

CANADIAN

# MUSICIAN

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**THE JEFF HEALEY BAND**

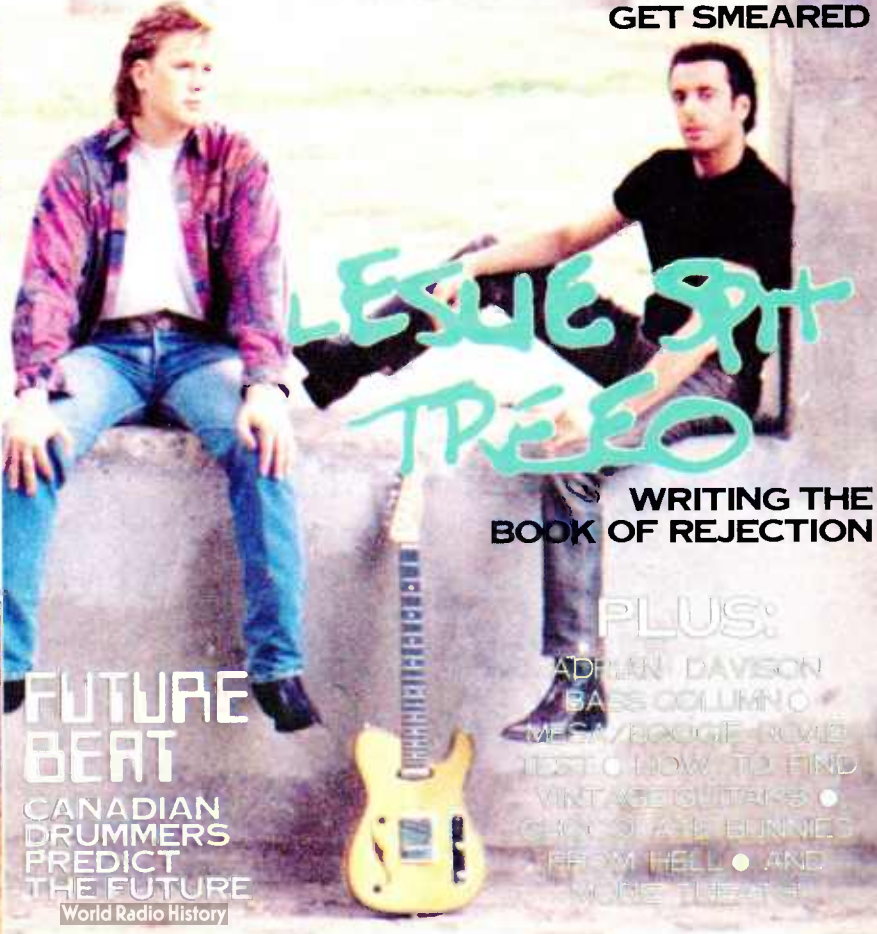


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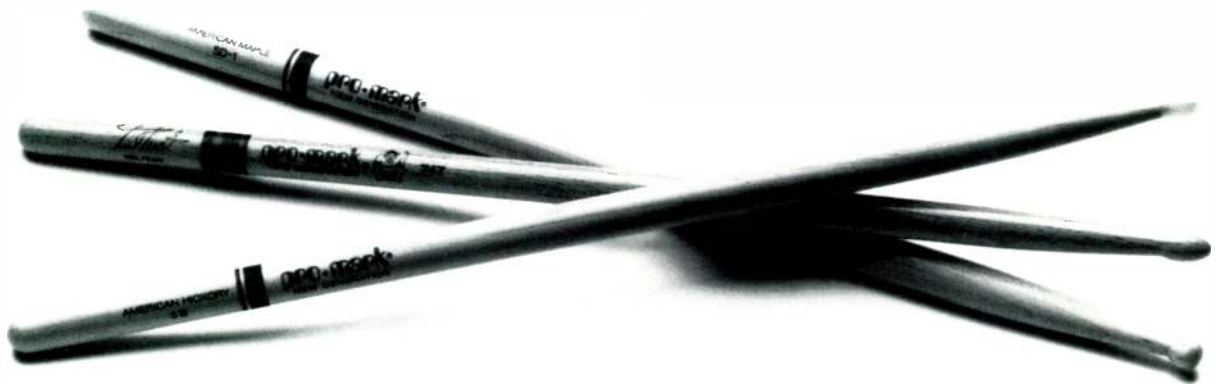
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<b>Scott McCrorie</b>	Audio Post Production
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<b>James Porteous</b>	Audio Post Production
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To receive a copy of our syllabus or to arrange for a tour of the facility contact:

**The Registrar, Stan Janes**  
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296 King Street East  
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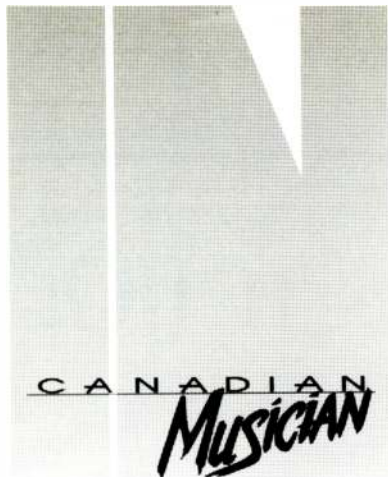


## SLOAN

46

The whirlwind success of these Halifax grunge-rockers has peaked with their signing to Geffen Records. *Smeared*, the band's first album release seems destined to prove that there's a lot of raw talent hiding out in this country's smaller cities.

by Tim Arsenault



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## 51 FUTURE BEAT

Drums are the focus as *Canadian Musician* holds a round-table discussion with eight established and up-and-coming Canadian Drummers, and spotlights some of the latest percussion gear.

by Barbara Stewart



## 42 LESLIE SPIT TREEO

The talented Toronto-based songwriters give a personal account of their experiences with the recently released *Book of Rejection*, including some lyrical insight into a somewhat controversial, radio-unfriendly tune.

by Shauna Kennedy

## THE JEFF HEALEY BAND 36

*Feel This* is the band's most ambitious effort to date, having been recorded in their own private production facility. *CM* gets a first-hand account on the tracking of this latest release from band members as well as one of the project's engineers.

by Richard Chycki



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### READER ENQUIRIES

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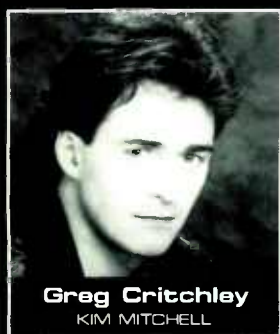
ISSN 0708-9635

Indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index.

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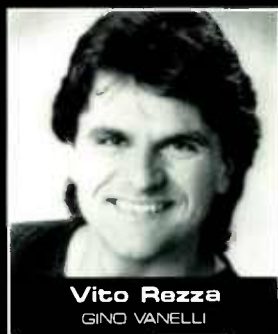
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## IN THE HANDS OF CANADA'S TOP DRUMMERS



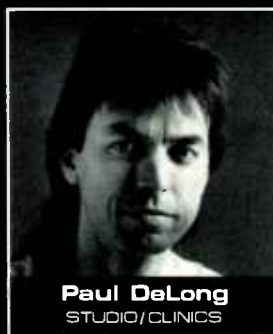
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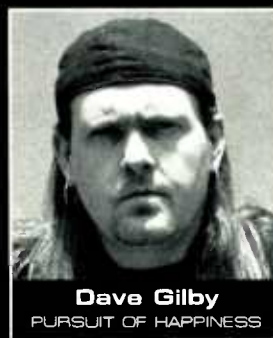
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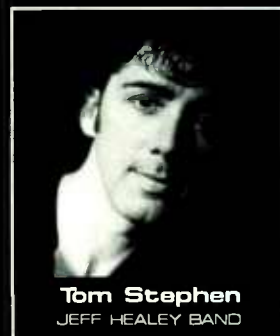
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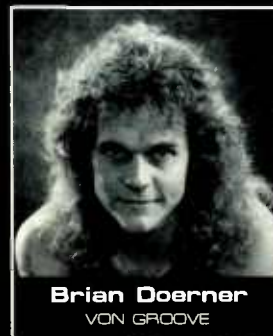
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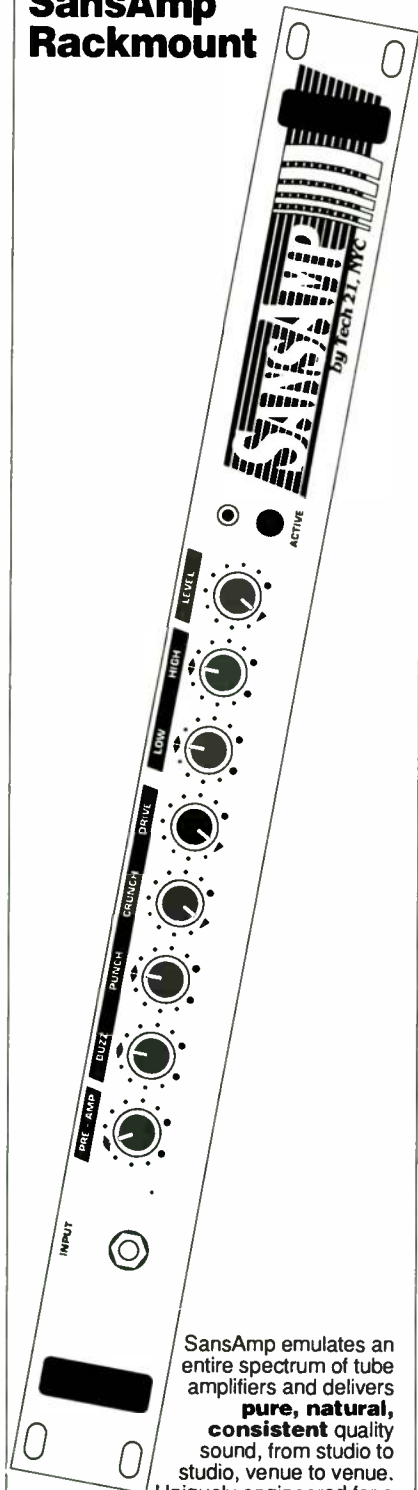
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# FEEDBACK

## A Question of Gender

I am a female, first year vocal student at Red Deer College. I am interested in learning more about the music industry in Canada, and especially about women in my field. I will be applying for a Women's scholarship in February, 1993 which financially aids the advancement of women in certain female-deficient fields of study and employment.

