guilty, to a greater or lesser degree, of selling themselves short. I'm talking about the belief, deep down in your heart of hearts, that "Hey, I'm not *really* talented enough to perform on the same stages as Bruce Springsteen, or k.d. lang, or Bryan Adams, or (name of your hero goes here)." There is an oldism that goes: "Be careful of what you want, for that is what you will get." Perhaps it is even more crucial to be careful of what you believe. In business, they say: "If you can conceive it, and you can believe it, you can do it."

Ask yourself, sometime: "What really stands between me and my dreams?" There is, of course, time. And there may, as well, be a few misconceptions, such as, for example, how hard you are going to have to work, how patient you are go-

ing to have to be, and how many seemingly endless sacrifices you are going to have to make. All of that, someone is sure to remind you, builds character. But here's the BIG question. What kind of a person will survive all of that, and actually see their dreams materialize? The kind of person, of course, who actually believes that they can.

Ladies and gentlemen, meet Alannah Myles!

Up until the release of her phenomenally successful debut album a little over a year ago, you never heard of Alannah Myles. But trust me, Alannah Myles is someone you want to know about. That is, if you want to know what it takes to attain your ideal of success. I couldn't resist the temptation to grab this assignment for myself, and I've got to tell you that I've never in my life encountered anyone with a clearer focus of who they are and where they are going. Also in this issue, look for Glenn Reid's interview with Jean Marc of The Box, who details the recording of *The Pleasure And The Pain* in England with Martin Rushent. I would also like to direct your attention to Ellie O'Day's piece on Vancouver's Paul Janz, who had much success with the 1988 ballad "Believe In Me" and is currently riding high with "Every Little Tear" from his third A&M

album, *Renegade Romantic*.

For this issue's business feature, we delve into management, following our most recent forays into A&R departments and booking agents. These forums are essential reading, loaded as they are with advice and insight from the top business minds in our quickly maturing industry.

Much has been written about what equipment to use, but not about how to use it. For this issue's Live Sound feature, we've gone to some of Canada's foremost live sound engineers, who all seem to agree on at least one thing: The quantity and the price of the gear you use does not necessarily equate with the quality of sound you're getting.

This is as good an opportunity as any to congratulate both the winners and nominees at this year's Juno awards and, in particular, the folks at CBC Television and CARAS (Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences) who, for the second consecutive year, have had the courage and tenacity to feature live performances by some of our best Canadian artists. If you missed the show, watch for re-broadcasts on YTV.

David Henman

David Henman
Editor

PHOTO: SHUTTER PRIORITY



Alannah Myles at the 1990 Junos.

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FEEDBACK

Word War II

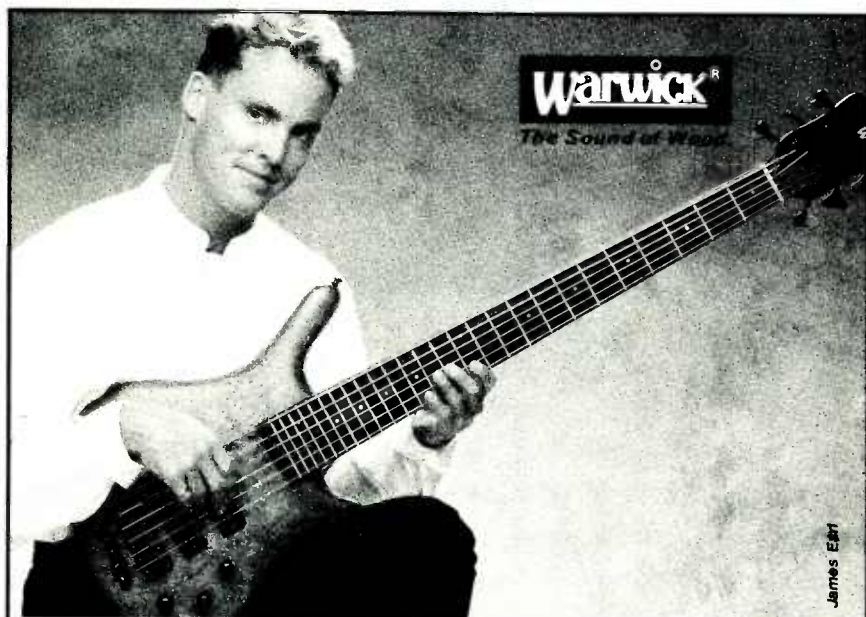
In general, I really enjoy your magazine. There are a lot of great articles, interviews and tips that are readable for musicians without degrees in music or engineering (unlike some magazines). This said, I am writing with my criticism of Jennifer Clark's article entitled "Lyrical Integrity", which appeared on page 66 of your February issue.

Ms. Clark's work upset me for a number of reasons. First of all, her use of over-generalization is appalling. She seems to imply that anyone writing serious lyrics today is obscured by some force, (Radio? The industry? The fans? Other musicians? She does not say.) and all the lyrics on radio are unemotional concoctions written to fit into an airplay format by songwriters driven by greed, with no pride in the integrity of their work. I beg to differ. If people like Bruce Springsteen or, more recently, Tracy Chapman or Melissa Etheridge don't write with the kind of imagery and emotion that Ms. Clark is talking about, I don't know who is or ever was. On the home front, Tom Cochrane, Andrew Cash, Paul Hyde or Bruce Cockburn are virtual paragons of the virtues Ms. Clark preaches. Or even Rush; Neil Peart's lyric writing is often neglected with all the attention given to the musical ability and world-wide success of Canada's premier band. However, one look at the lyric sheet of the band's new album, *Presto*, reveals a tremendous sense of serenity, devoid of cliché, formula love songs. Perhaps Ms. Clark's radio plays different stations than mine, but between the latest Bon Jovi clone bands, I hear lots of great lyrics.

On a personal note, I would just like to state for the record that I'm personally a rotten lyricist, and any advice published by *CM*, or by anyone else is much appreciated. My advice to Ms. Clark and anyone else writing for musicians and songwriters in particular: Don't try to insult us, try to help and inspire us. Greg Wells' article on keyboard solos on page 29 of the same issue inspired me to practice my own solo chops and try to use his suggestions to express my own feelings more through my solos. Inspiration is the name of our game, and any help getting it is a great gift.

Jay Moonah
West Hill, ON

Here's some advice for you, Jay: Don't sell yourself short. As musicians, that's one of our most tragic flaws. Learn to say: "I'm a GREAT lyricist!" Then start believing it.—Ed.



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Spot On "The Rock"

For two years now I have been a subscriber to *Canadian Musician*, and enjoy your approach to the "business." I have been a member of See Spot Run, a Montreal band, for over seven years. We are songwriters, and have been recording with S.C.I. (Gary Moffat and Bill Szawlowski), but to sustain ourselves we operate as a top forty band. Because of the peculiar nature of Montreal's live music scene, we are compelled to tour the entire country year round, averaging between 250 and 275 performances per year. Living like this, you sometimes begin to feel out of touch.

This is where your magazine comes in. We appreciate the approach of CM because it deals with the problems that Canadian musicians face in their quest for success in this country. Knowing that there are others out there trying to make some sense of this business besides our small team is important to us.
Randy Bowen
Montreal, PQ

No Problem Paying the Rent

I enjoyed the article by Nick Krewen on Rush entitled *Presto Change-O*. I found it both informative and entertaining to read. There was one section of the article I'm very curious about. On page 32 and the top of 33 Nick dealt with Rush's album sales worldwide. The number stated was 30 million. I feel this was probably a typing error made by Nick. Rush have probably sold that many units in North America alone.
Tom Gorolonis
Mississauga, ON

According to Kim Garner at SRO/Anthem, this figure is correct.-Ed.

Rush-ian Politics

I cannot think of what would make Nick Krewen refer to the late Ayn Rand as a 'socialist' author (Rush: *Presto Change-O*, cm, April '90.)
John Gordon King
Calgary, AB

Author Ayn Rand is to 'socialism' what Megadeath is to 'easy listening.'
Michael Dillon
Sioux Lookout, ON

It is doubtful that a 'socialist' writer would publish a book called *The Virtue of Selfishness*. Other than that inaccuracy, Nick's article on Rush was great.
Jennifer Schell

Toque Off, Eh!

Thank you for the David Henman article *A&R Directors; What Are They Looking For In The Nineties?* (cm Feb., 1990). It provided some valuable comments for both the virgin and accomplished demo artist.

It is refreshing to read a national magazine which looks at all sides of the musical industry and still remembers that the initial ingredient for the business is creative energy.

Toques off to you down there! Keep up the good work!
Ben Nind
Yellowknife, NWT

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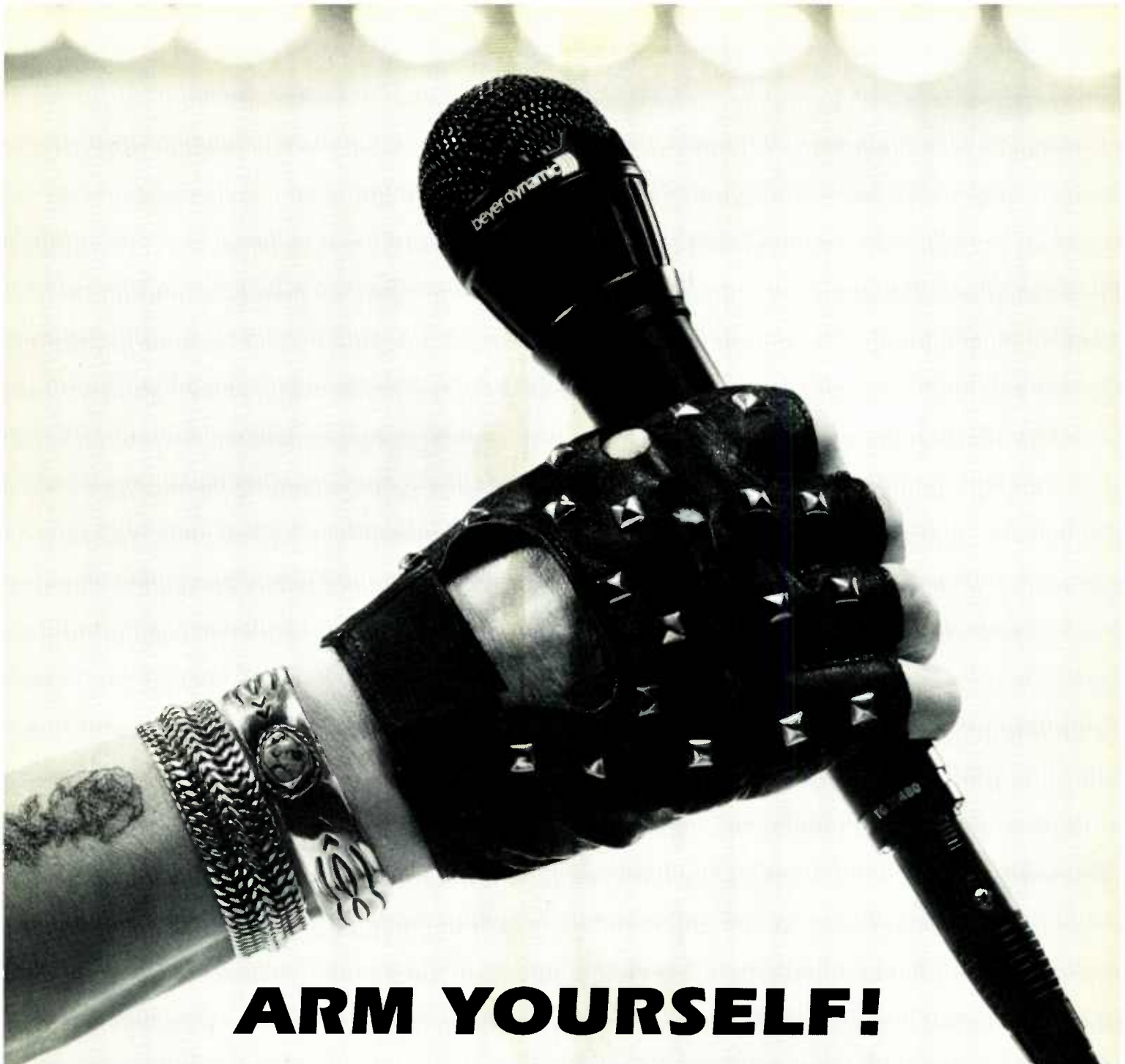


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EMI Music Publishing Comes to Canada

In a move destined to enhance and broaden the Canadian music industry, EMI Music Publishing Canada has opened its doors in Toronto. A division of British-based Thorn EMI, one of the world's leading and most successful music publishing companies, EMI Canada will aggressively seek out and promote Canadian talent at home and abroad.

"This means we can deal directly with creative Canadian talent on a worldwide scale," say Hank Medress, president of EMI Canada. "I'm here to work with great Canadian talent and expose it to the rest of the world."

Medress, in fact, has already signed his first discovery to a worldwide publishing deal—Ross Harwood, a twenty-seven year old Toronto composer.

For more information, contact: EMI Music Publishing Canada, 300 Richmond St. W., Toronto, ON M5V 1X2 (416) 345-9277 FAX (416) 345-9284.



EMI president Hank Medress announces the signing of Ross Harwood. (L to R) Irwin Robinson, president, EMI Music Publishing Inc. (New York); Hank Medress, president EMI Canada; Ross Harwood; Charles Koppelman, Chairman of the Board and C.E.O. EMI Music Publishing Inc. (New York).

Manitoba Home to New Recording Label

Thunder Records Inc. hopes to produce up to five albums in its first year of operation. Two recording artists have been signed and negotiations are currently underway to sign three more artists. However, the company's major objective will be to support new, emerging artists.

Company president David Wolinsky, a Winnipeg lawyer specializing in the en-

tertainment field, is joined by Fred Turner, founder of Bachman Turner Overdrive and a well know writer and sound producer, and by Lorne Saifer, an artists' manager who represents recording artists across Canada and in the U.S.

For more information, contact: Thunder Records Inc., Winnipeg, MB (204) 944-9777.

Trebas Moves Montreal Headquarters

As of February of this year, Trebas Institute has re-located its Montreal headquarters. The new address is: Trebas Institute, 451 St. Jean St., Montreal, PQ H2Y 2R5 (514) 845-4141, FAX (514) 845-2581.

Songs for Soundtrack

Bruce McDonald, director of the award winning film *Roadkill*, is in the pre-production stage of his next film, *Highway 61*. Artists interested in being considered for inclusion in the soundtrack and who have material of any style (master or near master quality) should submit a photo, bio and cassette of no more that two songs to: Rampart Music Corp., 7 Crescent Pl., #1909, Toronto, ON M4C 5L7. Attention: Peter McFadzean.

Music Holiday

Scheduled for July 22 to 29 on Vancouver Island, the Shawnigan Lake Music Holiday is an opportunity for amateur musicians to improve their musical knowledge and experience in a friendly, informal environment.

For more information, contact: West Coast Amateur Musicians Society, 943 Clements Ave., North Vancouver, BC V7R 2K8 (604) 980-5341.

Nova Scotia Songwriters' Association

Incorporated in November '89, the Songwriters' Association of Nova Scotia (SANS) hopes to create both an information base and a support base for songwriters in that province.

For more information, contact: Songwriters' Association of Nova Scotia, 41 Dahlia St., Dartmouth, NS B3A 2S1.

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*Billboard's 1990 International Recording
Equipment & Studio Directory, Oct. 1989.

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Vancouver's Johnny Jet Records Established

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For more information, contact: Johnny Jet Records Inc., 68 Water St., #300, Vancouver, BC V6B 1A4 (604) 685-2002, FAX (604) 685-1062.

Canadian Artists' Code New Address

The Canadian Artists' Code, which deals with many of the issues that affect musicians on a daily basis, has announced a change of address (see below).

The Canadian Artists' Code publishes the *Arts Bulletin*, a quarterly bulletin, and *Arts News*, a newsletter.

For more information, contact: Canadian Artists' Code, 189 Laurier Ave. E., Ottawa, ON K1N 1P1 (613) 238-3561, FAX (613) 238-4849.

MCA Canada and Justin Finalize Distribution Deal

MCA Records Canada and Justin Entertainment Inc. have announced the finalization of a three year distribution agreement in Canada. Justin, a new independent label headed up by long-time industry executive Jeff Burns, will primarily be involved in the discovery and development of Canadian artists. Jeff held

the position of Vice President of A&R and Promotion at GRT Records from 1968 to 1979, and the position of Vice President of A&R with CBS Records in Canada from 1979 to 1989.

For more information, contact: Justin Entertainment Inc., 30 Malley Rd., Scarborough, ON M1L 2E2 (416) 757-9991, FAX (416) 757-6315.

Composers Competition

"Camillo Togni", which is held every two years, aims to promote the musical production of young composers and develop their activity and professional level. Open to musicians born after December 31, 1949, the contest deadline for submissions is July 31, 1990.

For more information, contact: Alla Segreteria del Concorso Internazionale di Composizione "Camillo Togni", c/o Associazione Nuovi Spazi Sonori, c.p. 196-25122 Brescia (Italia).

Steve Blair Joins S.L. Feldman

S.L. Feldman & Associates has announced the addition of Steve Blair to its agent roster.

Steve moves from Toronto where, for the past eight years, he has represented such bands as Cowboy Junkies, Gowan, the Razorbacks, Ray Lyell and the Storm, Andrew Cash, the Breit Brothers and the Skydiggers.

For more information, contact: S.L. Feldman & Associates, 3rd Floor, 1534 West 2nd Ave., Vancouver, BC V6J 1H2 (604) 734-5945.



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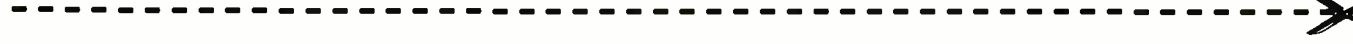
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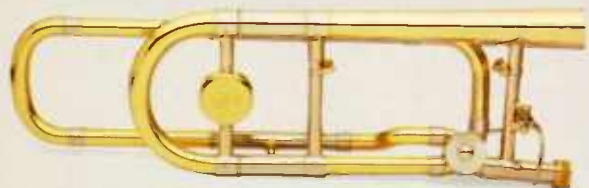
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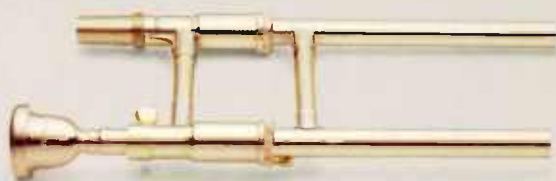
The list of Strad trombone options is so lengthy, you can virtually design your own instrument. You can, for instance, choose the free, full response of an open wrap design. Or, you can choose the solidly braced, compact trigger unit of a traditional wrap. Or get an option within an option by choosing a convertible model.



In the tenor models alone, you get a choice of seven different bores. And in all models you get a bell selection that includes regular or heavy gauge in either yellow or gold brass.

The option list doesn't get any shorter in the handslide department. There are traditional yellow brass outer slides. Or lightweight nickel silver outer slides. There are

regular mouthpipes. And, on some models, open mouthpipes and removable mouthpipes. Some models also offer a choice of regular or narrow handslide crooks.



Open goosenecks are available. As are removable balance weights. And if mouthpiece selection is a concern, consider this: There are 38 tenor and 13 bass mouthpieces available—and that's just the *standard* models. Each mouthpiece can be further customized to meet specific needs.



Bach offers all these options because at the professional level, there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all trombone. You need an instrument that fits *you*.

The best way to get that instrument is to visit a Bach dealer and build your own.