I have found a growing number of chauvinist men in my program of study here at the College, as well as in the cities of Los Angeles, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver. It disturbs me to know that there are so many archaic values still alive and well in this business.

I was hoping you would be able to direct me to or place me in touch with women in all aspects of the music business, including recording studios and companies. Any assistance would greatly aid my application as I am having severe difficulties finding any information at all on women in music.

I genuinely appreciate any efforts made on my behalf. Thank you very much.

**Cherina Sparks**  
Red Deer, AB

*\* Ed: As a woman in this field myself, I tend to question your perception of women in music. While it is true that discrimination does exist here (as well as in all career areas — and not only against women), I think that if you look a bit harder, you'll find that there is indeed a great number of women working in Canada's music industry.*

*As a vocal student, I'm sure you've heard of Anne Murray, k.d. lang, Loreena McKennitt, and Joni Mitchell to name but a few. Women hold important positions in virtually all of the major record companies in Canada, and there is an increasing number in the fields of recording, radio, video and related technologies. If you look at our magazine's masthead, you'll see that is true here as well.*

*Dispelling chauvinism lies with both genders. To be successful anywhere you've got to be able to either ignore or rise above someone else's ignorance, especially if that is based solely on gender or race. I've never been prevented from doing anything because I'm a woman — and I've never allowed my gender to become a barrier to my goals. You'll find that mindset is the common thread among the women who work in all areas of this industry. Once you become confident in your own abilities, gender shouldn't be an issue at all — the less you yourself look at it as a "handicap", the less others will too.*

*There are many womens organizations you can contact for information. Two good ones to get you started would be the Association of Canadian Women*

*Composers, 20 St. Joseph St., Toronto, ON M4Y 1J9 (416) 239-5195; and Canadian Women in Radio and Television (CWRT), 95 Barber Green Rd., #104, Don Mills, ON M3C 3E9 (416) 446-5353, FAX (416) 446-5354. And don't overlook the many other associations and organizations in the music industry, as they can be very valuable sources of information. Best of luck with your endeavours.*

**Sauna Kennedy**

## Praise for our Penny!

Thanks very much for that lovely review (*Showcase*, Oct. '92). Needless to say, it will be a glorious addition to the promo-package for our forthcoming four-song tape (we are currently completing the pre-production stage).

Of course, any praise we get is encouraging, but more importantly, we really feel that you understand what we're trying to do. We especially appreciated your ""?" regarding our style of music.

Terror of Tiny Town has strived for undefinability since day one, yet most people still feel the need to label. You didn't. You're a credit to your profession. If you're ever in Vancouver, please don't hesitate to look us up.

**Geoff Berner**  
Terror of Tiny Town

## Thank You Hank Fans!

*\* Ed: Back in our April '92 issue, we ran a letter requesting support for a commemorative stamp of Hank Williams Sr. Cathy Malfatti recently wrote us to let us know that they have established the Hank Williams Sr., International Society & Fan Club (c/o Mary Wallace, PO Box 280, Georgiana, AL 36033) with full approval of Hank Williams Jr. and Merle Kilgore, and that already they have received in excess of 61,000 votes for a Hank Stamp (that's more than Elvis got)!*

The Hank Williams Senior commemorative stamp project is doing very well and we are hoping for an announcement soon. I would like to thank you, the fans, for your support!

We are still asking for your letters of support for this project.

Please mail them to: The Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee, c/o Stamp Administration and Advisory Branch, Washington, DC 20260-6753.

**Cathy Malfatti**  
Eureka, CA

**Write to Us!**  
Address your letters to **FEEDBACK**,  
c/o Canadian Musician,  
67 Mowat Ave., #350,  
Toronto, ON M6K 3E3



# Canadian Music Week

DATE: MARCH 11-21, 1993

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**Make the commitment now. Be part of  
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Canada's music business is worth well over a billion dollars a year. That includes record sales, concert grosses, and performing and mechanical rights income from home and abroad.

Now, for a single week, it's possible to meet the entire Canadian industry—record companies, managers, attorneys, retail, radio, television, and the artists themselves—at one time, in one place. To top it all off, there's the opportunity to attend the annual Juno Awards, televised live to millions from coast to coast.

**Welcome to Canadian Music Week: March 11-21, 1993.**

Organized by THE RECORD, Canada's weekly music business information source, and Chart Toppers, the country's leading promotion company, Canadian Music Week consists of a series of events designed to maximize the contacts you can make, and minimize the time you could waste.

From the opening night party to the finale of the Juno Awards, Canadian Music Week is both a tribute to a growing industry, and your most important opportunity to be part of it. Make your commitment now.

JUNO  
AWARDS



## THE RECORD's Music Industry Conference and Awards 1993

This year's music industry professionals' meetings are held at the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel, March 18-20. High-profile guest speakers and panelists will be announced in January, 1993. As always included in the conference full package will be The Record's Awards Banquet.



## MusiCan '93 offers practical help in accessing the industry

Designed especially for professional songwriters and musicians, MusiCan also attracts the newly-initiated. These seminars and workshops are scheduled for March 20 & 21 at Westin Harbour Castle.



## CMX: Canadian Music Exhibition finds its feet

Under the same roof as the two conferences—on the same weekend—now delegates will enjoy the benefits of an exposition of the latest products and equipment of interest to the industry and the enthusiast. Westin Harbour Castle, March 20 & 21.



## Canadian Music Festival '93 puts spotlight on new domestic talent

A line-up of Canada's best bets will be showcased in venues around Toronto over the ten day period leading to the Juno Awards.

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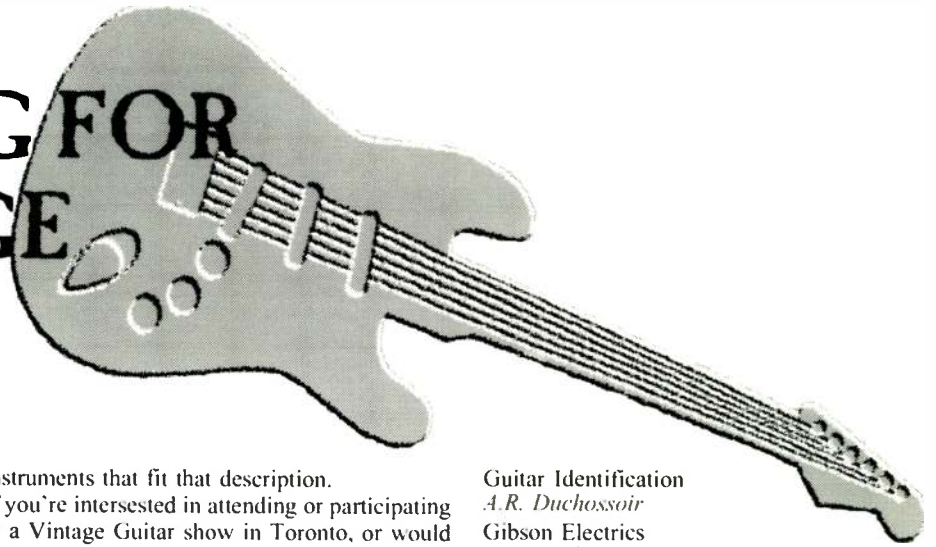
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## Primary Business

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# UpFRONT

## LOOKING FOR A VINTAGE GUITAR?



**V**intage instruments are being increasingly sought after by musicians.

*Canadian Musician* spoke with Ed McDonald, an avid collector of vintage instruments who offered some tips for those of you who are thinking of looking into the past to find new instrument sounds.

### Information Alert

• Often, the best way to find out about vintage equipment is through word-of-mouth. Ask people who own vintage gear who their contacts are — they may be able to put you in touch with someone who can get just what you're looking for.

• Most music stores have an information exchange board — check them regularly for news on used vintage gear. Even if a piece of gear listed for sale isn't what you want, the person who posted the item could turn out to be a valuable source of information.

• Become as educated as you can about the gear you're planning to purchase — and this means to be aware of things like serial number runs on certain instruments, the type of hardware that should be present on an original, what type of finish the instrument should be, etc. There are many older instruments that have undergone extensive (and often debilitating) modifications that will detract from its market value. Know what to check for and how to spot any modifications when you're inspecting an instrument before you go slapping down top dollar.

• You can never be too safe — inspect serial numbers to ensure they haven't been tampered with, and, if in doubt — check with the police department and music stores (they often keep records of stolen gear) to find out if there are any reported lost or stolen

instruments that fit that description. If you're interested in attending or participating in a Vintage Guitar show in Toronto, or would like to be on a mailing list for receiving updates and information on vintage guitars, please call or write to: Ed McDonald, PO Box 135, Pickering, ON L1V 2R2 (416) 420-6380, FAX (416) 420-9582.

### Stores to Visit for Vintage Guitars

- Music Mania, 331 Emery St., Montreal, PQ H2Y 1J2 (514) 363-6771.
- Song Bird Music & Trading Centre, 388 Gladstone Ave., Ottawa, ON K2P 0Z1 (613) 594-5323.
- Song Bird Music, 791 Queen St. W., Toronto, ON M5B 1Y4 (416) 368-5415.
- Used Sound, 226 Preston St., Ottawa, ON K1R 7R2 (613) 594-5449.
- Ring Music, 90 Harbord St., Toronto, ON M5S 1G5 (416) 924-3571.
- The Twelfth Fret, 2229 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON M4C 1K5 (416) 694-8162.
- Encore Music Exchange, 40 Danforth Rd., Toronto, ON M1L 3W4 (416) 691-2686.

### Recommended Reading

Ed McDonald has recommended a number of books for those interested in researching vintage instruments. Most of these books can be obtained by mail-order through The Music Book Store, 23 Hannover Dr., #7, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A3 (416) 641-2612, FAX (416) 641-1648.

The Fender Guitar  
*Ken Archer*  
The Gibson Guitar #2  
*Ken Archer*  
American Guitars  
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Guitar Identification  
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*A.R. Duchossoir*  
Gruhn's Guide to Vintage Guitars  
*George Gruhn*  
Rickenbacher Guitars  
*Richard Smith*  
The Gibson Super 400  
*Van Hoose*

*continued...*

### More A&R!!!

Last issue's *Upfront* listed a number of A&R people in the Canadian music industry to send your demo tapes to. We'd like to give you a few other contacts that were not included in that list:

#### BMG Music Canada Inc.

151 John St., #309  
Toronto, ON M5V 2T2  
(416) 586-0022, FAX (416) 586-0454

VP of A&R: David Bendeth  
Style of music accepted: all styles

\* Please do not send unsolicited demo materials

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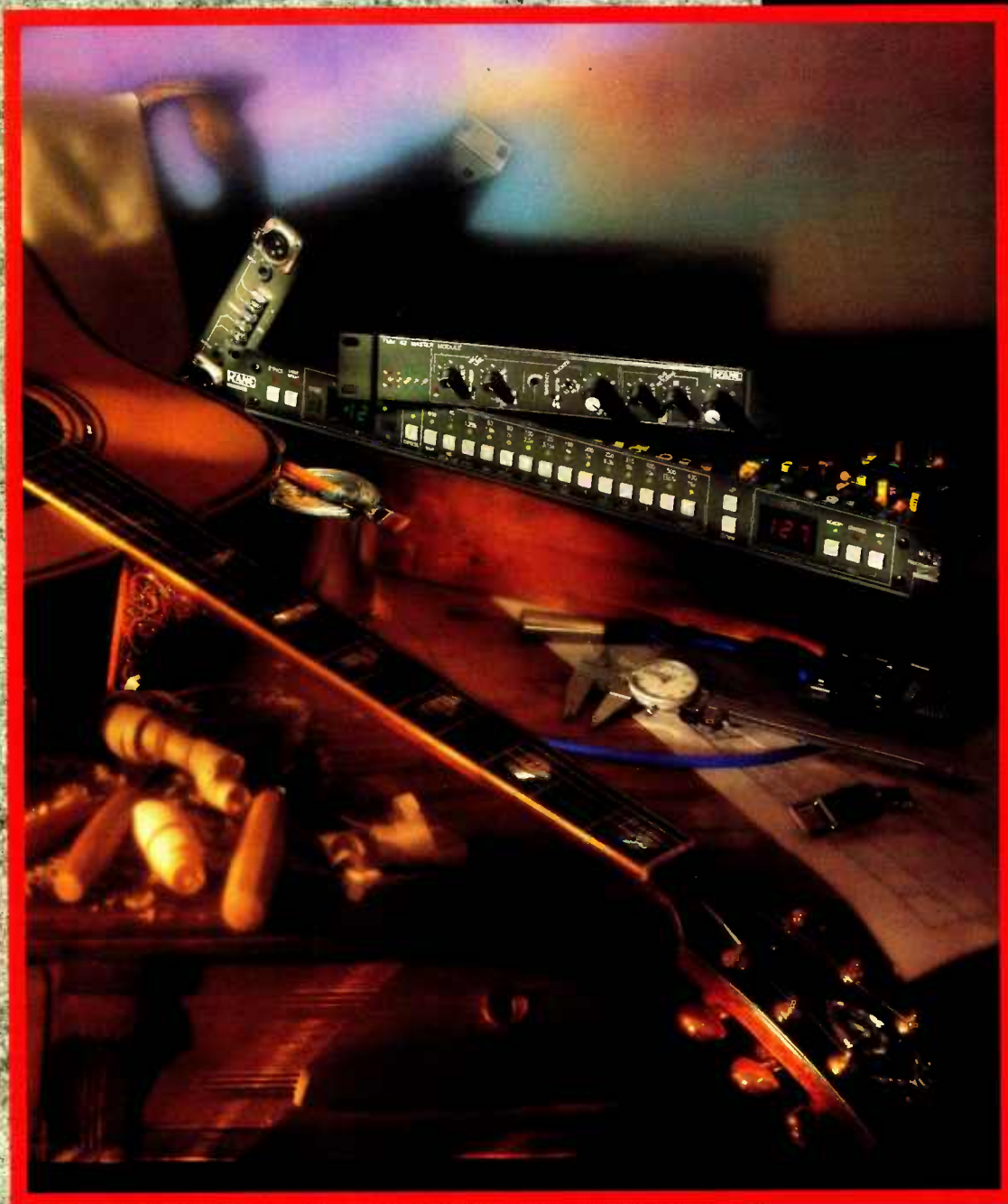
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## Breaks

... **Wanted** — the world's WORST guitar player (we're not joking!) Rochester's infamous House of Guitars is once again holding their annual international search for the most obnoxious, searing, and just downright awful guitar player out there. I think we all know someone who should be entering this contest. The contest is open to players (or should we say anti-players) from around the world, and the grand prize includes a \$400 electric guitar plus amp; an instructional guitar video (you need it); an opening club appearance in front of someone else's audience (you don't have your own); and a recording contract with Mirror Records which



includes 75 copies of your very own release to force upon relatives, friends and enemies. The winner will also be granted a solo (so low) performance in a House of Guitars TV spot and a one-way bus ticket to Canada (if a Canadian wins, we're told that a round-trip bus ticket will be awarded). This is the real thing folks, so don't practice — send a tape of your worst playing before December 31, 1992 to: "I'm The World's Worst Guitar Player" c/o House of Guitars, 645 Titus Ave., Rochester, NY 14617 (716) 544-3500.

... **On Sunday**, November 29, 1992, *Canadian Musician* magazine will take a look at the independent music scene and go through the recording and marketing process step-by-step with PRODUCING AND MARKETING AN INDEPENDENT RECORD, a one-day seminar, taking place from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. at Toronto's Royal York Hotel.

The panelists assembled for the day are at the top of their fields, and include seminar moderator **Brian Allen**, V.P. of A&R for Attie Records; top producers **Chris Wardman** and **John Switzer**; **Jean**

**Ghomeshi** from indie success Moxy Fruvous; Juno Award winning artist **Loreena McKennitt** and indie publicist **Anya Wilson** among others.

The sessions will cover budgets, recording, mastering, manufacturing, distribution, selling the product, promotion and publicity, shopping an indie record, and will include discussions of success stories like Loreena McKennitt and Barenaked Ladies.

A cocktail reception at the end of the day gives attendees the opportunity to speak one-on-one with the panelists, and a TASCAM Portable Recording Studio will be given away as a door prize.

Registration for PRODUCING AND MARKETING AN INDEPENDENT RECORD is \$75.00. For information, contact *Canadian Musician* at (416) 641-3471, FAX (416) 641-1648. Credit card holders may register by calling 1-800-265-8481.

... **The Axemen Cometh**, the ultimate guitar and bass workshop, will be presented by *Canadian Musician* and Musicians Institute on its new date, Sunday, February 21, 1993, and its new location, The Phoenix Concert Theatre in Toronto. This one day event will feature clinics by some of the best guitarists and bassists in North America, focussing on technique and performance.

Featured clinicians include G.I.T. instructor **Roy Ashen**, B.I.T. instructor **Dale Titus** and new Triumph axeman **Phil X**, who has also played alongside Aldo Nova and Jon Bon Jovi. One lucky person will win a musician's tour of Hollywood, including round-trip airfare, one week's accommodation, and study sessions at Musicians Institute. For more information, contact *Canadian Musician* at (416) 641-3471.

... **If country music's** your forte, and you're interested in breaking into the American music market, you might be interested in the services the Western Canadian Country Music Songwriters Association (WCCMSA) offers. This non-profit organization offers consultation as well as song placement services within many U.S. publishing companies which cater to country music. For membership information, send \$5.00 (deductible from membership fee) to: WCCMSA, PO Box 3836, Regina, SK S4P 3R8.