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Prezmith HPD6

by David Henman

This handy little device is a headphone distribution box that has a variety of applications. For the home studio, for example, you could plug it into the headphone jack of your portastudio and plug up to six sets of headphones into the HPD6. A similar arrangement could be utilized with a mixing board for rehearsals, particularly if you're using a drum machine to keep the volume down to avoid disturbing

that four-hundred pound neighbour who works the graveyard shift.

This is a very high quality, made in Canada device that comes with a ninety day replacement/one year parts and labour/five year labour only guarantee.

For more information, contact Prezmith Engineering, 50 Carroll St., #304, Toronto, ON M4M 3G3 (416) 461-4891

Seymour Duncan 84.40

by Richard Chycki

The Seymour Duncan 84.40 tube amp is aimed primarily at musicians playing club size gigs. My test model came equipped with a single 12" Eminence Vintage speaker. A 2 X 10" configuration is also available.

The preamp section is well laid out, as is the whole general design. Two footswitchable gain channels share a single EQ section. The channels are each voiced very differently, so a compromise EQ setting yields surprisingly good results. Several pull gain switches pack more than enough *oomph* for the 84.40 to really rock.

And does this thing rock! At low levels I found the tone a little on the dark side. After consulting the well written manual, which strongly recommends that the masters be cranked up for best results, I had no trouble obtaining a variety of sweet (but really loud) tones. There is no mud here. Patching my Yamaha SPX900 into the effects loop resulted in some positively heavenly sounds at levels that can easily keep up on a loud stage.

My only qualm was the reverb. Its overall tone was not overly enticing and the springs had a very easy tendency to feed back. With so many inexpensive digital reverbs on the market, why not scrub the ol' spring reverb and save the buyer a few bucks.

Overall the 84.40 is a real workhorse amp. Compact, efficient and highly recommended.

Manufacturer's Response

The Seymour Duncan 84.40 certainly is well suited to the musician playing club gigs, but it's not limited to that. Many well known guitarists in the US have already incorporated the 84.40 into their concert stage setups. The Duncan engineers have also developed a simple modification that allows easier access to those sweet tones at lower volumes, thus eliminating the "dark side" noted on the test unit. Finally, the spring reverb was included to complement the "vintage" appeal the 84.40 offers. The reverb tanks were over-tightened in the cabinets in the first production run, causing feedback. This has also been rectified.

For more information, contact Erikson, 378 rue Isabey, St. Laurent, PQ H4T 1W1 (514) 738-3000

Richard Chycki plays guitar in Winter Rose.



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PRODUCT REPORTS

Fender P-Bass Plus

by Norman Hartshorne

For a number of decades the Fender Precision has been a standard choice for bassists. It has a proven road record and, despite its ruggedness (mine has endured more than its share of abuse), it maintains the kind of quality that is more often associated with more fragile instruments.

But always there's that same query: "Nice bass, but is it a pre-CBS?" Fender has rendered that question pointless with the introduction of the Fender P-Bass Plus, an American made instrument of considerable quality and worthwhile innovation. Much of this, of course, is due to the electronics. Fender's Lace Sensor pickups are nearly impervious to external interference, a constant threat with conventional single-coil pickups. An additional treble pickup delivers plenty of high end.

A unique feature is the series/parallel switch. When the pickups are placed in parallel, there is an increased output signal and a boost of the lower frequencies. This very natural sounding option is like having active electronics

without the batteries.

The neck is equipped with a Bi-flex truss rod, meaning adjustments can be made in convex and concave directions. I found the factory setup very much to my liking, but fine tuning the neck to your own personal test should be quite simple.

The Schaller adjustable keys are smooth and precise, but if that's not enough, you have the option of using the fine tuners at the bridge.

Obviously, I'm sold. The P-Bass Plus is an exciting instrument to play. It's sensitive to the touch, and with all the electronic improvements you have access to pretty well any sound you're looking for.

However, if you have your heart set on a vintage bass, don't worry. There will be lots of trade-ins available once the word spreads about this terrific instrument.

For more information, contact TMI, P.O. Box 279, Port Coquitlam, BC, V3C 3V7 (604) 464-1341

Audix OM-2

An Affordable Alternative

by David Henman

Incorporating VLM (Very Low Mass) technology, the Audix line of microphones is well worthy of your consideration as a very high quality alternative to the "standard" brands.

Audix is a newcomer to the microphone world, where established names tend to rule the waves. I suggest you comparison shop, when looking for a mic, and then, when all is said and done, compare for price. This kind of quality and reliability at such a low price is not easily dismissed.

The OM-2 has a dynamic, moving-coil transducer with a hyper-cardoid polar pattern.

I used the OM-2 in a live situation for about a month, and found it to be a trouble-free mic with a clean, transparent sound and excellent off-axis rejection, which is especially crucial for vocals or any instrument where isolation is a factor.

For more information, contact TMI, P.O. Box 279, Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 3V7 (604) 464-1341

Drawmer M500

Versatile Dynamics Processor

by Peter Lee

The introduction of the M500 dynamics processor provides a classic example of what DSP (digital signal processing) is all about. Performing seven different types of dynamics, including de-esser, gate, expander, compressor, limiter, panner and auto-fader, it also contains various utility functions such as stereo link, filters for side chain operations, MIDI, and a record function that allows the user to commit up to sixteen envelopes to memory to be used with the gate program. Another impressive feature is its ability to cascade dynamics together. In mixdown, for example, the M500 can be inserted across the mix buss as a buss compressor. But you can also assign the fade program after the compressor so that it will perform an autofade on the mix.

There are 128 patches (1 through 50 are user-programmable) and editing is achieved by using the twenty-one keys

on the front panel to select the various modes and viewing the parameters on an 80 x 2 LCD. Four arrow keys are used to scroll through the parameters, and once the cursor is positioned over a specific parameter, the value may be changed with the rotary controller. The same LCD screen also shows input, output and other types of metering. There are two scales and one overload LED for each channel.

I was very impressed with the performance of the M500. Engineers will appreciate the high degree of flexibility and the high quality dynamics. It is quiet, easy to use and, as I have discovered, impossible to part with.

For more information, contact Head-Water Imports, 635 Caron Ave., Windsor, ON N9A 5B8 (519) 256-5665

Peter Lee is a house engineer at McClear Place recording studios in Toronto.

Maxima Gold Bass Strings

24 Carat Gold Plating

by Norman Hartshorne

Although roughly three times as expensive as more conventional strings, the seemingly high price of Maxima Gold strings is justified by their considerably longer string life and superior performance.

The key here, of course, is the twenty-four carat gold plating, which resists dirt and corrosion. The inner steel core has also been given an anti-corrosion treatment.

Maxima Golds are loud strings, providing great sensitivity and a broad dynamic range. They have a pleasing, "elastic" quality that makes for effort-

less string bending. Sustain is abundant, with each string holding true right up the neck.

I've been using these strings on a Fender P-Bass Plus for several months and thus far they show no sign of wear, proving once again that gold is a good investment.

For more information, contact Sound Music Distributors, 20 Melham Crt., #9, Scarborough, ON M1B 2T6 (416) 224-4799 FAX (416)224-4707

Norman Hartshorne is the bass player in The Business.



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by Howard Druckman

CENTRESTAGE

Will the eighties be remembered as a decade of technological overkill?



Maestro Fresh-Wes

Maestro Fresh Wes

Suburban Toronto rapper and Juno Award winner Maestro Fresh Wes recently signed a Stateside record deal that's seen his debut LP, *Symphony In Effect*, scaling the American charts. At press time, it was well on its way to gold in Canada.

"We use a lot of sampling," says Wes. "A lot of artists will take a whole piece without getting permission. But the way I sample is to take two bars here and there, touch and go, using bits and pieces. A little Rolling Stones in one spot, a little Teddy Riley in another. None of my songs rely or depend on a specific sample. My music is mostly stripped down to beats and rhymes anyway, and everything else is just to enhance that.

"My DJ uses Technics turntables, and we used a DAT machine to make our demos, rather than quarter-inch tape. The quality is great, even better than a CD, so we just mailed record companies our digital cassettes, and they EQ'd it from there.

"I don't think sampling is going into overkill, though, 'cause I like what's going on. Of course, sometimes it's overdone and it gets redundant. But I don't think we have done that."

Regatta

A rockin' Toronto trio who lace their powerful pop melodies with solid R & B chops, Regatta have established themselves with the hot single "Wherever You Run," from their self-titled debut LP.

"I think technology has affected us most in the recording of our demos," says bassist Matthew Gerrard. "Our setup at home is an Akai 12-track and an Atari computer with a SMPTE box to synch them up together, so our demos can be of studio quality. We put guitars, bass and background and lead vocals on the tape, and all the drums and keyboards in the computer. But when we went in to do the album, we did a lot of it live, and basically used the same technology that, say, Led Zeppelin used to do their albums.

"I guess you can get too involved in the technical side of things. After you've bought your computer and spent so much time sampling a bass guitar to try and make it sound real, you might ask why you didn't just use a real bass player in the first place."

"Sequenced drums can be a distinctive instrument of their own," says guitarist/vocalist Chris Smith. "As long as they're not used to emulate real drums, they really do have their place."

"Some sequenced bass things are also really cool," says Gerrard. "It's pointless to double a sequenced bass with a live one, but it can sound good to play another part around that. If the sequenced bass is not meant to be a real bass player's type of part, it can work well."

Regatta



Frank Marino

Veteran Montreal rock 'n' roll guitarist Frank Marino, of Mahogany Rush fame, recently released an instrumental track, "Babylon", on IRS Records' prestigious *No Speak* guitar music compilation.

"Looking back from 1990, it seems like there was a whole lot of excess technology in the eighties," says Marino. "But I think it's going to go so much further that if you ask the same question in 1997, we'll say 'No, not at all.'

"Sooner or later these guys in the laboratories will be able to figure out how to mimic guitars with their chips, and then it's going to be voices...Before you know it, it'll be one big faction of people who use all this stuff, and all these purists like myself who want to do it the old way.

"They could never really mimic the guitar electronically - there's too many nuances in the way it's played. So they used MIDI pickups and stuff to let you use your guitar to play synthesizer. 'If we can't make the guitar come out of a synth, maybe we can turn guitarists into synth players.'

"But other people used guitar technology in a good way, like making amplifiers with programmable equalization. You used to have to turn a tone pot one way, and a treble switch the other way, and change settings for every song. Now you can use programs that set the EQ at the touch of a button. Reverbs and delays have been made so much better.

"But I've always maintained that no matter what kind of devices they come out with, it really comes down to *what* the guitarist is playing."



Frank Marino

Tim Karr



Tim Karr

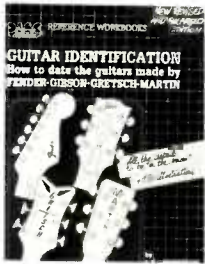
Metallic rock 'n' roller Tim Karr left Montreal as a teenager to seek his fortune in L.A. clubland. After several lean years, he was recently signed Stateside, and his debut album, *Rubbin' Me The Right Way*, has created a buzz across the continent.

"Recording, we use SSL boards," says Karr. "They're really good for mixing. But as far as the music and the instruments, it's all stuff that you could have played in the '60s. There's no samples, or tons of sequencing, none of that crap. We just plug in and play it. There's not a lot of outboard stuff. Once we put it down dry, we just take the effects from the board.

"So many people are sampling backing vocals and stuff right now, and it's not real. What's the difference between that and lip-synching? Even lead vocals now are being sampled, for the high parts!

"Some bands start out as a real hardcore rock 'n' roll thing, and with production, they make a lot more money. But you wonder where they'd be without that production. With some songs out now, there'd be nothing there without the sampled vocals and the 500 voices in back. Like John Cougar said, if you can pick up an acoustic guitar, sing it, and put it across, it's a good song. If you gotta start layering all kinds of crap around it, you got a problem!"

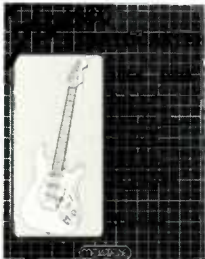
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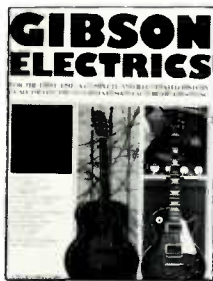
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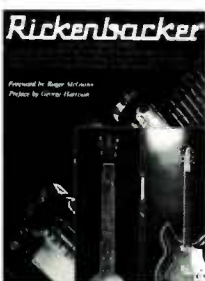
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How To Be Kind To Your Soundman (and still like your sound)

by John Albani

By now, I'm sure that you have heard that a low stage volume is essential to your soundman getting a better house mix. Well, here are a few suggestions on how to achieve a lower volume without sounding like you're playing out of a transistor radio.

I've heard people say that they have a great sounding amp when it's cranked, but when the master volume is turned down they lose a lot of sustain and the top end gets brittle. One solution is to modify the amp with an effects loop. This way you can take the preamp output into a compressor and return it to the main amp input. Also, you can open up your master volume and use the compressor output volume as your main level control. The compressor will also add "punch" to your sound. If you don't want to interfere with your amplifier electronics, try the Rocktron "Juice Extractor." With this, you plug your speaker output into the Juice Extractor and it gives you six outputs and a three-band fully parametric equalizer. Now you have to return into a power amp.

Either way, there is a new compressor I strongly recommend by Rane Electronics called the DC 24. Marshalls and other 4 x 12 cabinets give a great "chunky" sound, but it is also accompanied by an annoying "woofing" on the lower end. The DC 24 was given to me by Bill Coons at Contact Distribution for a trial run. This stereo compressor has the unique feature of becoming a two-way crossover with an independent low end and high end compressors. With this I was able to achieve what was previously only possible with the dynamics section of the SSL console that was used for my guitar sounds on the Lee Aaron *Bodyrock* album. Take either the preamp output of the loop, or one of the outputs of the Juice Extractor, into the DC 24 crossover input. The crossover output should return to the main amp input of the effects loop or the power amp (via your effects). Now you can set a crossover point on the front panel (try around 400 hz) and compress the bottom end at a 10:1 ratio. While chugging on a chord where you notice a lot of woofing, set the gain reduction with the threshold control to read 6 db. When you hit an open chord, there should be no gain reduction. If there is, back off on the threshold, not on the ratio. Now

compress the top end between the 1:5 and 2:1 ratios, with 3 db gain reduction when an open chord is hit, to give your sound a lot more attack. Also, no matter where you play on the neck, the bottom end of the sound will be even, without woofing, giving your overall tone punch and clarity.

Incidentally, the DC 24 can limit, compress and gate simultaneously.

WARNING: Do not over-compress the top end or the pick attack will be slurred. If you want to hear more attack,

Right now you are 99% on your way to retaining your sound or bettering it, without blasting everyone to Palookaville, or deafening your soundman.

turn up the top end *level* of the DC 24 after setting the above-mentioned compression for the top end.

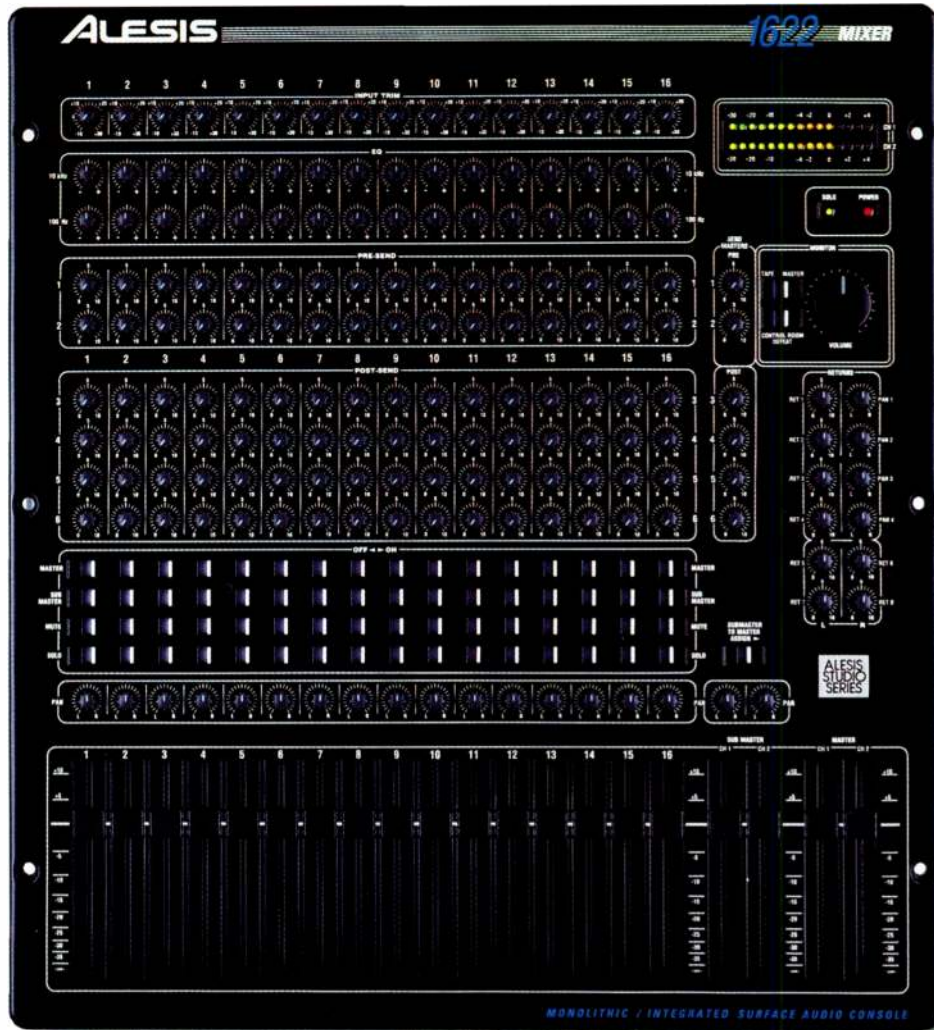
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On stage you must work within the tonal range of your instrument. I hear guitarists with huge sounds that are great until the bass player fires up. He can't hear because the bottom from the 4 x 12s is blurring out his bottom end. So you end up in a volume war, which puts you out of the front mix. Try this: Once you have the sound you like, back off on the bottom level control of the DC 24. Your bass player is already operating in that tonal range and you won't miss the sub lows when he's playing with you anyway.

Also, Marshall cabinets are uni-directional and long-throwing. So stand at your cabinet(s) and see if they are pointed directly at your soundman's head. If they are, you are probably not in the mix. A very slight angling of the cabinets is enough for the sound to pass by the soundman and reduce your apparent volume, putting you back in the front mix.

John Albani plays guitar with the Lee Aaron Band.

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Technique and Technology: Friends or Foes

An Interview with Bobby Wiseman

by David Henman

Last year's Country Music Awards show in Ottawa was a memorable experience, due in no small part to Blue Rodeo's live performance of "House of Dreams" from *Diamond Mine* (see *Inside CM* in the Dec.'89 issue). But a big part of that memory is the result of watching, or more accurately, sensing the reaction of this very traditional and relatively conservative audience to this decidedly unconventional and unconservative performer. Decker out in army fatigues, head shaved, body and limbs flailing about like some primitive tribal dancer, one can perhaps not even imagine what the members of this audience, here to honour their country music peers, heroes and hopefuls, were thinking. Nonetheless, Blue Rodeo's music, delivered with the authoritative sense of dynamics and understatement that is the trademark of country music, gave rise to a standing ovation.