... **Musicians in Newfoundland** should be aware that the recently founded Music Industry Association of Newfoundland & Labrador (MIANL) is actively seeking membership. The Association has a published newsletter and will be sponsoring a series of seminars/workshops and showcases throughout the year. For more information, contact: MIANL, 120 Duckworth St., St. John's, NF A1C 1E8 (709) 754-2574. ■

## EVENT SCHEDULE

### Producing and Marketing an Independent Record

Toronto, ON  
**November 29, 1992**  
 (416) 641-3471

### CINARS International Exchange for Performers

Montreal, PQ  
**December 1-4, 1992**  
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### Midwest Band and Orchestral Clinic

Chicago, IL  
**December 15-19, 1992**  
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Toronto, ON  
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### The Record Industry Conference

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**March 18 - 20, 1993**  
 (416) 533-9417

### MusiCan '93 & CMX '93

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**March 20-21, 1993**  
 (416) 533-9417

### The Juno Awards

Toronto, ON  
**March 21, 1993**  
 (416) 485-3135

### Music West

Vancouver, BC  
**May 7-9, 1993**  
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### Musifest Canada

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## MONDAY

6PM - PLAYING TECHNIQUES  
7PM - CHART READING  
1030 - CONCERT AT LE CAFE  
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## TUESDAY

4PM - TONIGHT SHOW TAPING "LOUIS BELSON"  
6PM - ROCK STYLES  
7PM GROOVE CLASS

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## WEDNESDAY

12PM - PHOTO SESSION FOR PROMO PACKAGE  
6PM - READING  
7PM - STYLES - JAZZ + FUNK  
HANG OUT AT THE RAINBOW CLUB ON SUNSET

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## THURSDAY

WEEKLY CONCERT / SPECIAL EVENT  
1:00 GREGG BISSONETTE CLINIC  
7PM CONCERT WITH BISSONETTE,  
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## FRIDAY

11 BEACH  
8PM CONCERT AT THE PALOMINO  
TOM BRACHTLEIN + ROBARN FORD

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## SATURDAY

11AM - PRIVATE LESSON  
1PM - REVIEW VIDEO OF LAST WEEK'S LPW  
4PM - SPECIAL CONCERT  
RALPH HUMPHREY w/ STEVE MORSE

## SUNDAY

11AM - BAND REHEARSAL  
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4PM - SIGHT READING IN COMPUTER LABS  
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# TUBE WORKS RT-2100 MOSVALVE & REAL TUBE OVERDRIVE COMBO

by Richard Chycki

The designer/innovator of low operating voltage tube equipment, B.K. Butler, practically pioneered tube pedals like the Tube Driver and Tube Works pedals. He has since branched out into rack units and full fledged amplifiers. The RT-2100 is a single 12 combo that combines Butler's proprietary tube technology with another of his industry successes, the MosValve power amplifier.

The dual tube compact combo comes with a rugged grey Ozite exterior and front metal grille to withstand years of use. The speaker is front mounted for added projection: Tube Works speaker is stock and a Celestion is optional.

## What's In It?

Two channels worth of controls fill the front panel to the rim. EQs for both channels centre at 3.5 kHz, 800 Hz, and 150 Hz for the hi/mid/low controls respectively. These controls are passive in nature, like most tube amps out there, but are actively summed to the active master. Apparently, active masters allow for zero crosstalk between channels. Gain and master controls allow for a variety of crystal clean to clipping settings.

The overdrive channel has much more gain than the clean channel, especially when the Stack control is engaged. That control adds more gain and fatness to the signal via tube #2; it's footswitchable so that, in effect, you have a quasi third channel in operation. All other controls are the same as the clean channel. Amp inputs have 8dB difference in gain, but they are separate active entities that could be strapped together for even more gain, should that be desired.

The two channels share a fully-buffered effects loop with adjustable send and return levels. The front panel Effects Mix control allows the user to dial in the amount of effect while maintaining a direct-through signal. Generally, this type of signal pathway maintains better signal integrity. By cranking the mix control to all-effect, the loop functions like a standard signal break loop. The onboard spring reverb circuit uses the same Accutronics spring tank as used in Fender amps and is claimed to be similarly voiced. The final master feeds the MosValve 100 watt output section.

Other features incorporated into this unit

include a "continuous anti-feedback circuit" that reduces amplifier squeal for overall louder operating levels. The pair of 12AX7 tubes use a low plate voltage (more on this shortly) for a purported extended tube life. DC heater current also reduces hum and internal noise further.



## Check 1... 2...

The MosValve power amplifier is impressive and LOUD. When comparing tube and solid state amps of the same output rating, it is usual to find the tube amp sounds way louder than the solid state unit. Output of the RT-2100 fell only a little short and, when driven into clipping, exhibited rather friendly clipping overdrive characteristics. The reverb was bright and crisp, as Tube Works stated.

Before we dive into the preamp section, a small blurb on tube technology is in order. Most tube amps like Boogies, Marshalls, Fenders, etc., all use a relatively high voltage (200-300 VDC) on the plates of the preamp tubes. That voltage affects the headroom (input signal before clipping) and hence, the overall feel and sensitivity of the distortion character. Conversely, low voltage on tube plates will yield less headroom and typically loses much of that touch sensitive distortion that has popularized tubes over the years. And so we begin here with the RT-2100. The clean channel yielded a full, rich clean sound. As the preamp level was increased to the onset of clipping, the resulting overdrive was somewhat abrupt in

character with a touch of rizz. The same effect happened in the high gain channel, too. The EQ and balance are there, and the Stack control adds a nice amount of shred to the signal, but the attack characteristics and upper harmonics of the distortion seemed a tad harsh.

## Outro

In conclusion, the sound of the RT-2100 can be likened to a very good solid-state design overall, falling a hair short of capturing all that makes tubes special for guitarists. But if you're not into lugging a 10-ton tube stack around to your gigs, this Real Tube/MosValve combo is feature-packed and offers a good \$\$\$-to-feature ratio in a well built, very portable package.

For more information, contact: Tube Works, 8201 E. Pacific Pl., #606, Denver, CO 80231 (303) 750-3801, FAX (303) 750-2162. ■

*Richard Chycki is a freelance guitarist and engineer in Toronto who has recently completed the latest Jeff Healey Band album, Feel This, with producer/engineer Joe Hardy.*

## Manufacturer's Response

As the sole designer of all Tube Works equipment, I appreciate your subjective comments. Leading guitar virtuosos such as Steve Morse and Fred Newell who presently use this amp have all commented about its extremely wide range of tonal possibilities.

It is capable of creating virtually any sound you're looking for from classic to contemporary. The voicing of the amp is based upon my Real Tube overdrive pedal, which Billy Gibbons has described personally to me as the "finest overdrive ever made". My innovation of low-voltage tube techniques have made it possible to reduce overall noise, microphonics and the unreliability that everyone knows are common to tubes. Most artists have found the headroom is quite sufficient after getting to know the amp.

Your readers should know that the RT-2100 comes in four versions: RT-2100 R (2 space rackmount); RT-2100 (traditional combo head); RT-2112 (1x12" combo); and RT-2124 (vertical 2x12" combo).

*B.K. Butler, President, Tube Works*

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# MESA/BOOGIE DUAL RECTIFIER SOLO HEAD

by Richard Chycki

If for some reason you've been living in a cave for the past 20 years or so, you may not know of Boogie's etched-in-stone reputation for consistently delivering cutting-edge guitar amplification. And the Dual Rectifier Solo Head is another in Randall Smith's (Boogie's founder and designer) long line of successful designs destined to become a staple in guitarist's arsenals everywhere.

## Checking Out The Goods

At first glance, the Rectifier is blatantly classy and robust-looking with its chromed chassis and, dig this, real leather covering.

Two channels, a Vintage-voiced Orange channel and the ultra-ripping Modern Red channel, sport externally identical controls — in action — the feel and voicing are very different. No numbers here, just dial in tone by ear. A single Loop Active Master control (essentially, a front panel-mounted effects return level) allows the user to conveniently boost overall output level post effects, avoiding the need to modify your effects/amp gain structure. Smart thinking. The front of the Rectifier also comes with an armour front upper panel — just in case any subversives launch a STGM (Surface-To-Guitarist-Missile) at you during a performance.

The rear panel reveals a little more about this very different beast. A quad set of 6L6s and a pair of 5U4 tube rectifiers reside immediately behind the heavy aluminium protective bar (no wimpy screens here). You don't need any tools to secure the bar: that's a small point, but it reinforces the detail with which this amp was thought out. The 5U4s are particularly significant in that it is possible to select between solid state diodes or the tube rectifiers in the power supply — hence the amplifier name. At mediocre operating levels, the difference between the two is next to unnoticeable. But crank things up, and the softer, more compressed tonal characteristic of tube rectifiers comes into play, if selected. This

richness is especially noteworthy when using a point-of-clipping type of tone. The solid state diodes do not sag (voltage-wise) and yield a brighter, more aggressive attack. There is not another amp that allows you to so easily select between the two supply types and it is a true innovation in design. Another complement to the power supply section is the inclusion of a variac-like Spongy/Bold switch that reduces internal operating voltages and lessens the output from 100 watts down to about 75 watts.

A quartet of 6L6s has a distinctly round characteristic tone. For those that prefer the shredding tone of EL34s, instead of using another amp, flick the rear panel bias switch over to EL34 and the amp is appropriately biased for EL34s. LEDs clearly indicate bias selection. Pop in your EL34s.

The effects loop can be set to turn on for either or both channels via a rotary switch. There is also a setting for activation via a remote switch — useful for footswitching and automated set-ups (channel switching is possible this way, too). A send level optimizes the output level sent to a particular effect for maximum S/N performance. As mentioned previously, when the effects loop is engaged, the Loop Active Master on the front panel is used to set overall level. For those players whose rig is complex enough to use slaving, an adjustable slave output is also provided.