As much a part of Blue Rodeo's appeal as Jim Cuddy's youthful voice and looks, Greg Keelor's brilliant lyrics and criminally unrecognized guitar work, Bazil Donovan's soulful bass playing (he's also quite an accomplished guitarist!) and Mark French's inspired drumming, is Bobby Wiseman's over-the-edge-but-always-in-control keyboard magic (to say nothing of his recent performances on accordion, harmonica, mandolin and soon, violin).

Coming from a family in which every member was a professional or amateur musician, Bobby was surprised to discover that he could actually make money doing something he loved.

Somehow, although he has been playing piano since the age of three, Bobby manages to keep an open mind, particularly in his assessment of the contemporary keyboard player with his push-button, paint-by-number technology. "If a person is talented, they're talented," he declares. "I saw Count Basie, before he died, playing a somewhat minimalist piano style; yet it was very exciting, because he just placed the notes so perfectly. He probably developed his high-velocity style performing with big bands, where it may have been difficult to be heard. You've got to be open to checking

out what someone is doing. The converse is true, too. There are people who have very sophisticated technique who are boring, as well."

Nor does Bobby feel that this technology is unsatisfying or detrimental to children or anyone else who is attempting to learn an instrument. "If you're turned on to music, you're turned on to music!" Wiseman knows whereof he speaks. Even his first experience with formal lessons, in which his very strict piano teacher used the threat of physical violence ("She threatened to burn my fingers with her cigarette"), did not dilute his passion.

He does caution that a person who has been learning music via the one-finger method is in for quite a shock when they sit down to play with other musicians, but explains that we have no more to fear from these easy-to-play keyboards than from calculators—you still have to understand arithmetic in order to use them properly.

Formal Studies

Bobby found his later experience of studying music improvisation at York University to be somewhat "intellectual and competitive", compared to the jam sessions he soon discovered were taking place at Grossman's Tavern. "The main thing I got out of York was studying with Casey Sokal. That was why I came to Toronto."

More recently, he studied classical music with Carla Hartsfield. "I've always tried to be involved with what I don't know how to do. I learned a Chopin Etude from her, which I performed recently with Eugene Chadbourne. We did it for piano forte and electric rake! I worked my butt off to learn that piece, and I felt very proud. I was thinking, 'I've never studied classical music before and now here I've worked on it for a couple of months and I've got it down. Ha!Ha!Ha!' Then I went to a library and listened to Louis Lortie perform the piece and I cried; I felt so stupid."

As for advice to aspiring keyboard maestros, Bobby has this to say: "People figure 'Oh! All I need is this machine or that machine.' It's silly, because what they need is to get musical."

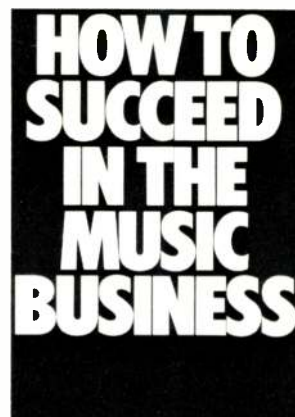
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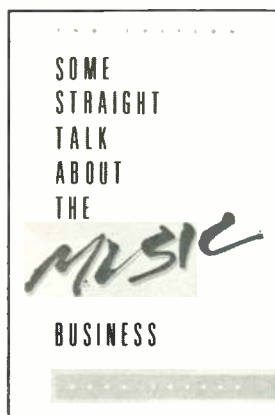
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Learning From The Masters

by Pat Kilbride

It is obvious from listening to electric bass players today that there is a raised standard of technical proficiency. Go into a music store and you'll notice that where once guitarists held court, doing tepid imitations of Van Halen's "Eruption", young bassists have now staked their claim with a flurry of fast triplets and two-hand tapping. These innovations are amazing to hear and, in the right hands, a welcome addition to the bassist's arsenal. However, this heightened technical awareness does not always manifest itself in musicality. With beginners, this may be attributed to such basics as lack of chordal knowledge or a bad sense of meter. In this limited space the only remedy I can offer is to find good teachers and/or books (my favourite is *The Improviser's Bass Method* by Chuck Sher) that stress the fundamentals. Without these, technical dexterity is left foundationless. In other instances, this deficiency may be the result of music listening habits which ignore the legacy left by great bassists in all styles of music.

For instance, when the word "funk" is mentioned, many players immediately think of the thumb-style playing which is so prevalent today. Those who do may want to check out the staccato finger

style of Francis Rocco Prestia, whose seminal rhythm section work with Tower of Power is still unparalleled, or Jaco Pastorius (Weather Report, solo albums, Joni Mitchell, etc.) People tend to revere Pastorius most for his pioneering fretless techniques and his lyrical solo approach. However, he is also responsible for some of the most savage R&B grooves ever recorded. (Example 1 is a typical Jaco lick in this style.)

Another case in point is the often overlooked role of melody and rhythmic variation in bass lines. Most bassists are familiar with the concept of "locking in" with the bass drum. This has undeniably resulted in the general tightening up of rhythm sections. However, becoming a slave to the bass drum can become an aural hindrance. One must always be aware of all stimuli from every section of the band, especially vocals or any principal melodic line. If one's focus on forging an inextricable link with the bass drum is overemphasized, the song may end up sounding stiff or too contrived. Many of the most influential players, from the great reggae bassists, to Paul McCartney to modern fretless player Pino Palladino (Paul Young) have established distinctive styles by creating provocative bass lines which function on more than one level. Learn their parts

and the musical rewards of this approach will be readily apparent.

One of the best examples of a style where the bass is an integral part of more than one aspect of a song is that of the unsung hero of Motown, James Jamerson. (I must recommend the book and cassette tribute to Jamerson, *Standing in The Shadows of Motown*, published by Hal Leonard.) His playing perfectly illustrates how a bass line, when approached with a degree of artistry, can enhance the melody by introducing a hook of its own as well as providing a solid low-end groove. These points are in no way meant to negate the value of simplicity. In many songs nothing sounds better than relentless, pumping eighth notes. Overactive playing in this context is nothing short of annoying.

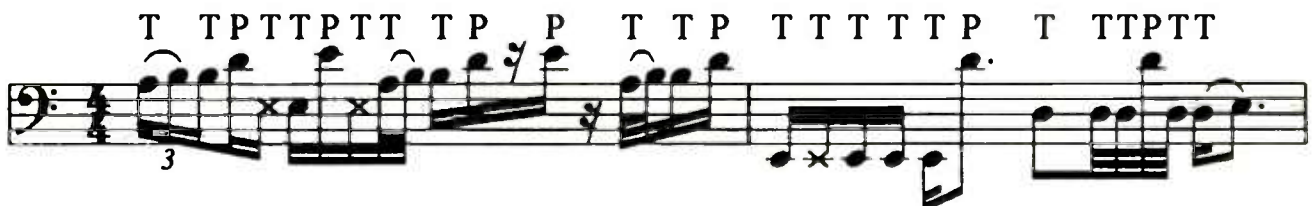
But for all those who have an occasional desire to impress the fans in the front row (of course, I would never succumb to so puerile an impulse...) I leave you with Example 2. This slap exercise incorporates hammer-ons, ghost notes and percussive rhythmic patterns. Learn it properly with a metronome at a slow tempo. It looks worse than it sounds.

A native of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Pat Kilbride pumps the bass for Ian Hunter.

Ex. ① ♩ = 100



Ex. ② ♩ = 108-120



Key: \frown = Hammer-ons, T=Thumb, P=Pull, x=Ghost or Deadened Note

Fill Designation for Thrumming

by Jim Norman

In the February '89 issue, I introduced "The Art of Thrumming." With the response to the article, and the reception of my band Graphite at the Toronto Jazz and Blues Festival, I have been prompted to tell more.

In Graphite I use a Yamaha RX21L, which is a percussion machine, and a Yamaha RX5, which is a drum machine, in MIDI.

The programs for these two machines—programs that complement each other and leave holes to play the acoustic kit to, still leaving space for the rhythm to breathe—would best be executed by a drummer/percussionist who has developed a distinctive playing style. That style would then show up in the two programs.

In one of my compositions, "Time Parent," the percussion machine is in a one bar pattern in 6/8, and the drum machine has a three bar pattern in 7/12 (or a 21 beat figure before it starts again). In accompanying this rhythmic composition, the drum kit is played in 6/8 with the percussion machine. Then, the 7/12 rhythm is slowly introduced from the second machine (more drum oriented than percussion oriented), and the acoustic kit is "phase-played" from the 6/8 to the 7/12, until there is a rhythm in seven established against the six. During the unfolding and establishing of this rhythmic melody, thrumming fills are superimposed on top of the cycle.

A simple example of "Fill Designation" is as follows: on the kit, at the end of every four bars, one would play a fill, signifying the end of a group of four. This first fill is designated to the kit. The second fill is designated to a machine (Thrum), the third fill, the kit, the fourth fill, the kit, the fifth fill, the machine (Thrum), the sixth fill, the kit, the seventh fill, the machine (Thrum), and the eighth fill on the machine (Thrum).

What will be discerned here is a paradiddle figure (RLRR LRL), not as a rudiment, but as "Fill Designation" (Kit/Machine/Kit/Kit/Machine/Kit/Machine/Machine, or KMKK MKMM).

The fills don't have to be every four bars; they can be wherever is tasteful or in call response with a musician. The

point is that thrumming takes on a systematic movement, allowing the player to think ahead. Remember, through all of this the player is still playing the kit, playing the music, and in a musical idiom, playing off the musicians: *listening*. The concept is concluded with the fill designation, alternating between the two machines, so that the first machine fill could be on the percussion machine, and the second machine fill on the drum machine, third on percussion machine and fourth on the drum machine. This would be seen as RLRL; again, not as a rudiment but PCM DRM PCM DRM. When this approach is relaxed, and one is familiar with a variety of combinations, the fill designation of the thrumming becomes a cyclical, tumbling, looping, mobius strip type of thinking.

Okay, so you need another brain. And another limb wouldn't hurt. The player must really want to do this. The result is a Different Drummer, with a different feel to the music. Though machines are involved, there is still a "Seat of the Pants" excitement, a call and response, and the human element of making a mistake and turning it into a new idea. Practise, practise and visualize, like the athlete visualizes going over the hurdles before actually going over them; that is using the other brain, not just the lobes and coordination. (A lot can be done in the dentist's chair: count the drill revolutions and bite the guy on every seven hundred and eighty thousandth revolution; a pattern will come up.)

These are some of the ideas we use in Graphite. I hope that as time goes by drum machine manufacturers will realize that many players like to play the machine, and will make button placement more user friendly to the hand, to enhance the approach I call "thrumming."

Jim Norman is a Toronto percussionist. His band Graphite has been voted "Most Original Trio, Class of '87" (The Toronto Star). He has played with Domenic Troiano, Rough Trade, Salome Bey's Indigo, and spin-offs from Nexus.



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Dr. Jack Train is a dental consultant to brass and woodwind musicians in Canada, U.S.A., and Europe, and a trumpet player.

by **Dr. Jack Train**

Most scholars agree that the best teaching is by example, and the best teacher is experience.

The following case history is true. It is a story of a musical career ruined by poor advice, poor decisions and inappropriate treatment.

Many years ago, a friend was advised that his embouchure could be improved if he straightened a crooked front tooth. He consulted a dentist who knew nothing about embouchure, who advised removal of the offending tooth and its replacement with a fixed bridge. The dentist's intention was to flatten the front teeth artificially by placing a "cantilever bridge (free-end)." This was completed and, to be sure, our friend's embouchure improved and his lip no longer suffered from the crooked tooth.

Very shortly, the tooth supporting the bridge began to suffer. The stress of the cantilever, natural function, plus the trauma of six to eight hours daily trumpet playing, caused the other supporting front tooth to become irreversibly damaged. His gums were chronically swollen, his bridge loose and his embouchure bed began to "cave in." His dentist now recommended the extraction of the other front tooth and the construction of a new larger bridge, using the two lateral incisors, one on each side of the space.

The scenario was repeated and shortly afterwards the roots of the lateral incisors were so badly involved

periodontally, that they too became untreatable. The bridge and their supporting teeth were soon lost.

By now, his periodontal condition had spread to the adjacent teeth, his gums were falling away from the roots and root decay invaded nearly all of his remaining teeth. His teeth and the new bridge became demonstrably loose.

Our friend's trumpet playing was in serious jeopardy, as he no longer could play for sustained periods. His teeth and gums hurt every time he played, and playing in the upper register was almost impossible. His bleeding gums were fouling his horn.

It was at this point that we became involved in his care. Appropriate referrals were made to various dental specialists and, following some very difficult periodontal surgery, several root canals and a fourth new bridge, he began to play trumpet again. By now, he had lost in excess of fifty percent of his top teeth and had endured almost twenty years of very costly dentistry.

He was forced to modify his musical career as he no longer was able to play for extended periods.

Regrettably, even with the finest treatment, the dental condition would re-activate to be followed by periods of remission. He discovered that if he stopped playing, the periods of remission would last longer. Very quickly, he learned he could no longer play. The discomfort was too great and the strain of his embouchure on his weakened teeth and gums proved too much.

At this point, his career as a performing musician ended. It is not possible to speculate whether or not our friend would have developed gum (periodontal disease) if he had not removed that healthy front tooth many years ago. One thing, however, is certain. The removal of the healthy tooth and the placement of the cantilever bridge, so many years ago, activated and exaggerated what most probably was a minor gum condition. It is very likely that if the tooth were not removed, his condition recognized and appropriate referrals made, our friend would still be performing.

Our friend tried to fix something that wasn't broken. A simple brace with an elastic should have corrected his crooked tooth without interfering with his embouchure.

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Making Machines Groove

by Don Breithaupt

It's easy to sit back and say, "MIDI productions don't groove," until you run into blatant exceptions like Earth, Wind and Fire's new album, *Heritage*. When you hear sequencers and samplers creating knock-down dance tracks that rival any live band you'd care to name, it's time to stop disparaging digital and get down to work on your own stuff.

Here's my method for getting your gear to, er, kick:

1) Know what you're imitating. Even when you're building the most futuristic, industrial groove of your career, the principles of an old-fashioned rhythm section still apply. Don't make the kick drum hyperactive. Don't move the backbeat away from beats 2 and 4 unless you're matching a push somewhere else in the band, (especially on the bass track). Use dynamics for the hi-hat; 16 consecutive hits with the same "on" value make for a very tedious bar. Finally, remember that drum fills are meant to momentarily disturb the groove. If you don't want your groove momentarily disturbed, don't set up every section with a fill.

2) Don't quantize 100%. Leaving small errors in the track helps to maintain "feel," that mysterious commodity. In general, this rule works: the louder the sound, the more quantizing it requires. Kick, snare, and bass tracks sound good when they're extremely tight, while hi-hat, percussion and synth tracks can do with a little more breathing room, i.e. less quantizing. If you're dealing with a track that's been entered in step time, try shifting all the notes a few clicks past the beat—this can lay back a rigid-sounding sequence.

3) Swing that mutha. Although there are still plenty of tunes around that are dead straight, the emergence of hip-hop and the much-imitated Soul II Soul feel have paved the way for more swinging grooves, or shuffle funk patterns. It generally amounts to a 16th-note triplet feel superimposed over a standard backbeat. You can either program the feel in real time and quantize gently, or use the swing function on your sequencer or drum machine to get things bouncing. But beware: pushing everything to a strict triplet feel tends to sound too perky. The sweet spot is somewhere be-

tween 50% and 67%. For an example in which different elements of the track have different amounts of swing, check Michael Jackson's "Another Part of Me." 4) Work subtractively. By that I mean throw all your ideas in, then decide which ones to keep. Don't edit yourself too early in the process. When you've recorded everything you can think of, try muting various tracks to find the magic combination. Less is more. Maybe the shaker was interfering with the hi-hat. Maybe the cowbell was one element too many. Maybe the rhythm guitar was covering up that sexy effect on the snare.

5) And speaking of effects, try making them part of the groove. An eighth-note-oriented track with a timed delay suggesting sixteenth notes is sometimes better than programmed sixteenths. Check the stereo-delayed violins in Steve Winwood's "My Love is Leaving." On the other hand, don't be afraid of leaving some things dry. Hi-hat, kick, bass, rhythm guitar samples and clav parts are often better left alone.

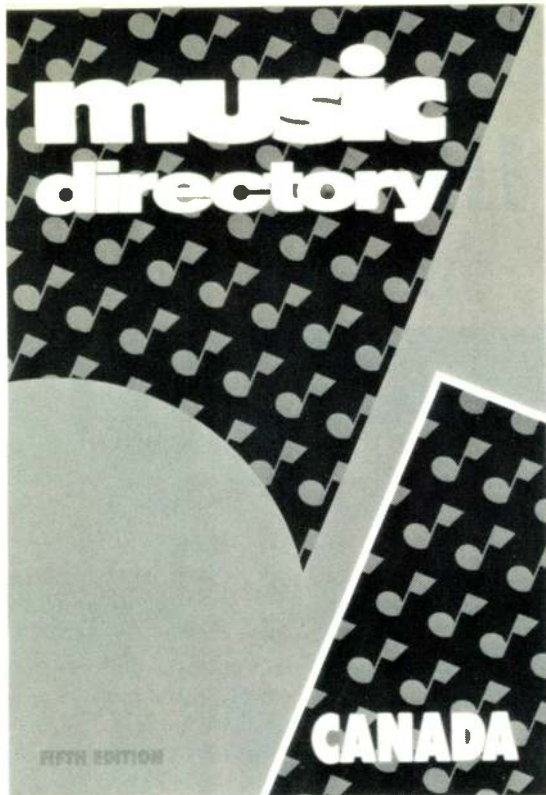
6) It ain't over 'til it's over. Even when you've got all the parts written, there may be more you can do. Dropping the tempo a few clicks can give the track some much-needed breathing room. The spaces between the notes are as important as the notes themselves. Playing your sequences back with different sounds can shed new light; with the drums chugging away full tilt, you may be able to use a round synth bass sound instead of that edgy sample you started with. Also, if you're looking for a dance groove, take the levels down on all your harmonic instruments—piano parts, pads, rhythm guitar—and let the bass and drums do the talking. Most importantly, walk away from your work for awhile. You won't know if it's good until you come back to it fresh.

One last thing—whoa, get those floppies out of your hand, bub! We're not quite through. I have to tell you not to bother with any of the above unless you've got a decent song. Without a melody, a lyric, a hook...something...you're building sand castles. Never expect a groove to save a lame piece of music. Think of your sequencing package not as a cure-all, but as a little recording studio with some nifty extras.

Okay, you can go now.



Don Breithaupt is a freelance musician and composer who runs Green Dolphin Studios in Hamilton, Ontario. He recently wrote and co-produced Rikki Rumball's single, "It's A Wonderful Life".



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Preparing Your Showcase



PHOTO: HELEN STOKELL

Guitarist Rick Mead (left) and bassist Chris Caron (right) of A&M recording artists, Syre, with CM editor David Henman at the Canadian Musician booth during Make Music Day.

by Sharon Tracey

The showcase: For a band or solo artist hoping to make tracks (literally) in the music business, no event is more important. How can you ensure your showcase isn't just another live performance, and that the industry and other listeners will want to hear more from you in the future? What are some key considerations when organizing this pivotal step in your career?

Mary Arsenault of Be Bop Promotions in Toronto is publicist and promoter for the band Syre, for all the artists on A&M Records' new children's label, and for the El Mocambo Tavern (a popular showcase spot). Arsenault stresses that the organization of a showcase is directly influenced by your intended goal. For the novice band, a basic aim may be to find management. The group may invite two or three prospective managers to come hear them in live performance.