The Vintage Orange channel can be switched from "clean" to "variable hi-gain", allowing a range of tones from crystal clear to ultimate, warm distortion. The test model I received was the latest update that lowered the noise floor in clean mode. A slight amount of noise was present, but definitely within reason. If you prefer the characteristics of either the Vintage or Modern voicing and wish you had two variable channels of either, wish no more. Using a patented system called Channel Cloning, it is a simple task to make the Vintage Channel a Modern voice channel and







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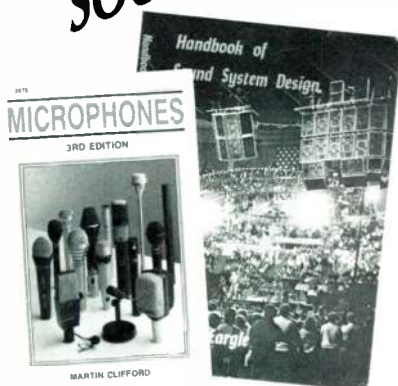
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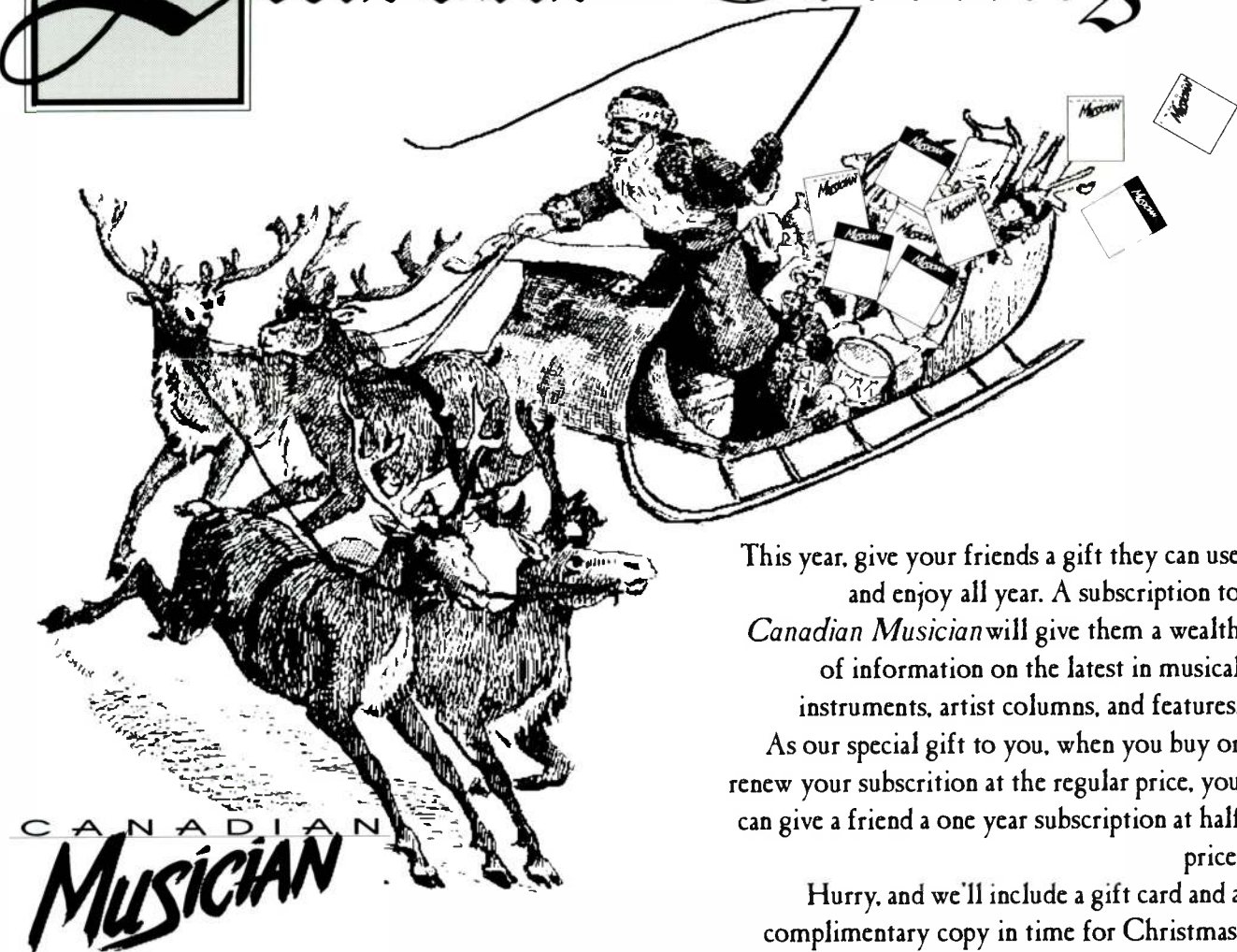
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You need more information? Contact Yamaha Canada Music, Combo Dept., 135 Milner Ave., Scarborough, ON M1S 3R1 (416) 298-1311, FAX (416) 292-0732.

**The SY35.**

## MESA/BOOGIE DUAL RECTIFIER SOLO HEAD *continued*

vice versa in the Modern channel via a single rocker (no pun intended) switch.

A quick look inside the amp revealed an exceptionally clean, well-laid-out design. All caps are fully reinforced and precision metal resistors were used throughout. As well, Boogie's use of "inverted PC" board assembly gives the structural integrity that circuit boards offer, combined with ease of parts replacement should it ever be necessary. And not that you should have to think about it, if you ever blow a tube, you'll be glad to know that it won't take one of those rugged porcelain sockets with it.

The accompanying speaker cabinet, also a leather covered gem, comes packed with four Celestion Vintage 30 speakers. Two amps can connect to the single box for a single cabinet stereo rig as desired. It has an armour option as well, should you feel the need to have military hardware with happening speakers in it.

### I'm All Ears

First, the Vintage channel: The distortion was exceptionally creamy and palatable, just as the channel name implies. By incorporating the tube rectifiers and the spongy setting in the power supply, it is possible to get positively soulful tones. And anti-metalheads, take note: the lightly clipped tone is as brown as a 30-year old page in rock 'n' roll history.

The Modern channel boasts much more aggression and attack than its counterpart. Dialing in maximum gain coupled with solid state diodes and Bold power setting, it was easy to get searing rock tones that were well balanced and articulate. No overdrive devices of any kind were needed with this amount of intense saturation. By activating the Red-to-Vintage switch on the rear panel, both presence controls operate in tandem for some interesting tonal shades.

The variance in the power supply settings really shone through when the amp was played VERY loud. Be aware of this — you may not want to mic up this amp for apartment recording and try to work that power supply. The Rectifier is incredibly touch sensitive. Playing the Vintage channel lightly and or slightly backing off the guitar's volume cleaned up the sound completely except for a very gentle bite on only the hardest transients. Because of this touch sensitivity, two channels are ample — even for those players looking for a wide spectrum of drive who have turned to programmable preamps in the past. Experienced Boogie users, who are hopelessly addicted to their ubiquitous five-band EQ, will find that the tone controls sufficiently alter the amp's tonal characteristics but they remain within a range of good, balanced tone.

With so much emphasis placed on the power section, I was a little concerned to find two things missing from the power tube section. Boogie's latest rack power amps have fuses on the cathodes of the power tubes; that

safety has been overlooked here. It's no secret that power tubes short and fail, considering the ever-increasing volatility of tube suppliers and their products. Should a power tube ever fail, it would be preferable to lose a fuse than chancing the loss of a critical component in the amp. As well, this amp comes pre-biased for both 6L6s and EL34s. If you prefer to use say, American 6CA7/EL34 rather than Czech EL34s, there will be a small mismatch. Although not overly serious, such a conscientious amp design should allow exact tweakage for optimum performance.

### Final Word

This amp ain't for the weak-hearted nice guy player. It can rip out a listener's guts and smilingly hand them back on an armoured platter. However, tamed, the Rectifier will deliver warm, round tones with excellent touch sensitivity.

Clearly, this amp will suit an extremely wide spectrum of players from the thrashiest of metalloids to the mellowest of backstreet blues aficionadors and everything in between. With the ability to clone channels and to select between power supplies, output tubes and two different channel voicings, the possibilities are next to endless from a single amp. An exceptional winner, all the way.

For more information, contact: Mesa/Boogie, 1317 Ross St., Petaluma, CA 94954 (707) 778-6565, FAX (707) 765-1503. ■

### Manufacturer's Response

First, my compliments for capturing the very essence of the Dual Rectifier. Players today are looking for a new breed of amplifier that combines contemporary performance with a good portion of innovation. We'd like to think that the Dual Rectifier is an answer to their calls.

With regards to amp biasing, it has been my experience in the past, way back when I was servicing Fenders, that power tube bias voltage was set all over the place. More correctly, the bias was set to the same value but varying line voltage was the culprit. We've found that by setting up optimum conditions at the lab and creating fixed bias circuitry to best match the tube, the bias voltage would fluctuate relative to the plate voltage and the tubes would be much happier. Tubes from various manufacturers do have small differences in bias requirements. However, because they are a certain tube type, say a 6L6, the tubes must conform to a tolerance window for the bias voltage. That amount of latitude will pose no problem to the performance of various power tubes in our amplifiers. Your point about the cathode fuses is well taken.

*Randall Smith, President, Mesa/Boogie*

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# HUGHES & KETTNER TUBEMAN

by Richard Chycki

Sometimes, carrying a full rig to a quick session or expanding your gear with more amps is an unnecessary, cumbersome event. But you need authentic tube sound, so pedals or practice-type headphone amps just won't do. Enter the Tubeman. Housing a single 12AX7, the Tubeman boasts tube

popular Red Box circuitry to simulate a 4x12 cabinet miked up. The Tubeman uses one of those wall wart external AC adapters that, like Huey Lewis' records, nobody seems to like but they're everywhere. To maintain a high voltage for the tube, the unit incorporates an ingenious voltage inverter circuit to feed the tube with a healthy 250 VDC. That is crucial to the tube's sonic performance.

Taking a quick peek inside, the Tubeman is remarkably rugged. Everything, except the footswitch, is mounted directly to the PC board, minimizing noisy cable runs. One word of note — the tube is mounted sideways beneath the main PC board and is pretty well a service call should it fail. And, contrary to popular belief, those little preamp tubes do fail.

### Listening

My first test was to plug its Line Out into the power amp sections of both my Boogie Mark IV and my modified Marshall 50. This



is the first tube pedal that I've heard with a real authentic preamp sound. I had no problem emulating the Marshall preamp at all. The Jazz and Funk settings were reminiscent of switching the bright switch off and on respectively. The clean sound seemed a little thin when compared to both guitar amps but it would still be quite useful. The Rock mode was rather blistering, much like cranking a Tube Screamer on my Marshall. Noise was negligible even when the gain was maxxed. One of the most difficult duties for any amp is to reproduce an element of touch sensitivity when the unit is lightly clipped. The Tubeman did not disappoint in this area. The tube power amp certainly helped.

### Specifications

Roughly the size of one of those ol' MXR green analog delay units — but more tapered, the Tubeman houses a complete preamplifier.

Preamp gain drive is set via the gain and four-position voicing switch. This switch offers settings appropriately called Jazz, Funk, Blues, and Rock. Post tube is the bass/mid/treble tone controls and the Master volume. A mid-boost switch is also provided. Although the Tubeman is touted as a four-channel preamp, its format would more accurately be defined as a four-voice, single-channel unit, as there is only a single set of controls in series surrounding the tube. Hence, you must re-adjust the controls when switching voices.

Three 1/4" outputs garner the rear panel, each with a specific application. The Booster Out is voiced to connect to the input of a guitar amp. Pressing the front bypass allows the straight guitar signal to pass through to this output. All other outs mute on bypass. The Line Out is designed to directly connect to a power amplifier, the unit then acting like a full-fledged preamp. The Recording Out has Hughes & Kettner's

Test #2 involved using the Tubeman as a booster and as an extra voice for a single channel amp. Keeping the Marshall in a semi-distorted mode and engaging the Tubeman in distorted Blues mode yielded a warm, creamy distortion tone with no unpleasant artifacts. Setting up both the Boogie and Marshall for a cool, clean sound and then running the Tubeman as a "distortion" pedal yielded somewhat less than adequate results. It required a lot of EQ fiddling on both the amp and the pedal, and

## HUGHES & KETTNER TUBEMAN

continued

although you could hear that the distortion character was hidden somewhere in there, the EQ curve never sounded quite right, compromising both the amp's sound and the Tubeman's sound.

Finally, the Tubeman was directly connected to a recording console. First a word about direct recording. There's a ton of stuff happening when you shove a mic in front of a cab. Ambience, amp and mic capsule compression, proximity effects — they all contribute to the final sound on tape. That said, adding a little compression, extra low end and room to the sound gave convincing results. Very stack-like. Those slightly distorted tones we were discussing before seemed to lack a bit of oomph when the Tubeman ran in this mode, but that is to be expected. An XLR would have been a welcome addition here. H&K recommends plugging headphones half way into the Recording Out jack. This proved to be clumsy. The Tubeman could not drive the phones with any sort of volume without the output stage (solid state) being driven into clipping. High-impedance phones would work better. A separate headphone driver would have worked best.

### Bottom Line

Hughes & Kettner have put substantial design consideration into the Tubeman. It makes a quick, effective means to get your ideas to tape without the hassle of setting up your entire rig and blasting the neighbours at 3 a.m.. A formidable preamp in a pedal box format, it could easily add on as another pre to a mono-preamp system. And, with its tough construction, you can be assured that it will last for a long time.

Recommended.

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

### Manufacturer's Response

Thanks for the positive review in which Richard emphasizes that in spite of its very compact size, Tubeman is a "complete preamplifier" that's "formidable", "tough" and versatile.

As is clear from the review, this ain't no "stomp box", but something much, much more: a professional tube preamp in a radically multi-functional package. Unlike a stomp box, Tubeman possesses a true hardware bypass, allowing the guitar signal to come through in its original purity; Tubeman also has a special matching filter at its output so that it doesn't sound like a stomp box at all, but like an additional amp channel. Tubeman is for every guitarist who seeks a final measure of control over his guitar tone in any situation. This preamp is so compact that it fits inside a standard guitar case, so you can always have it at your side and be ready for anything.

Since submitting the product for review, we changed the designations of the three output jacks from "Recording Out/Line Out/Booster Out" to read "To Mixer/To Power Amp/To Guitar Amp". One final point: yes, high-impedance headphones (e.g. Walkman MDR-032) produce plenty of volume, particularly in the blues and rock channels. Thanks again for the good word.

*Lee Liebner, Director,  
Hughes & Kettner, Inc.*

## SABIAN AAX CYMBALS

*by Andy Stochansky*

I was leafing through some magazines a couple of years ago while waiting at my doctor's office, when something caught my attention. A product report for the "Miata" car, written by none other than Laurie Anderson. The whole time while reading the review, I kept questioning whether she had actually driven the car, or whether the article she had written was just another "piece" of her imagination.

My questions were answered when I was asked to "road test" the new machine hammered AAX cymbals by Sabian, and yes — I in fact did run through the whole gamut and tested each and every one of them (as any of my neighbours within a five-mile radius will attest to).

There are three different cymbal ranges in the AAX series — Metal, Stage and Studio, and they are basically designed as their titles go. The Metal cymbals are designed for monster drummers; the Studio are thinner, clearer; and the Stage a nice medium. On top of this are the splashes, which were a particular favourite of mine. I have always found that with a good splash cymbal, a drummer can fill in the spaces or play melodically on them between a groove without it being oppressive or sounding busy. I found both the 10" and 12" AAX Splash to be excellent, with just the right amount of tone and snap.

After having the opportunity to play all of the cymbal models in the AAX line, I

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## SABIAN AAX CYMBALS

continued

wouldn't suggest that a drummer just go out and purchase all of the cymbals from, say, the Studio range. I guess that from the start, I realized that by combining these cymbals (some from the Stage subseries, a few from the Metal subseries, etc.), I would end up with the best cymbal array for my own personal taste, and, quite frankly — these were some of the best cymbals I've heard!



It would be very hard to choose my top five cymbals because they all have different strong points, but I will mention a few of my favourites:

### "Metal" Hi Hats

These are a solid pair of hi hats! Their dynamic range is what surprised me the most. Yes, you can BIG STICK these guys and you'll probably tire a lot faster than they will — but these cymbals can swing both ways and respond to a sensitive style of playing as well. For great all-around hats, these are it.

While testing out the rest of the Metal line, I found some of it a bit too heavy — whether I was really wacking them or not. This is all a matter of personal taste, but I gave it my best shot and slammed the hell out of the things (I swear to God the foundations of my house moved)! The 20" Crash is so heavy in fact, that I used it for a ride for a rehearsal and it wasn't bad at all. The real Metal Ride cymbal is heavy and dark, but I liked it. If you're looking for a ride that dies soon after you hit it — this is for you. The Stage and Studio Rides are both thinner, brighter and will sustain longer, which brings me to another one of my faves in the AAX line . . .

### "Stage" Ride

Although it was difficult to choose a ride that suited my needs the best, the Stage Ride certainly got my vote for the best "all-around" ride in the AAX line. What struck me first about this cymbal was just how much life and brightness it had, but cut below the mark where it would start bothering me.

I should mention now that the finish on these cymbals is impeccable — I'm sure that this has a lot to do with the fine sustain they exhibit.

The Crash cymbals were easy to choose from (I already let you know about my hearing loss after testing the Metal Crash). I found both the Stage and Studio Crashes to be excellent. Once I got used to the weights and sustains of the various models, I found I could easily manipulate them to get exactly the response I wanted, and it was because of this that they became easy to love.

Sabian has obviously gone to town in developing the AAX cymbals, and have put out some great models. But, as I mentioned

earlier — go to a store and try out the entire line, because the Metal cymbals that you like may not be for the next guy, or vice versa. I would also strongly suggest that you consider mixing cymbals from the various categories when purchasing — kind of like having a well-rounded diet of Stage, Studio, and Metal — I can't think of a better meal for any drummer. Dig in!

For more information, contact: Sabian Ltd., Meductic, NB E0H 1L0 (506) 272-2019, FAX (506) 328-9697.