When a band is more established, it will be ready to organize a major showcase for the record companies, media, etc. The performer with a record deal prepares a showcase (of sorts) for the album release party. If a band or solo artist chooses not to perform live at such an event, they should be planning to "showcase" a video, visually reinforcing the profile of themselves they've presented on the record, Arsenault states.

"Get the word out along the industry grapevine," she suggests. Industry people receive many requests to hear new bands; you must find a way to pique their interest. For example, if you're hoping to work with a particular agency, "make sure you've got someone who's in with the agent" to get him/her excited about your music, she states. "To get some sort of buzz going, work on it months in advance."

Arsenault may begin as much as a year in advance to promote a band's album release and accompanying party. The earlier you arouse curiosity and interest in your work, the better.

As you approach the date of your showcase, choosing a location will become an important consideration. Arsenault recommends that the venue suit your band and its image. Select a club where you've played before and have developed a reputation with the audience. Those "built-in fans" will lend support, and give you that extra surge of confidence.

In addition to the regular patrons, consider others you'd like to see in your audience. If you're fortunate enough to be promoting an album, invite a variety of people from the record company to get them more interested in your band. "A big company could be pushing twenty

albums a week," Arsenault notes. If you're promoting your group with the staff, salespeople and anyone else from the company who's able to come to the showcase, you'll have a greater chance of seeing your album pushed by the company.

Perhaps your career is not at that stage yet, but your showcase guests can still include record company personnel; you may want to send tapes to the A & R directors, along with the invitations, to further encourage them to attend.

Remember to invite retail people; having heard and met you, they'll be on the lookout when your album is released. The local press can also help spread the word that you're a band to watch and, of course, you'll want to have radio DJs and television VJs on the list. Anya Wilson (of Anya Wilson Promotion and Publicity) recommends that you send invitations to writers from the local college paper and to the campus DJs. She also encourages investing some money into your showcase to have a "real big party. Invite all your friends, splurge on some free drinks and schedule it at a reasonable hour."

She recommends beginning as early as six p.m., so that media guests can stop by for a drink after work and catch a set. Similarly, Arsenault suggests that you do at least two sets: "Don't do one ninety minute set that begins at 11p.m.," she cautions.

When it comes time to inviting the guests, bear in mind the basics of effective promotion. Toronto-based promoter/publicist Joanne Smale stresses that you use creative invitations (on paper—not just by "word of mouth") that are complementary to your music. She suggests giving some type of souvenir item as well. Wilson advises that you give sufficient notice; send the invitation at least one week in advance, and follow up with a reminder by phone or fax two or three days before the date.

Take Arsenault's advice for the actual showcase performance. Don't suddenly try to project a whole new "you" that you're not comfortable with—dress consistently with your own image, and play as usual. Finally, let your manager and publicist do their job for the night—helping you feel as relaxed and confident as possible, so that you can give your best performance!

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THE
alannah
MYLES
STORY

By David Henman

Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity. While many of us are waiting for our ship to come in, Alannah Myles was busy swimming out to hers.

ALANNAH OPENS THE 1990 JUNO AWARDS AND STEALS THE SHOW!

THE IDES OF MARCH

On Thursday, March 15, around midday, a chill went up the collective spine of the Canadian music industry as radio announcements, office chat and telephone conversations revealed the fact that Alannah Myles' first American single, "Black Velvet," had just bumped Janet Jackson out of the number one spot on *Billboard* magazine's cherished Top 100. With lightening speed ("Black Velvet" had been out for less than three months; furthermore, Janet Jackson was on tour promoting her own record), Alannah Myles skyrocketed from total obscurity (in the U.S.) to the absolute pinnacle of commercial success—a number one record.

For those embittered souls who are quick to conclude that success like this can only be the result of luck, knowing the right people and a corporate sell-job, stop reading now. Neither this, nor any other similar account is ever going to convince you that success is no accident; or that it is not offered, on a silver platter, to those fortunate few with good looks and a mastery of the science of mediocrity.

The story of Alannah Myles' overnight success (it was a long night—ten years, roughly) is nothing less than an object lesson for every artist in this country who aspires to commercial success, to mainstream recognition of their talents. It is about the three indispensable elements of any kind of success: conviction, or an unwavering belief in yourself (see *Inside CM*, elsewhere in this issue); teamwork—a group of people with a shared vision; and perseverance.

YEARS OF REJECTION

Recently I came across a demo tape, perhaps the first of many that Alannah had been sending to every record company, big or small, for nearly ten years. What's great about this tape is how awful it is. Unless you believe that the first time Eric Clapton strapped on a guitar and opened his mouth he sounded wonderful, this won't come as a shock. It's the kind of demo that an A&R head would listen to for about thirty seconds and go, "Right. Next?" More to the point, however, it's the kind of forgettable attempt where, after a round of across the board rejections, the artist in question is only too happy to pursue a career in word processing. End of story.

Alannah Myles or, more accurately, the team of Alannah Myles, producer/songwriter David Tyson, manager/songwriter Christopher Ward and entertainment lawyer Stephen Stohn,

endured years of rejection. As you'll see as you read on, what initially threatened to destroy their ambition eventually made them that much stronger.

THE A&R DEPARTMENT

The first big breakthrough was a three song demo and accompanying video that landed on the desk of, among others, Bob Roper, former head of A & R for WEA Music Canada and now personal manager for Sharon, Lois and Bram. Like everyone else before, during and since, Roper was impressed with her conviction: "A year and a half ago she was talking about the fifth video for the fifth single. You sort of take that, quite honestly, tongue-in-cheek a lot of the time," chuckles Roper. The timing was off, however. "I had just signed three or four acts, and that put a good-sized dent in my budget. Usually, you sign two or three acts a year; and when you do three or four things in a short space of time, when the fifth one comes along, you've got to take a real hard and fast look at

"I'm always nervous when artists are overly reactive to what happens to be on the radio at the time."

it. Also, at the time, she had no band. She knew who the band was going to be—three out of four members, at least, all top players. There was no management. Christopher was writing songs, he was a (MuchMusic) veejay, he was on the road, etc., etc. So there wasn't what you would call a Bruce Allan in the picture. Given all of that, we decided not to go with it."

However, having just returned from New York on behalf of acts like Blue Rodeo, Roper was privy to the fact that Tunj Arim, Senior V.P. of A & R for Atlantic Records in the U.S., was looking for an "edgy, rock/pop female artist." At Roper's urging, the package was forwarded to Arim.

Much of Alannah's impact on people like Bob Roper stemmed from the fact that her goals were so clearly defined and articulated. "That's part of a selling point," explains Roper, "of any artist who comes through the door. It's the opposite extreme from the artist who calls you up and says, 'I'm a writer; I can do anything you want. What are you looking for? I can do that,' versus somebody coming in who's got a complete package, sitting

down and saying, "This is what I am. This is where I'm going to take it. Do you want to come along for the ride? And, how can you as a label help me attain what it is I want?" It's been her determination that's made this work."

"There was something magic, something different in her voice and her delivery that really touched something in my heart," explains Tunj Arim from his Atlantic Records New York office. "She didn't care if she had to work twenty-four hours a day. That is very rare; usually the artist expects other people to do it for them. She had so many qualities that I really liked the first time I met her."

The lesson here, says Arim, is to never give up. "People don't realize how long it takes. Look at Phil Collins, or Genesis. With Genesis, it took at least eight or nine years."

Tunj Arim is one of the many people aware of Myles' powers of prophecy. "It scares me sometimes. The things that she told me three years ago, about ninety per cent of them have come true."

MANAGEMENT

Danny Goldberg, of Gold Mountain Management, is Alannah's manager for the world and, with Christopher Ward, her co-manager for Canada. Tunj Arim played her demo for Goldberg, to attract his attention. After meeting her he decided he wanted to be involved. "I was real impressed with the music, but I believe that the artist is as important as their music. A lot of very talented people don't have the right attitude. I was very impressed with the clarity of her thought process about what it was that she was doing. She really had a fully developed sense of who she wanted to be as an artist, more so than most new artists. I've really never met anybody that was quite that focused. The other thing that impressed me was that as an artist she marches to the beat of her own drummer. She wasn't just trying to copy what was commercial at the moment. I'm always nervous when artists are overly reactive to what happens to be on the radio at the time. That's kind of like driving by only looking in the rear view mirror. On the artistic side she had almost a rebellious iconoclasm. I've found that the most successful artists are the ones that are a little different from what is going on at the moment rather than the ones who try to synthesize all of the things that are going on."

Myles' attitude towards management, says Goldberg, was very realistic. "She's not into hand-holding. She's always focused on the work that has to be done."

Goldberg shared some advice with

alannah

us regarding looking for a manager: "It's better to wait to find the right manager than to get stuck earlier in your career with the wrong manager."

A LAWYER'S VIEW

Entertainment lawyer Stephen Stohn is a songwriter who put himself through law school in order to learn about the business and legal aspects of the industry. He met Alannah about ten years ago, when "she was writing songs, and singing, and wanted to be a rock 'n' roll star." Stohn's involvement was, at first, informal. Impressed with the demo tapes she and Ward were putting together, he helped her "shop" them around, sending them out to record companies. "It's hard to tell at what point it evolved into a 'professional' relationship," puzzles Stohn. It was Stohn, in fact, who convinced them to create a video to complement the three song demo that would get them an American record deal. His reasoning was that the demo was too good, a sure thing, and that they shouldn't leave anything to chance. The video, he said, would showcase Alannah, and answer the

inevitable question, "What does she look like on stage?" "As well, it would set it apart from other tapes the record companies were receiving at that time. It wasn't usual, three years ago, to do video demos."

Stohn, of course, became deeply involved in negotiating the record deal, once it was established that Myles would be signed to Atlantic Records in the U.S. In getting to that point, however, Stohn stresses that, "Persistence is the key. Even if you have an excellent tape, it's so hard to get a deal. You just have to keep on trying and not give up. Alannah visualized what she wanted, and went after it. She would not be sidetracked." Record deals are generally pretty similar, explains Stohn, "You get a royalty of roughly a dollar an album, sometimes expressed as a percentage of the retail price, and sometimes as a percentage of the wholesale price. There's a million different ways that they chip away at it. The recording costs and half of the video costs are generally deducted from the royalty. So, if you produce an album for \$150,000 and there's two \$50,000 videos, you've built up an unrecoverable debt of \$250,000; you've got to sell 250,000 units to break even. And so, I would have a conversation like that with Alannah. 250,000 is a good selling record; it's two and a half times

platinum in Canada, and the record company would be delighted if you sold that many on your first album. She didn't even want to talk about that. She'd say, 'I'm selling at least a million!' " (*The album has, thus far, exceeded seven times platinum in Canada and platinum in the U.S.*- Ed.)

The recording contract with Atlantic, says Stohn, "is about sixty pages in length, and literally every sentence of it is negotiable." But the question in the minds of many in the industry is: Did signing an American deal make the difference? Would she have been as successful, as quickly, had she signed a Canadian deal? "I have a tremendous amount of faith in the WEA group of companies," says Stohn. "I think they're superbly managed; there are other companies that are very insular, and if you sign to the Canadian arm, it spells almost certain doom for you in the United States. The United States companies look down on their Canadian counterparts, and vice versa. They're set up to be such 'islands' of profit centres, and they're basically accountant-driven. If the U.S. company has a choice between selling a Canadian artist, or one of their own, they say, 'Hey, let's promote our own artist. We've just sunk \$250,000 or \$500,000 into it, so why should we worry about promoting one of these Canadian artists?' This is true with a



number of companies, I fear. In the WEA group of companies, and I think the reason they've got such a tremendous market share in Canada and the United States, they have developed this incredible team spirit. It comes out in their creative side and it comes out in their financial side. So, it was entirely appropriate for Bob Roper to completely, unselfishly say, 'Hey, this is a brilliant act. I want to get it down to the States immediately.' That's the 'team' thing to do. But, had Bob's plate not been full, and we'd signed here, I firmly believe that it would have ended up the same way. When the sales started to happen in Canada—and, of course, it was Canada that drove the initial sales efforts—Atlantic would have looked at it in the same way, whether she was signed directly to them or not."

Not that Atlantic was sitting around waiting: They were working "Love Is" in the U.S. when it was out in Canada, but "MTV, for whatever reason, just did not play the video, and there was nothing the record company could do to convince them to play the video. That was a very critical blow, and one that was very difficult to recover from."

PRODUCING THE RECORD

Producer/songwriter David Tyson has

been part of the "team" for about five years. "There was," he says, "a lot of chemistry between the three of us." Much has been made in the media of Alannah's so-called "attitude". It is difficult to imagine that people like Tyson or Christopher Ward and, later on, engineer Kevin Doyle and lawyer Stephen Stohn would want to devote so much of their time, energy and faith, especially with no money involved, in someone who was negative, arrogant or bitter. "She's probably the most positive individual I've ever met," confides Tyson. "She never wanted to give up on anything. In the studio it was a case of 'do it until we drop.' It's a shame that certain people have the wrong impression of her. She's got a great deal of energy, and sometimes people misinterpret that. It would be great to dispel the rumour that she's negative because it's exactly the opposite. She's very strong in what she wants and what she believes in.

"I would hope that Canadian artists realize that with enough tenacity and hard work, combined with talent, they can reach the international level. Also, it's very important to be as schooled and prepared as possible. It's not a whimsical field to be in. Knowledge pays off."

Tyson stressed the importance of teamwork. "There's no question that three heads are better than one. Plus, it

makes the process a lot more enjoyable."

As producer of Alannah's album, Tyson has some advice to impart to other aspiring recording artists. "The best time spent is before you go into the studio. The number one most important priority, for us, was songs. The best arrangement in the world won't make a bad song good. Secondly, you do have to have good arrangements. If you're going for radio, you're dealing with a specific format."

THE VIEW FROM THE MIXING DESK

Kevin Doyle engineered and mixed over two-thirds of the album, including all of the singles, but has been part of the team for over three years. Much of that time in the studio was spent searching for the right focus, the right approach, the right attitude. The lead vocal for "Love Is", for example, was recorded and re-recorded a number of times. The method used, which has become the norm for many singers, "was to record multiple complete vocal takes, and assemble one," says Doyle. This is the best approach when the "attitude" of the vocal is crucial. "It's hard to get into an attitude when it's 'Okay

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here, listen to four lines and then punch in and sing'".

Another method employed was that of recording two or three tracks at a time. "I would like to see the industry use this approach more often. Usually you record all the bed tracks first, then a lot of the overdubs, then you do all the vocals. It puts a tremendous amount of pressure on the singer for three or four weeks in a row. It burns them out." An AKG 414 mic was used, "and we had to use a lot of compression, because of her dynamic range. She's just a flat-out singer."

Yet another interesting technique was recording the drums toward the end of the process. "It gave the drummer a better overall picture of what the song should sound like." Because there was no band, at that point, the entire album was overdubbed, instrument by instrument. "We came, virtually, from Alannah singing in the Holiday Tavern for a hundred dollars a night, and all of us putting our faith in this. Everyone would love to be in her band now, but back then it was a dream to have the players she has now. We couldn't afford to hire a whole band to rehearse and then go into the studio." Now that

she has a great band, there's a good chance that the next album will be recorded live off the floor."

MARKETING

The vice-president of national promotion and special projects for WEA Canada Music is Kim Cooke. Kim, too, was taken with Alannah's determination: "She had a very firm and highly developed vision of who she was and what she wanted her music to be and 'they' pursued that vision single-mindedly, without compromise; when I say 'they,' I don't mean just her, I mean the team of Myles, Tyson and Ward. Also, Christopher has to get a tremendous amount of credit in all of this. He's a very intelligent man. He's had a lot of experience in this business. He knew all of the pitfalls to stay away from. He took things step by step. He built on their momentum as they went along; he didn't try to rush things. He showed tremendous insight and ability in being able to handle and orchestrate everything, all the while holding down a full-time job at MuchMusic. The lesson there is: Choose your business associates, in terms of your manager and what not, as carefully as you possibly can."

Another thing that other artists can learn from this story, remarks Cooke, is, "If it takes you two or three years,

make the best possible album you can; and keep going back, working on songs—try not to have one or two good tunes, and the rest a record that doesn't measure up, not that any artist consciously tries to do that; but work and work until you know you've got the ten or twelve best songs you can possibly deliver. The depth and the strength of this album is a testament to the work they put into it."

Ward's expertise was further exemplified, notes Cooke, in his dealings with American A & R people: "Don't come up every month and say 'Here's the bed tracks for two more cuts,' and then come up a month later and say, 'You know, this is mixed, but...' There's so much going on at a record company that, unless we have direct control of what's being recorded, we're more interested in hearing it when it's ready. Present us with the final product. Christopher was very smart in not burning out our attention span early in the game by playing us endless tracks in the formative stage. He walked in and delivered a two-by-four to the head with the finished product, and from that point on we were completely gung ho."

CHRISTOPHER

You may recall Christopher Ward from his early days on television,

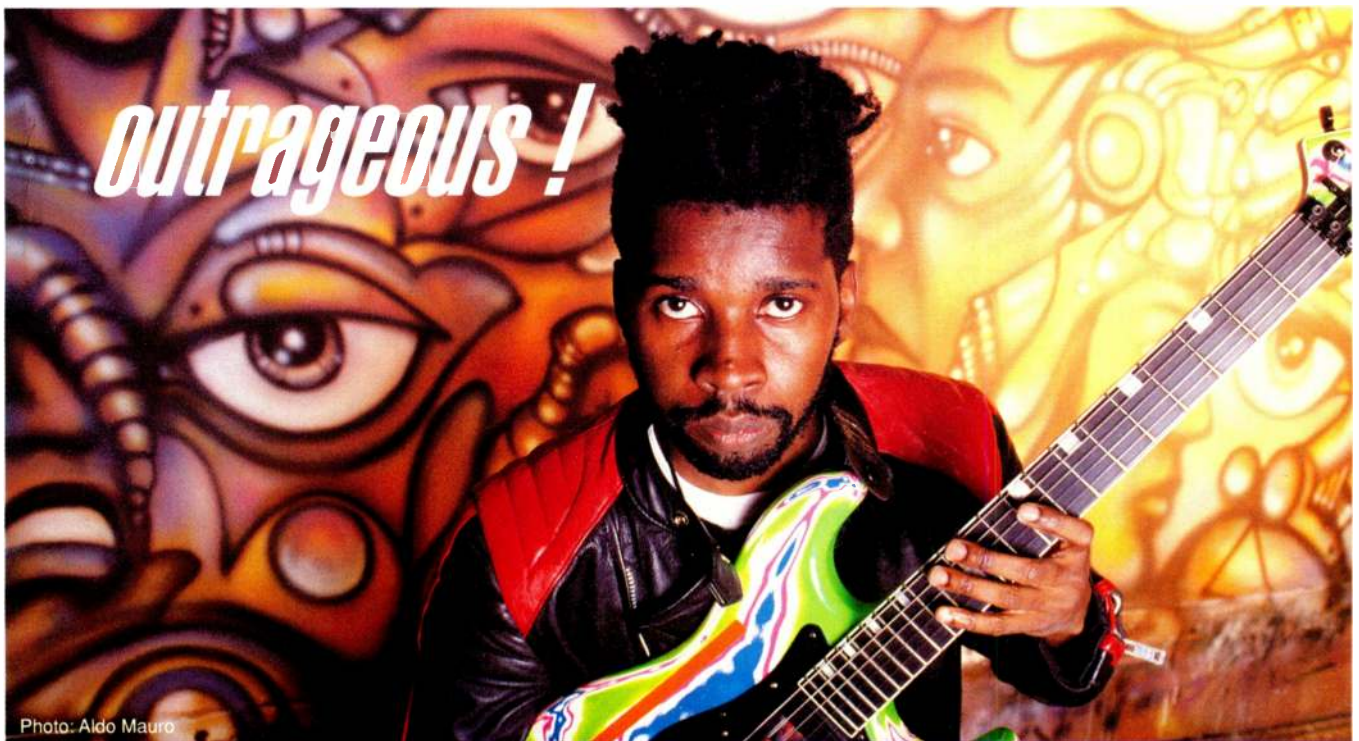


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hosting his own half-hour show, fronting his own band and performing his own songs. (The show was alternately known as *Catch-Up* and *After Four*.) He also put out a number of records. Ward's relationship with Alannah evolved from a romantic to a romantic/professional to a purely professional one, over the course of ten years. In fact, the romantic part of this relationship ended just before the making of the record, and so strong was the belief in the music at this point that they simply moved on.

"There were a lot of years of despair," recalls Ward, "when both of us really thought that we were good at what we did, and deserved an opportunity to be heard, and for some reason or another it just didn't happen. We supported each other. And it was gratifying, too, when people like David Tyson and Stephen Stohn came on board, and began believing as well. On everybody's part, it was an act of faith—there was no money changing hands. When other people start believing in you, that helps to fortify your determination."

Most of the songs on the album were written by Ward. "We demoed a lot of songs, and the ones that she sounded

the best singing were the ones we recorded."

Like many of us, Ward went through a period several years ago "when I bought a four-track recorder and a drum machine and a synthesizer and all that stuff. I wanted to make my own demos at home, practice doing arrangements of songs, and maybe turn my songwriting around—maybe write to some rhythm grooves instead of writing to the guitar. I did that for a year or so, with varying results, and then one day I just realized I was really bored with that. It didn't do a thing for me. I put all the machines back in the boxes, and I never took them out again. I went back to writing with acoustic guitar and a notebook and a pen, on a table, and that is it. I find that I write a lot of ideas in my head first, and then figure out how to play those ideas. That way you're operating, in a way, without physical restrictions of any kind; you're working purely from your own imagination."

What made the process easy, from a songwriting and arranging point of view, says Ward, was working with an artist who knew exactly what she wanted. "The thing that I've seen with so many young artists is that they aren't quite sure who they are or what they do best, or what is the most real reflection of themselves. They try all kinds of different things, hoping that

the public or, on the first level, the A & R guys will respond to one aspect of their work, and they'll go. 'Oh, I see, that's the part that works. Well, I'll pursue that alley.' You can't wait for someone else to tell you who you are."

The moral of the story, says Ward, is that "Good things come to he or she who hangs in. We all have waited our turn. Alannah, David and I; we've all been through a couple of different lives along the way. But we believed in ourselves individually and, later, as a collective. There came a point, after a certain amount of rejection, where it was almost like we slipped through into a new level of enlightenment, and we went, 'It doesn't matter. It's really good. People will hear it at some point. Even if we don't get signed tomorrow, or we get turned down, all around, all over again,' which had happened too many times, it was just like we knew: We're on to something. This works. This makes sense."

It wasn't a matter of following what was on the radio, Ward stresses. "The problem is that if you try to do that as you're developing your career, by the time you do get signed and make the album and put it out, everything's going to be different. You really do have to follow your own muse. If you know that what you're doing is right for you, don't let anybody tell you any different." **CM**

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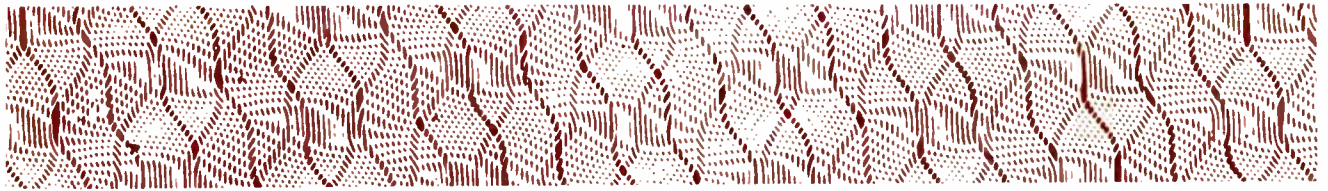
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“Once you’re out there, you’re no longer a person. You’re a product...You are a commodity, no matter how serious you are, how artistic you are, how great a degree of integrity you have in the eyes of the critics.”



PAUL JANZ

RENEGADE REALIST

BY ELLIE O'DAY

"I've always been a very analytical person," admits Vancouver's Paul Janz, who recorded his first album while studying philosophy on a full university scholarship. The Canadian-born writer and performer spent his formative years in Switzerland, studying piano and voice, and then (to the chagrin of his opera mentor, Sandoz) took his rock group Deliverance to the charts.

He returned to Canada ten years ago, and has deliberately built a career on unforgettable pop melodies. He's just released his third A&M album, *Renegade Romantic*, brimming with potential hit singles. The first single, "Every Little Tear", was the most-added record in its first week of release on all three formats of pop/rock radio in Canada.

Paul is a painstaking craftsman. "If any part of a song doesn't feel right, if I don't get some kind of rush, something's not right." For an analytical person, however, he makes a lot of room for subjectivity and intuition. "I'll sometimes go through past ideas, and BAM! All of a sudden there'll be a marriage, or it'll give rise to an idea that creates a whole new element in the song. Some of those might sound clinical—introducing a descending bass line, for instance, or adding four bars before the chorus. But that is the art of honing your craft—being able to retain the integrity while creating the song. I can be extremely critical.

"I worked on 'Every Little Tear' very intensely for about six weeks. There were periods I went through. I knew I had a great groove in the verse. I went through a chorus, and it was really happening; but as I was working on the lyrics, something just changed,

and I switched around the chorus so that it never landed on the root. Every chord is a leading chord. I didn't do that on purpose. It just felt like that's how it should be.

"The songs of mine that are most believable—even 'Believe In Me' or 'I Won't Cry' on the last record—have usually taken longer for me to write than songs that don't have quite the depth. You can get too analytical and kill the vibrancy with sterility; but as I've grown as a writer, I've learned to work that out as a positive."

Paul was something of a musical prodigy, singing in gospel choirs in Switzerland by the age four, then a popular gospel quartet. He found time to play trumpet with the local Salvation Army Band, and to listen to Europe's window on American rock 'n' roll, Radio Luxembourg. In the early 1970s he was admitted to the Basel Conservatory of Music. As well as excelling in piano and voice, he took on arranging and conducting studio sessions with the Basel Symphony.

"What I do understand is how music works," Janz modestly confesses. "I love music theory. It's valid as long as you don't use that as a formula. Ideas still have to come from the gut; but it does give you more tools to work with."

As for vocal training, Janz says—in a husky baritone that belies his 'pop' voice—that it gave him breathing technique. He figures he'd deafen himself if he tried to sing open-throated in front of stage monitors.

Though Paul hasn't yet become an international household-name, he's already had several radio hits: "Believe In Me" (1988 Juno Song of the Year; he also won Album, Artist, Male

Vocalist and Keyboardist of the Year); "I Won't Cry", "Close My Eyes"; as well as the *Iron Eagle II* closing theme, "Enemies Like You and Me", for June Pointer and Billy Vera.

Paul emphasizes that the trick to creating those songs is blending creativity, craft and sweat. "Over and above that, I think it's building relationships with people in other areas of the industry. Once you're out there, you're no longer a person. You're a product. Any good record company will never treat their acts as product. But you are a commodity, no matter how serious you are, how artistic you are, how great a degree of integrity you have in the eyes of the critics."

Paul is a believer in building relationships, whether it's with his wife of seventeen years, or his manager of five years, Michael Godin (who left A&M in Toronto to manage Paul in Vancouver), or his publisher.

"What makes a hit song happen after you've got the goods—in terms of writing and recording—is building relationships with people so that they'll mirror that same energy that's in that song, so they'll be willing to go out and kill for it. I'm really fortunate to be with A&M in Toronto, who have stuck with me for four years."

And what makes a great song? "A song is most important in the context of what it elicits in the listener. It has to elicit the same emotion in the listener that the writer had when they began writing the song. It's fairly nebulous. A 'great song' is very subjective. I think anybody who writes in a vacuum is fooling themselves. I get no greater joy than to see something I've written and performed

Continued

Janz

move somebody in a positive way emotionally."

If there's a great deal of accessibility to Janz' own rich, singalong melodies, it comes naturally and from what he's accustomed to singing. What makes you want to sing along more than gospel songs? And six years ago, when Paul was attending university, recording his first album on spec and trying

to support a family, he brought home cheques by singing commercial jingles. Paul also acknowledges that he was the type of teenager far more into the Beatles than the Stones.

Nevertheless, each album has its odd-song-out. On the last album, *Electricity*, it was the title cut. On this one it's the final track, "Saddle Up."

"I write quirky little things like that, and I like to have it represented on the record. There's something I dig about it —sort of a twist at the end of the record, a left-jog. It was very premeditated to put it at the end. Musi-

cally they're a little easier to write. You can afford to be off-the-wall, and you can bring in phrases that have no relation to the previous or following one. The big thing to me is the groove. I'd like to do a dance-mix of it."

Janz doesn't do anything too unusual in the recording process. He starts with SMPTE striping and a click track, then a rough keyboard track; then, step-by-step, all the parts go on.

When recording this album, Janz was far more prepared than the other two. Everything was demoed quite accurately, though a few adjustments were made in the studio, including changing the bridge to "Every Little Tear." This time the record company, both the U.S. and Canadian offices, required four "singles" before he could go into the studio. And this is an artist with a track record!

"I think Canada is getting to be in a very unique situation, something like Australia," suggests Paul in parting, from the perspective of a world-citizen who played with Deliverance in East Germany when the Wall blocked nearly everything but radio signals. "There's everything from the resurgence of Neil Young, to the pure pop-rock of Alannah Miles, to the Cowboy Junkies and Jeff Healey and Mary Margaret O'Hara, or a great New Age artist like Susan Bourne. There's such a huge reservoir of talent!" **CM**

JANZ' JEWELS

As heartfelt as Paul's music is, it takes a lot of micro-chips to produce, either in the studio or on stage.

Guitarist Tom McKenzie, like many West Coasters, uses Larivee guitars (with EMG pickups) through two Hi Watt 50 watt heads, modified by Rick St. Pierre at Wizard Research. His switching system is designed by Graham Brown at Calder Music (North Vancouver). He plays through two 1 x 12" cabinets with Celestion Classic 90 watt speakers.

Bassist Miles Hill uses Warmoth 4 and 5 string basses, a Groove Tube bass preamp, Carver power amp, a

pair of Electro-Voice 81503 cabinets and a Samson wireless system.

Keyboardist Rob Bailey uses a Yamaha rack and controller; an array of Yamaha, Oberheim, Prophet and Voyetsa modules; a MIDled Mini-Moog; and Kurtzweil, Emax, Yamaha, Roland and Dynacord components. The brains are in Mac hardware and Mark of the Unicorn and DigiDesign software.

Michael Root uses a customized Yamaha kit, Sabian cymbals, and a full set of Roto Toms for touring, with a Tama Imperial bass drum and metal snare.



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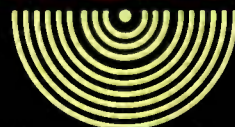
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***THE ECSTASY AND THE AGONY
OF RECORDING
THE PLEASURE AND THE PAIN***

BASIC BOX

Most of the country is familiar, by now, with Montreal's pride and joie (take that, Sault Ste. Marie), The Box. Their third album, *Closer Together*, exceeded platinum in sales. And in late '89 they travelled to England to a studio owned by producer/engineer Martin Rushent (Human League, Pete Shelley and The Go-Gos, among many others in a long and successful career) to record *The Pleasure and the Pain* for Alert Records.

There have been a couple of recent changes in direction for The Box. Lead vocalist Jean Marc, for example, was once the principle songwriter in the band. "Now it's evolved into a real band effort," explains Jean Marc. "Sometimes what people call a band effort is really just one guy writing. No, this time out it's more like one guy comes with an idea for a song and it goes through the, uh, the 'hacking machine.' We put it together."

The new album illustrates the fact that the band has moved away from the high tech, digital sounding production values that have become familiar in the last few years.

"Actually, we decided to change the sound. Our goal, our purpose, was to have a band sound. Because today, with all of the keyboards hanging around, and all of the artists who are relying a lot on arrangement to create a 'sound,' the danger is that you will sound like everybody else. I mean today, with all the keyboards available, especially the ones that are difficult to program, like an M1 or a DX7, you end up using presets. Now everybody can afford a key-

board these days; and chances are, the band next door is using the same presets you are. And the arrangements often—not always but often—take away a bit of the basic sound that you could have if you decided to head for that band-type sound. So what we did, with no idea what we were going to sound like at first, was just strip the band down. We took out most of the keyboards, just kept a few trademark sounds that we have used since the beginning, and which are there only to fill the gap between bass and guitar, and we kept the band to the bare minimum: bass, guitar, drums and lead singer.

"I thought that this approach to the kind of music that we would be doing for this record would lead us into paying more attention to the songwriting. Instead of the arrangement writing the song, the song itself would have to work in that naked type of structure. If it works like that, chances are you're headed off in the right direction.

"Of course, we couldn't stop there. We didn't want things to be too bare either. We didn't want to sound like a garage band. So, that's how the producer came to mind."

Martin Rushent focused much of the band's energy on preparation and pre-production, which consisted of twenty sixteen-hour-a-day rehearsals, ten in Montreal and ten in England. "It speeds the process up in the studio," explains Rushent, "and leaves more time for spontaneous, creative elements to happen. You have to get it so that everybody knows the arrangements backwards. It's very difficult to over-rehearse the

bricks and mortar of a record."

As has become standard procedure, only the drums (along with a click track) were recorded on the basic tracks, even though the whole band was playing. (The band performs with a click track live, as well.) "Because we were also simultaneously firing triggers from samplers, to beef up the basic sound, it was quite a complicated set up," explains Rushent. "So we decided to pump for all eleven drum tracks in one go. It worked out to one a day. We followed that procedure with everybody."

Much of the drum sounds on the record are the result of ambient (as opposed to close-up) miking techniques: "Most of the 'real' drum sounds are picked up on Calrec Sound Fields, which are well away from the drum kit, and you're basically picking up the room. The close-mic sounds were blended with selected samples that (drummer) Philippe brought with him."

The bass guitar sound came from a 4 x 12 cabinet with metal cone speakers, an Ampeg amplifier and a DI "mixed together with various inverted phase relationships." For the guitar, direct outs were taken from Roland digital delays into a Marshall (with a 4 x 10 cabinet); a Mesa-Boogie and a Traynor amp. A Korg M1 was the predominant keyboard used. An Ovation and a B & K mic were employed for the acoustic guitar parts. "The B & K mic was used on the vocals, as well," says Rushent.

Another standard operating procedure was used for recording the

Continued

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BASIC BOX

lead vocal, that of recording a number of complete takes and then printing one "composite" of the best parts of those takes.

"What Martin did, basically, was to take the band as is, and not bring in things like new vocal arrangements, or anything else that did not already exist in the band," says Jean Marc. "Plus, he's an engineer; he engineered this record, too."

Despite the "traditional" approach to recording that Rushent and The Box adhered to, they were fortunate to have access to some technology that is still in its early stages. Explains Jean Marc: "We used a console that is one of three prototypes that Trident has been developing. The Trident factory is about five or ten miles away from the studio where we recorded, and they loaned Martin one of these consoles in exchange for his advice and help in developing the unit. This console does not process analog sound, except at the input stage. Past that, it converts all information to the digital domain. The EQ, for example, is actually processing digital information, so there's no limit to how far you can go. And it's fully automated. Everything is stored on computer diskettes and can be recalled at any time, instantly."

As impressed as The Box were with Rushent's professionalism, he in turn found the band to be "really hard working, and exceptionally good players. And they're very enthusiastic, which is equally important." Martin Rushent offered a little bonus in speaking on this subject, however: "I was very impressed with the standard of musicianship in the band. I've spent about four or five weeks in Canada recently, because of this project, and I've seen quite a few bands. I'm very impressed with the Canadian music scene generally. It's certainly a lot more exciting here than in Britain right now, where, while there's lots of bands, they all tend to formulate into the same pattern; whoever's the current hot band, ninety percent of the up and coming bands are a carbon copy of them. In Canada there is a tremendously broad spectrum of bands."

The Box is one of those workman-like bands that quietly goes about the business of making the best music, live and on record, that they possibly can, and let the chips fall where they may. And for that, we are eternally grateful.

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MANAGEMENT

There comes a point in nearly every artist's career when they begin to feel that they need someone to manage the "business" side of things. This may be due to the onslaught of success, whereupon an artist finds him/herself in demand, and unable to cope with a myriad of details that deplete the time and energy that should be devoted to one's art. It may be due to the artist's vision of a Colonel Parker (Elvis' manager), a Brian Epstein or a Bruce Allen who can magically transform the unknown artist into a household name. Quite often, the need for management surfaces when the artist gets a call from an A & R director who expresses interest in the demo tape that was submitted, and wants to know if the artist has a management situation in place. Occasionally, the manager "discovers" the artist (e.g. Elvis, The Beatles); and sometimes management evolves from a more casual relationship.

■ What is the most effective way for an artist to approach a manager?

- **William Seip** (*Helix, Ray Lyell & The Storm, Big Bang*): The artist should have a "hook" in their presentation which serves to distinguish them from the myriad of submissions I get; for example, the artist that produces their own EP and sells it in quantity without significant distribution or airplay.
- **Leonard Rambeau** - *Balmur Ltd.* (*Anne Murray, George Fox, Frank Mills*): Come prepared. Have a realistic approach to the music industry: Know that it is a *business*.
- **Lou Blair** (*Loverboy [co-management], Zappacosta*): Call first, then send a tape, photo and bio. I like to be "sold"

prior to receiving a package.

- **Mark Stainback** - *Sky Is Falling Inc.* (*Tom Cochrane and Red Rider*): Send a tape of three or four songs and invite the prospective manager to a live showcase. A recommendation from other industry people helps to attract a manager's attention.
- **Brookes Diamond** (*Rita MacNeil, John Allan Cameron*): A manager should be approached with flair, persistence, confidence and a track record of success, however brief.

■ Do you have any compunction about managing an artist who is not signed to a record label?

- **Ross Munro** - *Random Entertainment Inc.* (*Rik Emmett, Danny Brooks*): Some of the best artists around are not yet signed to a label! If they have great material, I'll help them get a deal.
- **Mark Stainback**: There is nothing wrong with managing an unsigned artist; every superstar was born unsigned. The only reason to enter a management relationship, however, is if both parties share a common vision of the artist's career. They must believe passionately in the music and be convinced that they can, in the short term, convert other people into "believers", and get that record deal.
- **Wayne Thompson** - *Headquarters Entertainment Corp.* (*The Nylons, Billy Newton-Davis*): Managing an unsigned artist gives me an opportunity to guide their career from the start.

■ What three qualities could an artist cultivate that would make it difficult to turn down a chance to manage them?

- **Joanne Smale** (*Willie P. Bennett, Jane Bunnett*): An international record company contract and tour, an eagerness to play tour dates, and the ability to write good, accessible songs.
- **Jeff Rogers** - *Swell Inc.* (*The Pursuit Of Happiness, Art Bergmann, One Free Fall*): A good act with a strong potential for success; it also helps if I get along personally with the artist.
- **Mark Stainback**: Aside from working with an artist who already has an ongoing career, it would be difficult to turn down an artist who has demonstrated outstanding songwriting



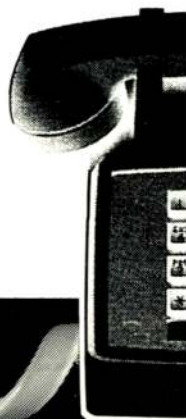
Jeff
Rogers



Joanne
Smale



Leonard T.
Rambeau



Are You Ready For It?

by David Henman

abilities and excellent musicianship (especially if one is a fan of the artist's genre); an artist who displays a genuine image and stage persona; an artist who is stable and mature in personal and business relationships and who has built a fan and critical following and attracted the interest of record labels.