*Andy Stochansky drums on Bob Wiseman's debut and follow up albums. He is presently touring and recording with Mervyn Cadell, Ken Myhr and The Full On Band and U.S. recording artist Ani DiFranco*

### Manufacturer's Response

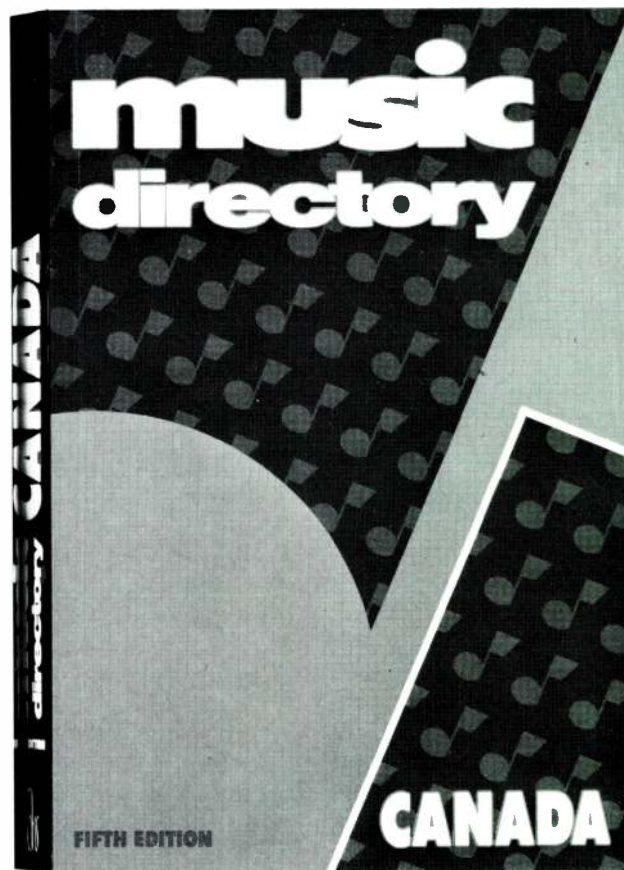
AAX has met with incredible response because it gives drummers the greatest possible control over their cymbal sounds, a fact noted in the reviewer's line "... I could easily manipulate them to get exactly the response I wanted."

This is because most cymbals must be played at a particular volume to produce their best sound. When played louder and/or faster, that sound changes, usually for the worse: all control over the cymbal is gone. AAX beats that problem by retaining its highly musical sound — and control — at all volumes and tempos — from soft to loud, slow to fast. Basically, the sound remains the same, only the volume changes. A light stroke on even the Metal models will produce the full fundamental sound of the cymbal. Play it full out and that sound is magnified into massive volume. In the thinner Studio and Stage models, some tonal wash will develop when they are played at the high end of their volume scale, however, this will remain in tune with the fundamental sound of the cymbal, so there are no conflicting overtones. AAX cymbals are priced in line with Sabian AA models, and there is no extra charge for Brilliant Finish.

Wayne Blanchard  
Manager, Marketing Communications,  
Sabian Ltd.



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# BONDAGE & DISCIPLINE



## Learning the Ropes . . .

A local music store passed my name on to a band needing a lead guitarist. I was thrilled — my first gig! Just show up and play. No sweat!

I'd immersed myself in Clapton, Hendrix, and Rory Gallagher, and was keen to jump in. With my guitar, amp, tie-dyed jacket and Vox wah-wah pedal in tow, what else could I need?

How about some licks by Scotty Moore and James Burton?!

Yes — unbeknownst to me, this rock band was an Elvis tribute



act! Start sweating now . . .

Needless to say, I left that night with a new understanding, and new sideburns that endure to this day.

That was some 20 years ago, and since then I've played in many different bands, hosted jam-sessions, played on a few recordings, and generally "done the do". All in all, I've managed to make a comfortable living working around Toronto, playing both original and cover material. This often meant working with several bands at once, which required some creative scheduling, reliable substitute players, telephone hustling and lots of cooperation.

Yet through all this, gigs would vary considerably — some nights were great, others were dismal. I always hoped for the perfect combination of players, songs, audience, divine inspiration — even the alignment of the planets, if it would help. Some things shouldn't be left to serendipity — an obvious concept for the overlooked. A quality performance is best achieved through consistency.

Consistency is the key, and it can apply in many different ways, the obvious ones being pitch; dynamics; tone; and timing. On one hand, it could involve "pushing the envelope" of your abilities every time you perform — a good example would be guitar-whiz Danny Gatton. It could even mean playing an entire show "carbon-copy", night after night — imagine being a house player for a musical like *Cats*, or *Les Miz* . . .

Well, just when I felt sure of the things I'd learned and safe in that knowledge, I was faced with the opportunity of working with a major artist. One audition and three rehearsals later, we began touring.

## Learning the Ropes, Part 2

Suddenly, ideas and concepts that rarely surfaced as conscious thought, became part of my daily work routine.

**Repertoire:** Obviously, I had to learn a whole lot of songs very quickly, and of course, as accurately as possible — giving due consideration to which instrument I'd be playing.

**Set Flow:** I saw that a great deal of thought goes into creating "set lists". Songs are chosen for their tempo, key, groove, overall impact and even regional popularity (not necessarily in that order or just by those criteria). Even the length must be carefully considered to suit a given performance time. They are chained together to give a desired flow, allowing specific breaks for related anecdotes, and indeed to let the audience digest the show.

**Instrument Changes:** These must happen within a heartbeat. I play six instruments in one show (pedal steel, Dobro, acoustic, electric, tic-tac bass, and electric E-flat tuning), and have had to learn routines to facilitate these changes; a sequence of moves, patch changes, etc. that happen in a very specific order — if not, all hell breaks loose! When the drummer's count is done, you'd best have the right hat on!

*Lee Warren splits his time between Toronto, ON and Nashville, TN. He is currently touring with the Michelle Wright Band, who were recently named Back-up Band of the Year at the 1992 Canadian Country Music Awards. Lee was also nominated in the All Star Citation category for Steel Guitar.*

**Attitude:** This plays a huge role. Have one . . . a good one, and treat every show like it's the Big Show (I learned that one from an old pal — thanks, Brad).

**Aggravation:** Be prepared for frustrations — shows where you have 15 minutes turnaround time, for instance. No sound check, just set up, tune up and play. You may be tired, you may be hungry, but like Nigel Tufnel says . . . you're professional, you'll rise above it!

**Restraint:** Another important element. As players, it's natural that we all want to wail, to cut loose, to light the Flaming Gong! But this show is focused on the singer and the songs (read lyrics). Our task is to support the vocalist in the best way we can. There are "windows of opportunity", allowing us to solo in our own style, and when that window opens, we must leap through fearlessly. Until then though, stay cool!

So where does the bondage and discipline come in, you ask? Well, it's easy to see that in working within the confines of a show like this, you could feel cramped or stifled — that your artistic integrity has been compromised . . . that you're in bondage.

I prefer to look at it as a form of discipline, where concentration and focus are paramount. It is trying to produce your best show every time you walk on stage. Our shows vary from 20 minutes to 90 minutes, and the trick is to come out of the gate running every time — no exceptions, no excuses.

I've been fortunate enough to meet many successful players, and there has been a common trait in all of them, beyond "licks, looks and luck". They all have a clear understanding of their role in their show, and they have the drive to fulfil that purpose consistently.

But this business is in a constant state of flux, so if you intend to make it your career, you must be prepared for change.

Be flexible, adaptable, and above all — have a REALLY LOUD AMP . . .

**W**hen I first started playing in bands, many eons ago, there was no such thing as a keyboard player. You were either a piano player or an organ player. If you were an organ player (or organist), the choice of instruments available was divided into two categories: portable and not-so-portable.

Of the portable variety, by far the coolest looking and sounding was the fabulous Vox Continental, with its chrome 'Z' legs, red top and colour-reversed keys. It had a wonderfully shrill sound that could easily cut through the most leaden wall of thrashing guitars and drums, and featured prominently in many hit songs of the day, like "House of the Rising Sun" and "96 Tears" to name but two. Another popular portable organ was the Farfisa, which had somewhat of a fuzzier sound, and graced the likes of "Woolly Bully", by Sam the Sham and the Pharoahs. There were lots of others to choose from as well, like the Acetone, the Hohner Symphonic, and the totally groovy Gibson Kalamazoo, organ of choice for Ray Manzarek of the Doors.

The classic sound of these organs, especially the Vox, made somewhat of a comeback during the "New Wave" era of the late seventies and early eighties, thanks to people like Elvis Costello and the B-52s, prime examples being "Pump It Up" and "Rock Lobster", respectively. This sound is still popular today in "Tex-Mex" bands, like the Texas Tornados.

In the not-so-portable category of organs, the overwhelming favourite was the mighty (and mighty heavy) Hammond, in its many different incarnations, including the L100, M100, A100, M3, C3 and by far the most popular, the legendary B3 (the one with the legs). Almost always, these were played through the equally legendary Leslie rotating speakers. One notable exception was John Lord of Deep Purple, who chose to play his C3 through a twin Marshall stack, with truly frightening results.

One particularly noteworthy example of the non-Hammond variety of not-so-portables was the Lowrey organ used by Garth Hudson of The Band, in their early recordings. These sounds and the way he used them still impress me for their sheer uniqueness. Check out *Music From Big Pink*, if you can find a copy — it's a rare gem.

These classic organs can be a great deal of fun to play, and a wonderful source of unusual sounds, but owning one is a lot like owning a vintage car — parts and servicing can be hard to come by as well as expensive. There are a number of fine new keyboards and MIDI modules that are capable of recreating these sounds in a more-or-less realistic manner, however, real die-hard Hammond jockeys will tell you that they play differently (and usually harder) on a real Hammond. It's an attitude, like the attitude you get when you get behind the wheel of a '59 Cadillac with the top down.

Now that you're plugged in and ready to rock, what happens now?

Organ playing in popular music over the past twenty-five years or so has run the gamut from the sublime ("Whiter Shade of Pale") to the wildly excessive (virtually anything by Keith Emerson, Rick Wakeman or Patrick Moraz in the seventies), to the downright funky (anything that Art Neville or Billy Preston played on).