- **William Seip:** An artist with a burning desire to succeed, a winning attitude and great songs sung with a unique voice.
- **Lou Blair:** An artist who is hungry to succeed (self-motivated), has an original and innovative style and a total focus on their career - an artist who is willing to do what has to be done!
- **Wayne Thompson:** Great songs, great attitude, rich parents!

■ Is it essential for a management company to have—or have access to—substantial financial resources?

- **Leonard Rambeau:** Yes.
- **Wayne Thompson:** Unfortunately, yes.
- **Gerry Young - Current Management:** Yes, because it all comes down to the manager and the artist finding the resources necessary for a career.
- **Ross Munro:** It helps, but it's definitely not a key factor. Attitude, aptitude, contacts, honesty, finesse and common sense are far more important.
- **Brookes Diamond:** It's not essential. Contacts, knowledge and a solid reputation combined with the real essential - compatibility - are more important.
- **Mark Stainback:** No, although deep pockets never hurt anyone. Management should have sufficient resources to deliver the very best services to the artist and to assist the artist without becoming either a bank or a charity. The term "sufficient" maybe subjective, and in the early stages of a career management may need to waive or defer commissions. The key, for both management and artist, is to avoid extravagant and unnecessary expenses. Artists with a future are able to support themselves and their careers in the marketplace.
- **Larry Wanagas - Bumstead Productions (k.d. lang and the reclines):** This depends on the level and experience of the manager. A young manager may need another job for income, so as not to add to the artist's financial problems.
- **Peter Karroll - Taylor/Karroll Organization Inc. (Annihilator, Rocky Swanson, Jess Lee):** You can't pick up the phone to call a record company if you can't pay the phone bill. It costs a lot of money to raise a management

profile in the industry. It certainly helps to have cash flow, whether it is generated by live performances, private investment or whatever means you design. The artist should be prepared to finance as much of their own career as possible. Don't lay the total burden on management. This is a key factor in managers not taking on more artists.

- **Lou Blair:** Yes! The availability of financial resources allows the manager to make career decisions that are not motivated by immediate money pressures.

■ If the earning potential of an artist is obvious to you, how essential is it that you actually like that artist's music?

- **Larry Wanagas:** The first priority is to love and understand the artist's genre.
- **Mark Stainback:** It is not essential to like an artist's music in order to provide a manager's professional services, but it is very important to at least understand and appreciate the music in order to maintain motivation and to offer experienced and heart felt advice. Everyone in the music industry, regardless of their job, began their careers as music fans, and this enthusiasm should always win over greed.
- **William Seip:** For me, that is where it all starts. If I don't love the artist's music, I cannot represent them. Money follows your love of the artist's music.
- **Lou Blair:** Liking the artist's music is not overly important; understanding the artist's music and fans is crucial. You can't promote what you don't understand.
- **Peter Karroll:** If the earning potential of an artist is obvious to me and it is going to make money relatively soon into the deal, then I will find a way to love the artist's music. Seriously, though, I manage acts that range from extreme heavy metal (Annihilator) to traditional country (Jess Lee), and I love both acts for their musical excellence.
- **Leonard Rambeau:** Very essential: I have to enjoy what I do. I won't work a project that I don't like.
- **Ross Munro:** I think a manager must at least be able to "appreciate" the artist's music and understand what elements make the music commercially viable in that particular genre. However, the artist's music doesn't have to be your "all-time personal favourite."
- **Gerry Young:** If I couldn't hear something I liked in the music, it would be difficult to manage the artist. I mean, there must be some belief, or else you become an old whore.

Ross
Munro



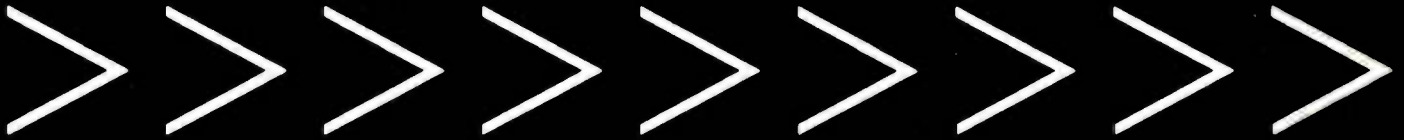
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Advice from the pros on equipment and techniques to maximize your sound.



RICHARD LACHANCE, BRUIT-BLEU

We're all well aware of how much time and money musicians spend developing their individual sound. Finding the right guitar, the perfect keyboard, the best combination of cymbals—it all adds up. But for most musicians it is an expense borne gladly in the pursuit of that signature "sound"—something that will rise above the pack to catch a listener's ear. What most of us often fail to realize, however, is that without the right PA system, set up and run properly, the only person who is ever going to know how you sound is you. The sound from your instrument or your voice is only the first step in presenting your music to a live audience. It is the next step, the PA, that determines whether the audience is hearing you as you hear yourself.

Whether you are running your own system, renting production, or employing a soundman, every band can benefit by knowing how that system works, and how they interface with it.

With that in mind, we went to a cross-section of working soundmen and PA companies and asked them the questions: "What is essential in a good, small PA system", and "How can you get the most out of it?"

Their answers revealed that, although

GETTING THE MOST FROM A SMALL PA SYSTEM



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some principles are universal, there is a lot of room for individual preference. Like music, live sound is an art, and the people who practice it well combine a creative approach to problem solving with a thorough knowledge of their equipment. Their advice is presented here as a guide to making your own equipment choices and solving some of the most common problems encoun-

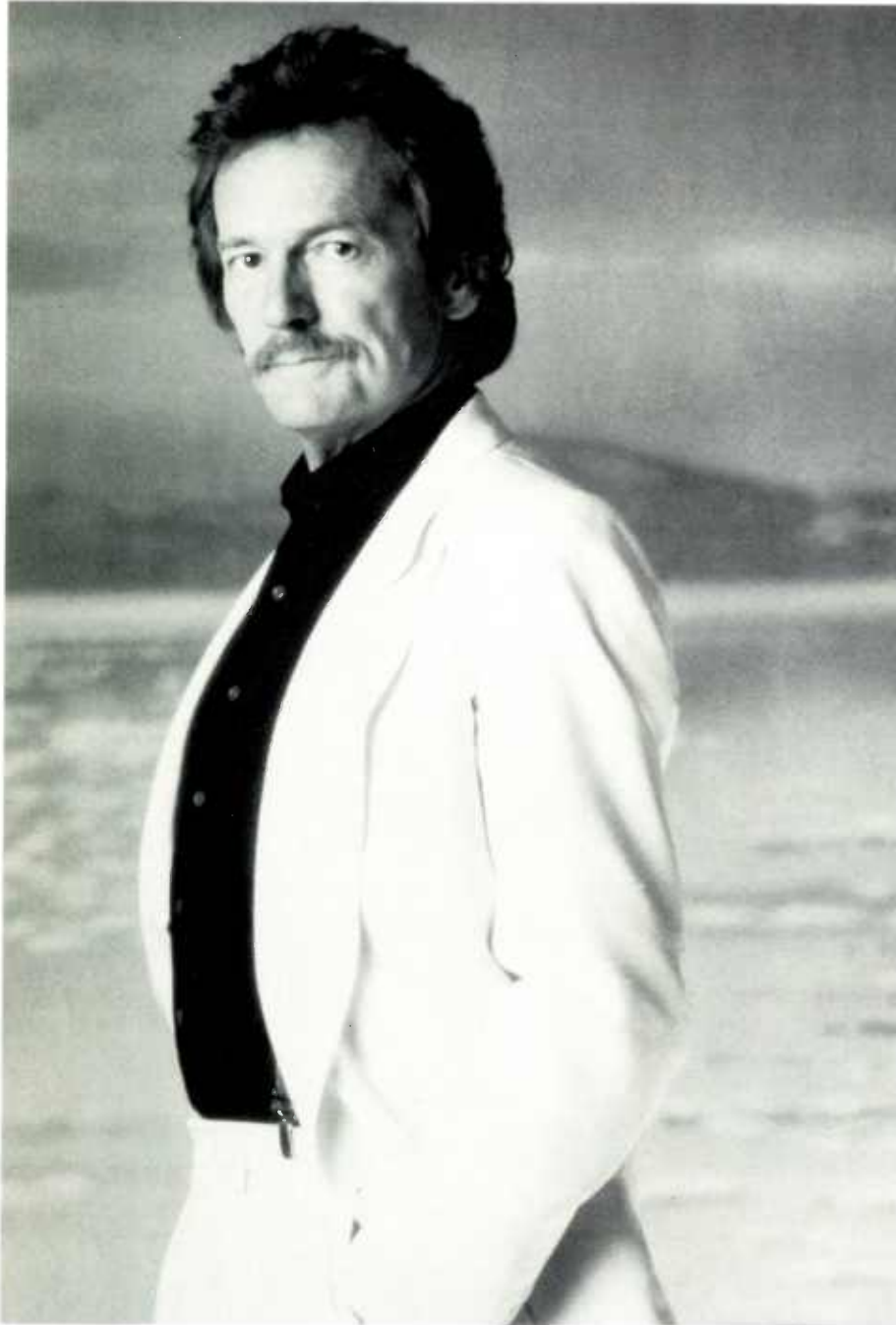
tered in a live situation.

SPEAKER SYSTEMS

For any smaller or regional band, the size of a PA system is an important consideration. Bob McPhee, who has stood behind the board for Gordon Lightfoot and Bruce Cockburn, as well as many club acts, sums up the situation: "I think

you have to have enough power to push your cabinets, enough microphones to cover the band properly, and a good monitor system, but it has to be able to fit in a small truck because of your budget. You have to make sure it's going to be loud enough and efficient enough."

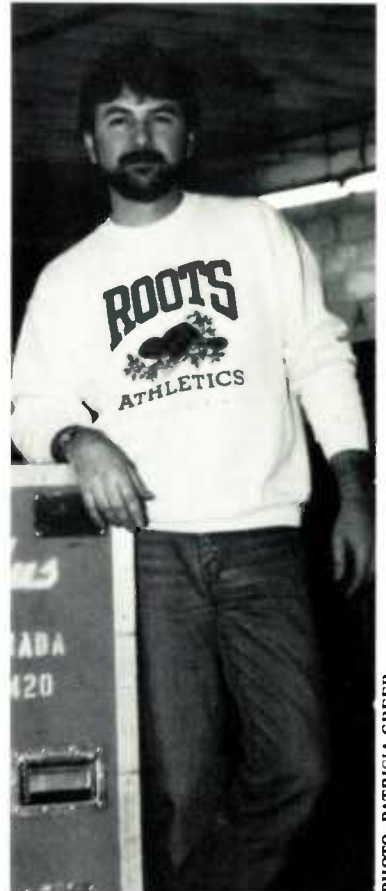
The largest items in a PA system are the speakers. But new technology has dramatically reduced their size.



GORDON LIGHTFOOT



**COSTAS LAKOUMENTAS,
WESTERN SOUND**



GABOR SZEPESI, PA PLUS

PHOTO: PATRICIA GREER

Costa Lakoumentas is the President of Western Sound, a Vancouver PA company that supplies a wide range of acts. He told us that recent innovations have “virtually eliminated” the large, multi-box stacks.

“That sort of thing”, he says, “is being supplanted by the more compact, processed speaker system that comes with an integral electronic processor, which

not only equalizes and provides a crossover, but also provides some speaker protection.

“Certainly, I would urge anyone who’s going to be getting into a PA system these days to look at processed speaker systems first and, if they can afford them, that’s the way to go. They’re more compact, they’re easier to move (and) quicker and easier to set up. They give

much more reliable results, not only for inexperienced people, but also for the professional who goes in and doesn’t want to spend a lot of time monkeying around with his crossovers, or spend a lot of time EQing the system to make it sound decent.”

Gabor Szepesi, whose company, PA Plus, has provided rental equipment to Lee Aaron and Chalk Circle, agrees:

LIVE SOUND



PHOTO: PATRICIA GREER

PETER HARRIS, THE NYLONS



SHURE BETA 58

"Most companies now are using full-range boxes for the top end and subwoofers to go along with them. For a 500-seater it would probably take two full range boxes a side and two or three subs per side."

Once you have an efficient set of house speakers, how can you place them to maximize their potential for covering the room?

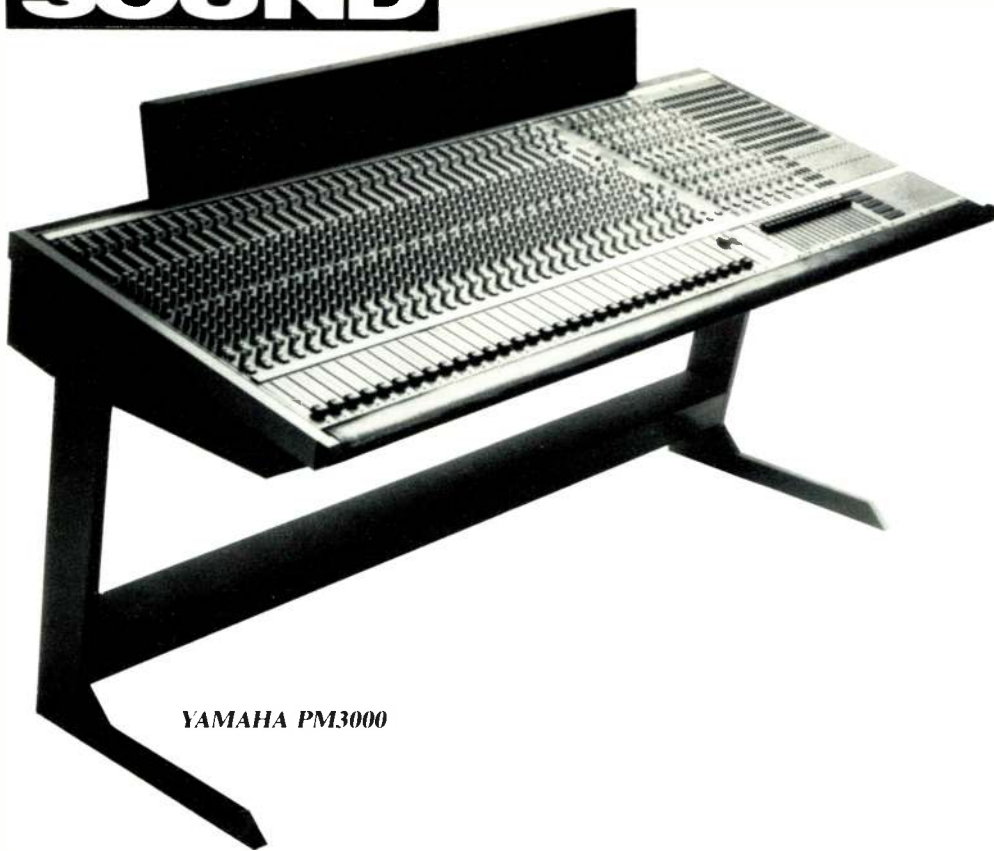
Peter Harris, whose main gig is running sound for The Nylons, offers these tips for room coverage: "Place the speakers in some position where they won't be obstructed by people standing in front of them. I'm a great believer in getting stuff like that up as high as possible. If you can fly it, fine. There's not too many club acts that go in and fly PAs, though. But get it up high and point

it at the people, not the walls.

"One advantage is that the guy in the front row is actually farther away from the box that way; he doesn't get blown down.

"As far as phase alignment and all that stuff goes, it's really a crapshoot. I try and rely on the guy who owns the stuff to know how it's supposed to be aligned. And more often than not, unless

LIVE SOUND



YAMAHA PM3000



ALANNAH MYLES

TOURING WITH ALANNAH MYLES: The Advantages of a Modular System

When Alannah Myles' sound people put together a touring system, they faced the challenge of having to go from clubs to arenas with the same PA. To solve the problem they went to Bruit-Bleu, a Quebec City based PA company, who assembled a modular system. Company president Richard LaChance elaborates: "She had a select problem of being still in a club gig situation, and having to tour a 'semi' full of band gear, sound and lights; she was going from a soft-seater to a club, to another soft-seater, to a club—day in and day out.

"The console was a Yamaha PM3000 with a full rack of effects, etc. She had a full monitor system, including a 40 x 12 monitor desk, with twelve wedges and two side fills. And they were getting all that equipment, plus the band gear, on any kind of

stage in a club!

"They had a modular PA system—that is, a four-way JBL system—a two-box system that they were employing in amounts of twos and fours. When they were going into larger venues, they were bringing in anywhere from eight to twelve pieces.

"People are going to be seeing a lot more of this, because a 500-seat club that has a cover charge of fifteen bucks to get in plus bar privileges can pay as much as \$5,000 for a one-nighter for a good act to come in, if they carry their own sound and lights.

"I'm sure a lot of bands that do 200-to 500-seat halls will carry small but very efficient PAs, because today with all the processor-assisted equipment and all the high-tech gear, it's easy to get very compact, very powerful PA systems."

it looks ridiculous, I'll take his word for it."

THE MIXING CONSOLE

Mixing boards have also come a long way in simplifying their operation. Bob McPhee explains: "Most boards these days have patching on the back of the console. If you make up a proper wiring harness, then you're not going to have any problems with it."

Costa Lakoumentas is excited about the new generation of programmable boards: "We're seeing more and more

manufacturers offering programmable boards that have MIDI interfaces, boards that have programmable VCA subgroups and VCA mutes. Consequently, I would say anyone who is looking for a board nowadays can pick up a lot more in terms of value.

"Also, for the smaller band that maybe cannot afford separate lighting and sound guys, getting a board with a MIDI interface and using it with MIDI effects and also tying it in to a MIDI lighting controller can be a real big advantage, because now all of a sudden one guy can trigger all the changes.

"Allen and Heath have a new board with individual, programmable mutes on all inputs and outputs, and it is MIDI-controlled and has about thirty-two memories. For the smaller group just starting out, that is going to be terrific."

MICROPHONES

Today's selection of microphones shows an enormous variety of products on the market, but old traditions die hard, according to Lakoumentas.

"I find that a lot of musicians will go out and buy something because it was



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the accepted standard. I used to play guitar myself, and what I wanted was a Gibson Les Paul. And when I could afford it that's what I bought. I didn't really go out and audition anybody else's guitar. And in microphones it's always (Shure) SM58s. I encourage musicians to really try a whole range of different microphones. I think that if you're a vocalist you should find the mic that works for you. Buy your microphone and, whether or not you're renting your whole PA, always take your mic with you. Once you become accustomed to working with your own mic, you may find that you can get a lot more out of today's microphones than 58s or 57s. So, rather than getting hung up on the brand names that have been there over the years, experiment a little bit. Try and find your own sound."

Peter Harris also recommends experimentation. "A lot of people say, 'Use this kind of condenser for overheads,' but I think there is just so much out there now, as far as different kinds of products, that it would be more practical to try and get a selection that is only one or two different types of microphones and have a lot of each—a selection that's kind of general purpose, and that you could put pretty much anywhere. There are a lot more mics like that than ever.

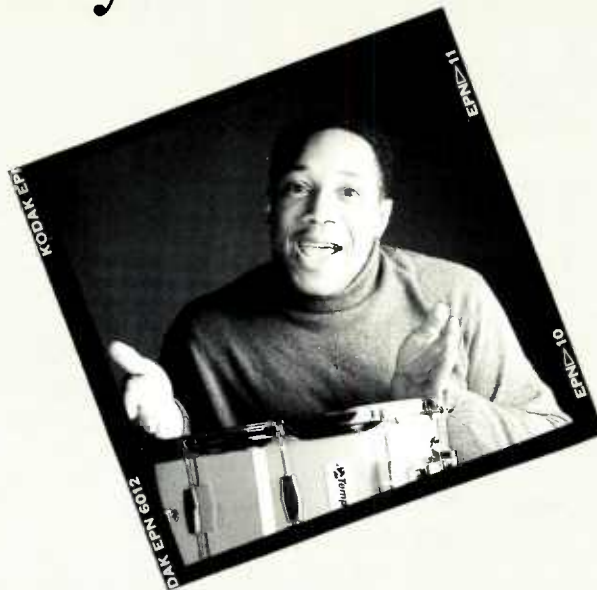
"I work for The Nylons, and they're really prejudiced towards SM58s, which are a great old workhorse, but to me they're a little bit on the outdated side. The guys like them because the pickup pattern is very forgiving and wide. They do a high energy song-and-dance routine, so their mic technique is a little bit on the sloppy side, and the 58s will forgive that; whereas something with a really tight super-cardioid pattern is not as forgiving, and if you back off the microphone the whole bottom end drops off.

"I would say try something in the middle of the road, like the Electro-Voice 757, for example. They're a fairly reasonable microphone with just a little bit higher design technology than the 58."

Gabor Szepesi says that microphone popularity "changes all the time. This year we're using a lot of the new Electro-Voice mics. They sound great, and we can get them really loud on the monitors, with good projection.

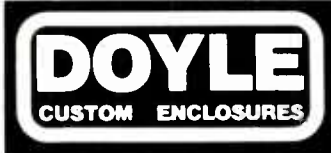
"The old SM58 is still probably the best vocal standby, because of its durability. Everything else sounds better than it does, but doesn't last! So you can't have both, I guess. Basically E-V has got it covered. Sennheiser makes good drum mikes. I don't like to get into any of the Japanese mics. They definite-

Billy Cobham has



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ten, a lot of people don't want to be DI'd. They want you to mic their amp—which is cool—but the big problem is that a lot of them are used to a sound that they can only get out of the amp running full bore. They only thing I can suggest in that situation is to carry along with you some Sonex foam. It comes in 4' x 4' sheets. You'll find that if you carry a couple of sheets with you and use them in certain key spots to absorb some of the energy that's coming off the stage, you can eliminate reflections, help control the sound coming off monitors and eliminate some of the feedback that you get.

"I think that if you are doing a good job of setting up your monitors, you can actually give that guitar player enough level coming back in a monitor so that he won't need to have that big Marshall cabinet cooking. One of the most effective ways is by using side fills of some sort. The big advantage there is that you've got controlled dispersion out of those side fills. There's a big problem with something like a Marshall cabinet in that it uses all cone-type speakers. Cone drivers have very low directivity, which means it doesn't matter which way the cabinet is facing, you still get a

lot of sound spilling out, off-stage.

"If, on the other hand, you use side fills, which might have a horn and a low frequency driver, you can get a substantial amount of level, but it's fairly well-directed into the area that you want to cover.

"I think a judicious application of monitors and a very light hand in dealing with the musician is what's important."

Harris recommends that on a small stage you "point the actual stage cabinets where they're needed. If the drummer can't hear enough of the bass player, I'd put an extra bass cabinet behind the drummer and point it right at his head. Instruments with a lot of bottom end can really mask a monitor system out pretty quickly, and all of a sudden you need big, huge cabinets and stuff that most of these stages don't have room for."

PA COMPANIES

Another consideration for your band is where to go to actually purchase your PA. "The music store," says Lakoumentas, "is definitely the resource to go to for information and direction with musical instruments. However, after a certain point, and that point comes quite early, they're completely out of their element in PA. Now, the one recommendation I would make to the in-

dependent musician who's considering getting his own PA system is to go to a number of PA companies. Stay away from the music stores for that type of advice, because the music stores are generally dealing in more entry-level types of equipment, which don't offer the sophistication, just the price.

"Go to a couple of PA stores and listen to a number of alternatives, then go out and see a couple of these systems in action. What you learn from doing this is that you get the benefit of all the experience that the PA company has acquired.

"Not to knock music stores—some of them have very capable PA departments. But, unless the guy you're talking to is a seasoned soundman who's been out gigging on his own, take whatever he says with a grain of salt."

Szepesi's advice is more blunt. "Don't buy; rent from companies who know what they're doing and have researched the market place and made the mistakes a long time ago. It's silly for bands to take five years, shave their expenses and buy a system. One guy in the band always ends up eating it, when it's all over."

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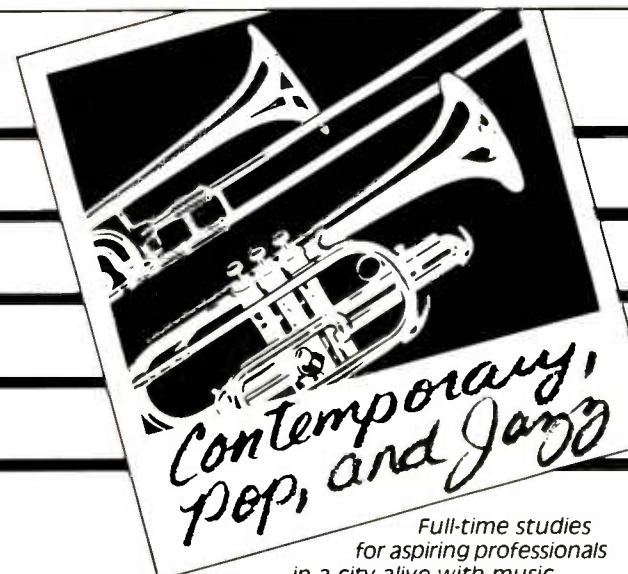
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tions", according to Szepesi, "be prepared for a terrible rig, because clubs aren't famous for spending money to buy good products. Usually club systems are the burial ground for all the junk the PA companies get rid of.

"One thing I would definitely carry would be a monitor system, because the clubs usually really 'cheese' on you when it comes to monitors. That's the most important part of the system, because if it doesn't happen, then you blow your pipes and you end up having to cancel gigs."

Peter Harris suggests calling ahead to get a detailed account of exactly how the system is put together, and then augmenting it with whatever you need, budget permitting.

"The whole fly in the ointment, though, is no matter what they say is there, the condition of it is not guaranteed. I mean, you can show up and it's, 'Oh, yeah, here's the 24-channel board, but only 20 channels work.' And there's really no way you can know, if you've never used the system before. The more detailed you can manage to make your intention to the person in charge, in advance, the more likely he is to be honest. If you tell him what you use all your channels for, by the time you finish rattling it off, he's going to be feeling so guilty about those four channels not working that he's likely to say, 'Oh gee, sorry we've only got 20 channels working.' And then you can bring in an extra little board, or whatever."

PARTING ADVICE

The two simplest sounding pieces of advice we heard were probably also the most valuable. One was, *read your owners manuals*, and the other, *get the right packaging*.

Gabor Szepesi says that the biggest problem nowadays is that "technology has come a long, long way, and every piece of equipment that you buy right now has got a manual that's a quarter-inch thick. People are using equipment to one per cent of its potential because, as a rule, they don't read manuals."

Peter Harris believes it's smart for a band to spend money in the beginning to ensure the safety of their equipment. "When something starts to break on the road, it gets stuck in a 'band-aid' fix, and that's the sure way to run down equipment. If you spend the money right up front—have the stuff packaged in the right road cases, for example, then that stuff is going to stand up a lot longer. And the cost of doing that is a more scheduled, organized cost than something breaking down every week."

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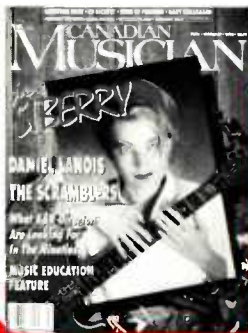
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How To Hustle a Gig in Live Sound

by Kitty Cross

When I was sixteen, I ran away from home to join a circus. In retrospect, it probably wasn't the smartest thing to do. There wasn't any circus when I got to town, and the first couple of years were real eye-openers for a kid from the boonies loose in the big city.

Eventually a band came along that couldn't afford a real sound engineer, so they hired me. My two big selling points were not complaining about loading the truck at three in the morning, and being able to work cheap. The band got what they paid for and I got free hands-on experience.

I had been working in theatre for a while and figured I knew my way around a small system. Ha! The first gig was one of those nightmares that most musicians only imagine. The fact that the power supply on the mixer was blown and two of the four P.A. boxes had no speakers (it's a long story—make sure you check before the stuff goes in the truck.) didn't make me feel any better. I was pretty sure it was my fault that nothing worked. After all, I only knew how to load trucks. Kind of the feeling you get when you ride a bike for the first time and when you look back, your dad isn't holding on to the back of the seat anymore.

Anyway, that was then, this is now. Things have changed a bit in twelve years. The trend toward more high-tech systems is introducing formal education as a possibility in areas like recording and post production.

So here we are in 1990.

Okay, I think I'd like to work in the business, but I'm not sure. How can I ease my way in without having to give up the security of my day job? you ask innocently.

The answer is night school. A lot of community colleges offer courses through their continuing education departments. This approach gives you a taste and will introduce you to basic terminology, usually from a practical point of view. It's a great way to decide between real estate and audio as a career. (A word to the wise—if you're looking to get rich, pick real estate.)

Live sound isn't always a strong component in these courses, so if that is your main interest, ask to speak to the



Kitty Cross is a freelance sound engineer who teaches (live sound) at Humber College and at The Harris Institute. Cross has worked with Max Webster, FM, Saga and Stan Getz.

course instructor and check the emphasis.

Besides the community colleges, there are private schools that offer courses. Two in Toronto are Network For Learning, and Learning Annex. These are usually 'mini' courses, and can be found under Education in the yellow pages of your phone book.

Enough already! I know this is what I want to do. What then?

Find a band—work cheap/free. Offer the skills you already have, like being able to drive a van or truck, the ability to stay up for seventy-two hours at a stretch, etc. Ask lots of questions. It helps if the first time there is someone there who knows more than you, but don't count on it. Remember that no one absorbs this stuff through the pores, so you're going to have to swallow your pride and ask if you don't know. Women usually find this a little easier than men. Think how silly it'll look if you do something dumb like put cabinets without speakers in the truck just because it didn't occur to you to question the fact that they felt a bit light.

Put a resume together and haul it around to all the live sound companies in town. As long as you don't pretend you know more than you do, then it's very possible to get hired in an entry level position. A lot has to do with being in the right place at the right time and, most importantly, having the right attitude.

According to Ian Murray, account manager for Westbury National, "If someone can show me they're motivated, responsible and capable of taking direction, I'll definitely consider them.

Formal education is an asset, but not essential at this stage. Once you've got a little experience with how things operate, then think about taking a course."

Speaking of education, I've heard about several full-time programs that are available. Should I look at those?

Probably not for live sound but, as a lot of us have discovered, it helps to keep your options open. Most full-time courses are recording oriented, and a certificate from one of these establishments can serve as your calling card in the world of recording and post-production studios.

The amount of work regularly available in the live audio field is inconsistent because of the small population base in Canada.

If you're planning to work as an audio engineer, then it helps to have another industry-related skill up your sleeve, such as lighting or being able to tune guitars. Some studio training might prove useful if there isn't any live audio work. At least your foot's still in the door.

So there you go. If your aspiration is live sound engineering, there are a couple of different ways to go about it. The main points to remember are: maintain a good attitude, and know enough to ask questions. Learning is that delightful little bonus that crops up after a couple of years slugging gear on the northern Ontario bar circuit. You're trying to impress some girl (or guy) in a high school in Sudbury with all your knowledge, when it suddenly dawns on you that you really *do* know your stuff. That's where the adventure begins.

The Four-Track Studio

PART TWO: Basic Recording Techniques

by Brad Murphy

Laying The Foundation

Generally, I begin with the drum computer and the bass guitar or synthesizer. In four-track recording there is not the luxury of recording stereo drums, or even putting bass on its own track. I usually combine drums or instruments such as cymbals or percussion with another like instrument that requires similar EQ. Because less is more, and because I am going for quality vs. quantity, I stick with a basic kick, snare, hi-hat and crash cymbal for my initial drum track.

This will be your final rhythm section mix, so you should do all your blending, EQ and effects now, and print them to tape. Because this process is an additive one, it is important at this point to have a clear picture of what you want to achieve as a final result. It is helpful to map out on paper which instruments you will combine on what tracks, and the necessary order of recording them.

Various types of reverb effects may be used on the snare. Experiment as much as you can, and remember when you add reverb in your final mix that it may tend to mask the reverb on the snare, so you should use more reverb than you think you need. You should also EQ the snare reverb to a frequency area that you do not expect to use on your vocal or instrument reverbs.

It is nice to brighten the hi-hat to give it a wispy sound. One way this can be done is by attenuating the midrange frequencies and adding perhaps a 3dB/octave boost at 10 or 12 kHz.

There are many kick drum EQ possibilities. One of my favourites for hard edged pop rock is a slight boost at 100 Hz, 250-400 Hz, and a nice +3dB point at 3-5 kHz. I always put light, fast-attack, fast-release compression on my kick drum. This gives it good punch and presence. I also usually compress my overall drum-bass track in the final mix. If your compressor has gates on it, use them on as many drum voices as you have gates for. Drum computers tend to be noisy.

Effecting and equalizing the bass guitar or synth is another crucial area. For that snappy, punchy sound that is very popular today I suggest rolling off anything below 40-50 Hz and brightening at 800, 1.5, 2, 3, 5 or 10 kHz, and maybe add some hardness at 400 Hz. This will create a very hard punchy

bass sound that is not too flabby or undefined on the bottom end, and a nice clear top that will give the bass presence in the mix. Once again, planning is important. The higher frequencies of the bass sound tend to get masked by other instruments, so sometimes a little over-emphasis is necessary to preserve the definition of the bass in your mix. I usually send a little bass sound to the same reverb as my snare to give the bass a little space and to put it in the same room as the drums.

If you wish to flange or chorus the bass it is a good idea to use an active crossover network. The purpose of this is to split the bass signal into two bands, low and high. Now you can run it into two separate channels of the mixer. Send just the high portion to the chorus or flange and combine it with the unaffected bottom. The reason for this is that choruses and other phase related effects create their sound by a continuous sweep of emphasis and cancellation through the frequency range. If the bottom of the bass is processed this way, cancellations can cause the foundation of the bass sound to disappear as the oscillator sweeps through that area.

Don't be afraid, when recording the bed track, to hit the tape fairly hard. Most of the time transient distortion on the snare won't show up at moderately elevated levels, and the bass and drums will have lots of presence and impact. Let your ears be your guide.

Instrumental Overdubs

You have recorded the rhythm section on track one and now it is time for overdubs. The order of recording these instruments depends on your arrangement. (It is wise to record a ghost vocal—a rough working vocal not used in the final mix. Keep it on tape as long as you can before you erase it. This working vocal lets the instrumentalists know where to play or not to play.) The rules here are: a) Only bounce when you have to; if you have to combine two instruments, record the first instrument and bounce it to another track while recording the second instrument simultaneously. This way only the first signal need go through another generation of tape. Try to record instruments together that will sound good being effected the same way in the final mix. b) Print effects on tape whenever you can. This gives each instrument its own ambient

space and if you only have one reverb or delay, you won't be able to effect everything later, especially if your instruments have been sub-mixed. Finally, EQ your instruments with the mix in mind, and always gate them if you can, to eliminate noise. For example, DX7s, which are used a lot, are notorious for residual noise.

The Vocal(s)

It is generally the rule to lightly compress vocals. Because there is a lot of dynamics in singing, compression will allow you to make a hotter overall recording. When recording vocals I shut off my input vocal rail between lines and verses of the song. Inexpensive gates will close up on a soft part such as the end of a line. I can avoid this by doing it manually, and this way the track is free from any noises that occur in the studio when the singer is not singing.

Having used two tracks for the instruments, you have only two left. Since you only have one track for vocals in this particular configuration, it is best to record any backing vocals first by bouncing the harmonies or doubled vocals back and forth between the two open tracks. In this manner you can mix and layer the background vocals first and print them, together with the lead vocal, last. It is best not to bounce the lead vocal. Making it a first generation recording will give it the most clarity and presence. I will print one or two short delays of perhaps 20, 47 or 79 ms. on the backing vocals to give them richness and space in the mix. Use your discretion as to how much of this is necessary. The real trick is, when printing effects, they generally don't transfer to tape quite as much as they appear to when you're recording them. A little more effect must be added than what sounds correct. Unless you want a *dramatic* effect, the best way to blend them is with enough presence to be effective but not strikingly noticeable to the listener.

Final Overdubs

You now have one track left to record solo instruments, percussion or just about anything. Because the four-track format is so small, unused portions of previously recorded track may be used to record additional programs. Careful consideration of EQ and processing is necessary. Anything goes; it's all a matter of planning.

Making It On The Club Circuit

by Ben Richardson

Getting A Gig

You need three things to book your band: a telephone, a promo pack and lots of patience. Your promo should be very simple: a black and white glossy photo with the band's name on it, a *short bio* listing the band members and style of music and an audio cassette with three songs on it.

The first thing you should do is make a list of clubs that would be appropriate for your band. Then find out who the club booker is. Call them, introduce yourself and briefly explain that you are a new band looking for gigs and ask if you could drop off a promo pack as soon as possible. You should give them about a week to look over the promo and then make a follow-up call. This is where the patience comes in. You may be asked to call back later. Don't get discouraged if, when you call back, you are put off again. Be keen and friendly; be persistent, and don't ever show your frustration.

Call back every two weeks "just to remind them" that you still really want to play their club. Eventually, they'll want to give you a chance. Once you are offered the gig, it'll probably be a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, as the weekends are usually reserved for the top drawing bands. The club owner figures that if you can bring in customers on a couple of slow nights, then they can probably afford to move you up to Thursday, and if you can prove yourself there, then you might get a chance at a weekend. Remember, at this point you need them more than they need you.

You will probably be offered one of two deals: either a flat fee (\$50 to \$150) or a door deal where you charge a \$2 to \$4 cover charge. The first way has the advantage of people being able to see you without having to pay. The second can be good too, because if you bring lots of people in you'll make more money.

One thing that you can do is offer the booker an alternative. If they're offering a flat fee, suggest putting on a small cover (\$2) and handing out 500 complimentary (free) concert style tickets to the gig, and for every comp. that comes back, they give you \$1. That way, if you bring in 200 people, the bar is packed with people drinking and you make \$200 plus whatever comes in at the door. If they're offering a door deal, suggest printing up discount tickets that offer



PHOTO: PATRICIA GREER

Ben Richardson plays bass in The Phantoms, one of Toronto's hottest club bands.

money off the regular cover charge. Try to get the club to pay or at least split on poster and ticket expenses.

The main thing to remember is that above all you want to make the gig work both for the band and the club: Everybody loses in an empty club.

Getting People Out To The Gig

Photocopied posters advertising the gig can be printed up for between four and ten cents a copy. You can staple these on wooden telephone poles and poster boards around town. (Be careful, though: In some cities this is illegal.) Visit record stores, music stores, college campuses, etc. where, if you ask nicely, they'll usually be happy to put up your poster. You can also reduce your poster to 1/4 size, thereby getting four nifty mini-flyers from one sheet. These you can distribute on tables at the club on the weekend before your show. You can also put these on car windshields outside a big rock concert.

Every city has some form of free club listings. This is usually a list of all the clubs and what bands are playing that day or week. Check entertainment weeklies, daily newspapers, college radio stations, local TV stations and local cable TV stations. Make a list and be sure to call and let them know about the gig. Don't rely on the club booker to do this.

Every daily newspaper has an entertainment section. Find out who the reporters are and try to get them out to see your band, or to mention where you are playing in their column. Don't forget about the college papers and entertainment weeklies.

College radio is great. They will play your demo, no matter what the quality,

at least once; and they are usually happy to interview one or two band members, which will enable you to plug your upcoming gigs.

Most record and music stores will let you leave a small stack of tickets at the front counter. Carry a stack with you at all times and give them away in pairs to everyone you meet.

Leave a book at the door of the club that people can write their names and addresses in. Every month, or when appropriate, make up a one page newsletter listing your upcoming gigs and anything else of interest and send it out. These people could become your hard-core fans.

Don't forget, this is a people business: The personal touch is your best calling card.

Doing The Gig

Most clubs today own or lease their own PA and light systems, and provide a house tech to operate the equipment, but some don't. This is something that you should always check with the club booker when you make your deal. Find out who the soundman is, and call him to see what time you should show up for the soundcheck. Most house techs double on lights. If you want to bring your own lightman in, it shouldn't be a problem, but it's wise to check with the house tech first.

If you're doing a door deal, find out whether the club provides a doorperson. If you have to provide someone, find out what time they should start collecting.

If possible, try to ration out the workload amongst band members. This way everybody will realize how much work there is to do, and by doing it yourselves, you will be better equipped to understand how the business end works when, down the road, you do have a manager and agent to do it for you.

One last thing I like to do is to get to know other bands on the club scene and to put together double or triple band nights with the ones that I like and get along with. If each band has a following, this could double or triple attendance to the show, and make for a very happy club owner. As well, you will be exposing your booker to a whole new crowd. I don't believe in competition among bands. It's more fun to get together to play, and you can have a hell of a party after the gig.

New from TASCAM

The MM-1 Keyboard Mixer

T EAC Canada Ltd. has announced the release of the new TASCAM MM-1 keyboard mixer with MIDI mute automation.

Key features include, 20 inputs (4 stereo and 12 mono), 4 effect sends and 4 stereo effect returns, MIDI-controllable mute function with an on-board 99 scene memory, and table top or 19" rack mount installation.

For more information, contact: TEAC Canada Ltd., 340 Brunel Rd., Mississauga, ON L4Z 2C2 (416) 890-8008, FAX (416) 890-9888.



Ludwig Rocker Outfits

T he LR-2426-RM outfit features suspended toms mounted on low double tom stands with floor tom positioning. Keeping with the trend of smaller toms, this outfit offers power toms that are 9" x 10", 11" x 12", 13" x 14" and 14" x 15". The LR-2226-RM, another popular six-piece configuration, features the traditional five-piece Rocker outfit with an add-on 9" x 10" Rocker power tom suspended with the new LR-255-STH add-on single tom holder.

For more information, contact: H&A Selmer Ltd., 95 Norfinch Dr., Downsview, ON M3N 1W8 (416) 667-9622, FAX (416) 667-0075.

The Fostex 280

T he new Fostex 280 provides an 8 channel mixer—4 basic line channels and 4 deluxe mic/line channels—with 2 auxiliary sends, sweep midrange, mic trim control and mute switch. The tape transport features advanced microprocessor control with 3 auto locate points, auto punch-in, and optional MTC-1 interface for computer control of transport functions. The inclusion of Dolby C and high speed operation complete the package.



For more information, contact: Erikson Music, 378 Isabey St., Laurent, PQ H4T 1W1 (514) 738-3000, FAX (514) 737-5069.

Imagination Lighting Controllers

T he Imagination series micro-processor lighting controllers are available as a foot controller, with 12 control channels, or as a 12 or 24 channel console with MIDI.

For more information, contact: RMSCO Ltd., 9 Pullman Crt., Scarborough, ON M1X 1E4 (416) 298-7766, FAX (416) 298-0225



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The King of the Jungle measures a slinky 5¼" × 19" × 15", so it fits all standard rack-mount installations. Yet each module will pump out a full 1400 watts into a 4 ohm load (1200 watts into 8 ohms). And when you compare the slender price—it'll bring out the beast in you too!

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Lowrey Premieres Three Portable Keyboards



Lowrey has introduced three completely new portable keyboard models for 1990, the LK-5, LK-10 and the LS-30.

The LS-30 offers 576 voice variations. Sound selectable pads provide a programmable, 4-pad touch percussion sound source. With one finger *ad-lib* you

can play a variety of right hand melody "riffs" with just one finger.

The LK-5, LK-10 and the LS-30 are portable keyboards.

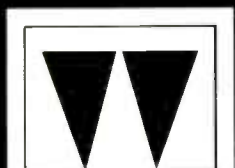
For more information, contact: Lowrey Canada Music, 6400 Shawson Dr., #1, Mississauga, ON L5T 1L8 (416) 670-2345, FAX (416) 670-3646.

EMG B/T Controller

The EMG B/T control puts on-board active bass and treble equalization control within the reach of every bass player. Its concentric potentiometer conserves space and makes direct retrofitting easy in most basses. Approximately 12dB of cut and boost are available from the bass and treble controls.

For more information, contact: Louis Musical Ltd., 529 rue DesLauriers, St. Laurent, PQ H4N 1W2 (514) 332-6907, FAX (514) 332-0255, 1-800-363-1884.

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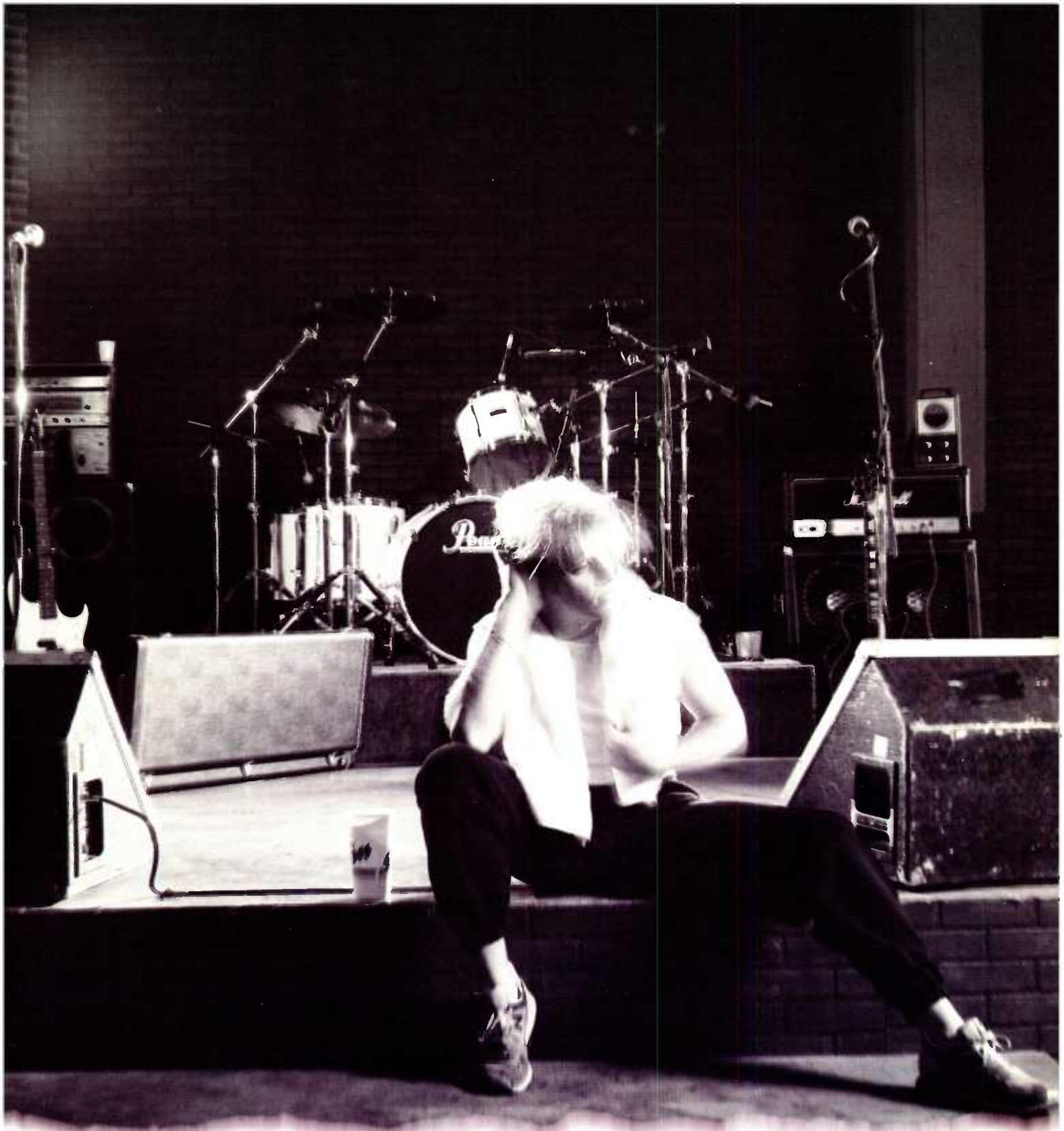
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For more information, contact: Kay Sound Imports Inc., 2165 46th Ave., Lachine, PQ H8T 2P1 (514) 633-8877, FAX (514) 633-8872.

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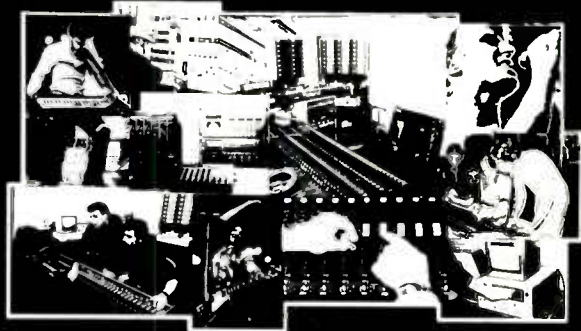
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Ensoniq Compact Keyboard Personal Music Studio



Ensoniq's new SQ-1 is a compact keyboard with 24 bit effects, a 16 track sequencer, mixdown capabilities and up to 180 internal sounds, including drum and percussion

sounds.

For more information, contact: Kaysound Imports Inc., 2165, 46e Ave., Lachine, PQ H8T 2P1 (514) 633-8877, FAX (633-8872).

Technics Introduces Four New Digital Pianos

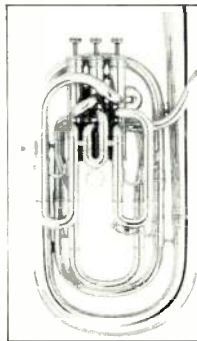
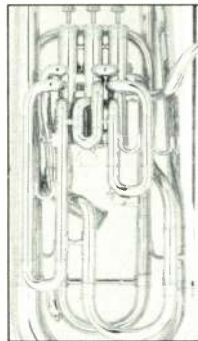
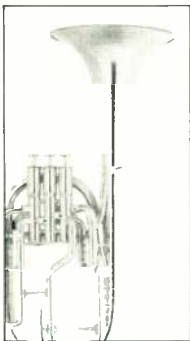
Technics Music Canada, a division of Great West Music (1987) Ltd., is introducing four new digital pianos. The top of the line PX66 and PX55 will incorporate Harmonics Source Sampling (HSS) to produce natural grand piano sounds.

In addition to the PX66 and PX55, Technics is also introducing the popularly priced PX44 and 76 key PX33.

For more information, contact: Technics Music Canda, 3331 Jacombs Rd., Richmond, BC V6V 1Z6 (604) 273-4976. FAX (604) 273-5931.

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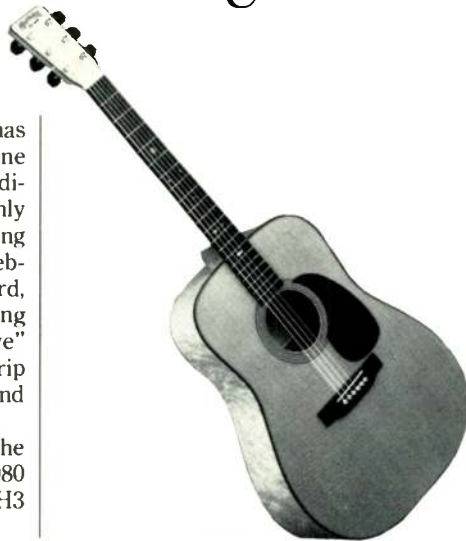
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The Martin Guitar Company has extended its Dreadnought line of acoustic guitars with the addition of the model D-60, made of highly figured birdseye maple, and featuring gold Schaller tuners with large, solid ebony buttons; tortoise pickguard, endpiece, heelcap and binding; aging toner finish; ebony bridge; "red eye" bridge pins, and herringbone backstrip and tortoise-bound fingerboard and headstock.

For more information, contact: The Martin Organisation Canada Ltd., 1080 Brock Rd., #14, Pickering, ON L1W 3H3 (416) 831-8544, FAX (416) 831-3445.



16" AA Bright Crash New from Sabian

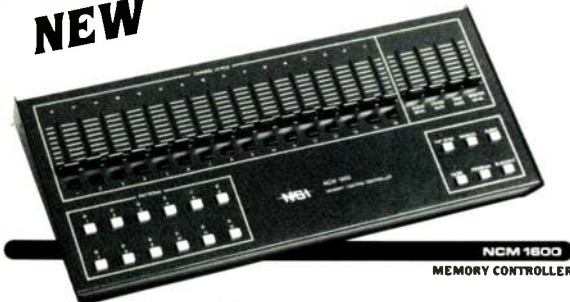
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For more information, contact: C.M.S. Music Inc., 8660 Jeanne-Mance, Montreal, PQ H2P 2S6 (514) 387-7331, FAX (514) 383-3576.

Samson VLP Series Wireless Systems

The VHF wireless system is available in instrument, hand-held, and lavalier configurations. The bodypack transmitter offers a mute switch, a sensitivity control, as well as an on/off switch and a non-removable battery door cover.

VLP is supplied in a choice of fourteen frequencies, all compatible for simultaneous use in the same location.

For more information, contact: Omnimedia Corp. Ltd., 9653 Cote de Liesse, Dorval, PQ H9P 1A3 (514) 636-9971, FAX (514) 636-5347.

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For more information, contact: Yorkville Sound Ltd., 80 Midwest Rd., Scarborough, ON M1P 4R2 (416) 751-8481, FAX (416) 751-8746.

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Shure L2 Handheld Transmitter

Shure Brothers Incorporated have announced the addition of the L2 handheld transmitter to its L Series line of wireless microphone products.

The L2 is available in three different versions. Model L2/58 features Shure's S58 dynamic microphone element, while Model L2/96 incorporates the condenser element used in Shure's SM96 vocal condenser microphone. A third version, L2/Beta 58, features Shure's Beta 58 element. The transmitter heads are interchangeable.

Shure L2 transmitters are designed to work with Shure L Series receivers.

For more information, contact: A.C. Simmonds & Sons Ltd., 975 Dillingham Rd., Pickering, ON L1W 3B2 (416) 839-8041, FAX (416) 839-2667.

Kahler Double Locking Tremolo

The model 2710 double locking tremolo from Kahler is strung from the top - no cutting off ball ends of the strings - and is finger lockable (no wrench required). It features all steel construction and 10-way

adjustable modular saddles.

For more information, contact: Active Musical Products Ltd., 24 Viceroy Rd., #4, Concord, ON L4K 1A9 (416) 669-6906, FAX (416) 669-6786.

Takamine Introduces LTD-90 Series

Highlighting a series of special models for 1990, the LTD-90 all-wood dreadnaught is a limited edition featuring palathetic pickups and a parametric preamp.

For more information, contact: B & J Music Ltd., 469 King St. W., Toronto, ON M5V 1K4 (416) 596-8361, FAX (416) 596-8822.

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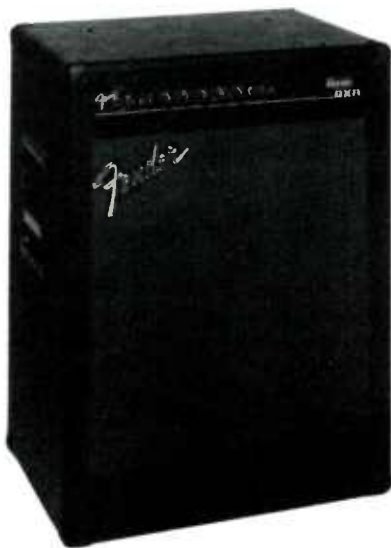
Fender Combo Bass Amp

The BXR 300C is a 300 watt combo amplifier with one Eminence 15" speaker. It produces less than .05% THD (Total Harmonic Distortion).

Features include 3-band EQ with a sweepable midrange, high and low Enhance (boost) buttons for additional tone shaping, an effects loop and two inputs: one standard and one for high gain instruments.

The BXR 300C has a Delta Comp™ compressor which may be switched in or out of the circuit. The Delta Comp is an adaptive compression system—it scans the signal and adjusts the amount of release time for optimum low-noise tone production.

For more information, contact: TMI, 2530 Davies Ave., P.O. Box 279, Port Coquitlam, BC V3C 3V7 (604) 464-1341, FAX (604) 464-9275.



Instructional Videos New from Rumark

Rumark Video, which specializes in instructional videos and cassettes, has several new products for 1990, including *Joe Pass: Jazz Lines*, *Artie Traum: Chord Magic*, *Lonnie Mack: Rhythm and Lead Blues Guitar*, *Jerry Donahue: Country Tech*, *Marty Friedman: Exotic Metal Guitar*, *Steve Morse: Power Lines*, *Tommy Tedesco: Playing Guitar for A Living*, and *Rick Danko: Electric Bass Techniques*, as well as Sound Choice accompaniment tapes.

For more information, contact: Rumark Video Inc., 534 Lawrence Ave. W., #215, Toronto, ON M6A 1A2 (416) 789-7881, FAX (416) 781-4725.

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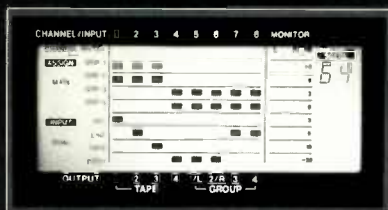
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In addition to the line-in jack to receive the incoming monitor signal, the MC100 also features a line-out jack for stacking of additional PM12H powered monitors or other monitor amplifiers. An extension speaker jack is also present to allow the use of an additional 8 ohm passive monitor speaker.

The PM12H is available in 110, 220 or 240 volt versions.

For more information, contact: Boosey & Hawkes (Canada) Ltd., 279 Yorkland Blvd., Willowdale, ON M2J 1S7 (416) 491-1900, FAX (416) 491-8377.



G&L ASAT Classic With Single Coil Magnetic Field Design Pickups

Designed and manufactured by Leo Fender, the ASAT Classic features one-piece hardrock maple neck, two single coil Magnetic Field Design pickups, chrome plate 18-gauge steel bridge (vibrato system with fine tuners is optional), and an ash or maple body and a rosewood or maple fretboard.

For more information, contact: Art White Music, 1020 Pony Dr., Newmarket, ON L3Y 7D6 (416) 836-6078, FAX (416) 836-6089.



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Style: Pop

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