As far as the type of organ sound I choose for a particular song, the two main factors I consider are what the rest of the band is doing rhythmically, and where their instruments are in the frequency range. If the guitarist, for instance, is playing something really bright and rhythmical, I will usually go for a smooth pad with a warm transparent kind of sound. Any of the old records by Booker T. and the M.G.s demonstrates the natural affinity between a Hammond organ and a Fender Telecaster.

In Rhythm and Blues music, quite often the organ serves the same purpose as a horn section, by accentuating passages with chord stabs. (ie: "Shotgun", by Junior Walker and the All-Stars.) In much early reggae music, the role of the organ was to provide both a rhythmical pulse, and to fill the space between the extreme bass and the usually bright-sounding guitar. The 1972 soundtrack album, *The Harder They Come*, is chock full of classic reggae organ.

## The VITAL ORGANS OF ROCK

Sometimes, especially in heavier rock music, the organ and guitar will double each other to create particularly huge and nasty riffs, as can be heard in the ever-delightful "Smoke on the Water", by Deep Purple. Another technique, which requires very little in the way of actual musical talent but is guaranteed to impress an audience, is the one involving using the organ as a percussion instrument, slapping and pounding the keys in wild abandon. To pull this off convincingly, you need a strong keyboard stand (if it's not a Hammond), and above all, you have to look cool. One of my favourite solos of this type was the one that Goldie McJohn flailed out on Steppenwolf's "Magic Carpet Ride".

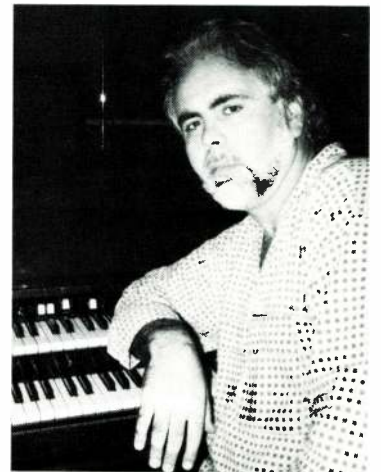
In a recording situation, quite often, organ tracks are an afterthought, put on last to fill out or fatten a track. Such was the case when Ian Thomas called upon me to play some Hammond tracks on the *What We Do* album by the Boomers. Since there was already some pretty involved interplay between the guitar tracks and not a whole lot of time, I had to approach the tunes cautiously and intuitively. Most of the tracks were done in one or two takes, with only a rough chord chart as a guide, and it worked very well. When the pressure's on, it's best to rely on your musical instincts. Sometimes too much thinking can interfere with the creative process.

In situations where you only get one organ track, usually you have to combine several different techniques and tonal changes. There is a new approach to recording organ tracks, involving layering different parts, using different tones, Leslie speeds, etc., and then mixing it all together, which I first heard on the *Storyville* album by Robbie Robertson. When I was called to play some organ tracks on the last Lava Hay album, Bill Dillon, the producer, used the same technique. I played several wildly different tracks, which were mixed together in a truly unique way.

Organs can, at their best, be the musical glue that holds everything else together, and I've always felt that learning things off of records is a great way of learning the basics and nuances of the instrument. And the bottom line always seems to be that if something sounds and feels right, then it probably is right.

Oh yeah, and if you end up buying a real B3, don't call me to help you move it.

*Toronto-based Denis Keldie has played and recorded with a diverse range of artists including Etta James, The Lincolns, Lava Hay, Ian Thomas and the Boomers and Crowbar. He is currently recording with Danny Brooks and The Band's On Fire.*



# Explore the UNORTHODOX

I have been asked on numerous occasions, who inspires me to play the bass in such an unorthodox fashion. The music is out there, but it's not being played on the bass guitar.

There are no rules. If you like a particular piano piece, adapt it to the instrument of your choice. The more likely the instrument, the more interesting it sounds. Go where no man has ever gone before... play "Hell's Bells" on a harpsichord or "Tiptoe Through The Tulips" on the tuba. Who says you can't?

The instrument of my choice just happened to be the bass. My inspiration comes from classical, contemporary, jazz and popular culture. I don't think I've ever tried to pick up other bassists' licks, I find that fully orchestrated pieces are more challenging to tackle.

I recently recorded the theme from *The*

*Simpsons* (which will appear on my third album due to be released Dec. '92). With its galloping tempo and multiple voices, it was a challenge — but a lot of fun.

The bass instrument, for too long, has been viewed as an automatic "handicap". Due to the fact that generally basses have only 4 strings, most bassists are ecstatic if they can "sort-of" tackle a grade two piano piece — WHY? If we can send a man to the moon, then we can at least open our minds to a new and more in-depth approach to an unexplored instrument. It's time to remove the training wheels and try to balance alone out there, like our big brother the guitar. The bass is now a solo instrument.

I am often asked if I compose for a technique or devise a technique for the sake of the composition. The composition, for me, is the framework and the technique only helps me move from section to section with

fluidity and, if desired, maximum speed. On occasion, I will discover a cool technique that I just want to use everywhere, but thankfully, these pieces come together and almost write themselves, demanding new techniques at every turn.

Bassists always want to know which bass I use, and if it has any special features on it which make my technique easier. The Lado "Zapper" bass, which I helped to design, accommodates all my technical and sound requirements. I definitely require as straight a neck as possible. The string height must be consistent from the first fret to the twenty-fourth, and cross-string equality is essential, you don't want one note always dominant over the rest. I try to make my high end as powerful and prevalent as my low E. In certain pieces, you might want to build up emotion in the higher registers, using dynamics and vibrato and needing a

consistency from end to end. In pieces like "Mezcal" (on my second album *Mens Rea*) or "Playing With Pain" (from my first album, *Bass Symphony*) the consistency from high to low was crucial to get across the melody and accompaniment while maintaining the bottom end (all of which, at any moment can take the lead, or remain part of the accompaniment).

The sound of the bass is crucial for me. Just because it's called a "bass" doesn't mean you play with your EQ boosting the lows and the world's largest woofers blasting out notes. The bass instrument, with its natural overtones and abundant harmonics, make the potential for this instrument boundless. It doesn't matter what your playing style is, as long as you open your mind and allow your playing to evolve to your full potential. Don't let anyone tell you how or what a bass should sound or be played like. ■



MARKO SHARK

Adrian Davison is presently working on his third album due out this December. *Bass Symphony* and *Mens Rea*, (his first and second albums) and his *Instructional Video* are still available.

# FEELING THE BEAT

Most drummers know how difficult it is to put feeling into words. On one hand, you desire the articulation to be able to get across the spirit, the sweat, the "feeling" that occurs when your eyes are closed and you're drifting, riding on top of that sound like the smoothest train you've ever been on. And, on the other hand, you secretly don't want to, for fear of suddenly becoming too conscious of this thing you've been doing all your life as a drummer without really thinking about it.

The day will come, however (if it hasn't already), when you will have to answer to yourself about who you are. Perhaps it will happen when someone asks you what it is

you do, and you find yourself uttering those three words "I'm a musician", instead of "I'm a drummer".

Putting feeling into practice can be as difficult as putting it into words. When I sat down to write this column, it opened up a lot of thoughts on how I view what it is I do within the whole musical picture, and how the importance of "feel" makes the difference between my being a "drummer" and being a "musician". I've found that placing more emphasis on "feel" in your playing can be simply achieved by letting that goal become part of all the other things you must be conscious of in your drumming.

## FEELING WITH TIME

Time and time again (pardon the pun), you will be under the gun from the rest of your band members for either speeding up or slowing down. There are a few simple things I've learned that can really help in this area, and better enable you to "feel" the music.

First off, try to record every gig that you play on tape so that you can analyze your performance. When listening back, listen carefully to your meter, and try to figure out where it is that you are likely to take off or pull back. Is it in the solo sections, where everything is getting exciting, or are you taking off from the beginning of the song, leaving the vocalist sounding like an auctioneer?

There is a method that I use on stage which really helps a lot in achieving the right tempo. Before the song starts, sing the chorus to yourself (do this while people are clapping for the tune you've just finished). This should not only help your meter, but should also put you in the proper mindset for the piece. Relax!

It was an eye-opening experience for me to watch Tony Williams sit at his drumkit, quietly singing the head of each tune to himself before counting the band in — taking as much time as he wanted! Tony Williams is a moulder. He can take a piece of existing music and construct it into something so interesting by using dynamics and his incredible sense of feel; whereas other drummers would just play the time. Make sure your bass player knows how you are feeling the piece of music. It's amazing how many professional bands I see where the bass player and drummer have not done their homework and sound like they're in two different bands!

## FEELING BY EAR

I am as much amazed by speed metal drummers as I am by someone like Manu Katche's (Peter Gabriel) intricate melodic patterns. A wide variety of tastes help.

Listen to who you are playing with and try to bring out something in the song that will strengthen the composition as opposed to strengthening your biceps. Pretend that the song is complete without you. Then, if something is necessary from the drum kit — do it. People will be throwing the word "sensitive" at you in no time, and you'll soon be wishing you were in a metal band again. I find what helps a lot for me, particularly when working with a singer/songwriter as I often do, is the "hot potato" game. Keep a low volume time when there is singing, and accent in between the lines. It's very much akin to a great conversation — when someone is talking, don't interrupt.

## FEELING WITH GUTS

You can't buy it or learn it. Having guts means not being afraid to take chances. The best musicians in the world all took chances — it's one of the things that made them what they are. If you play it safe, yes, you'll probably get work . . . so what? You get work, and then you die. Explore that feeling in your gut when you've found something new and you're pushing your creative capabilities to the limit. Have a happy flight.

*P.S.: Do I have all these points down perfectly? If I did, I would switch occupations. Remember to enjoy the journey getting there!*

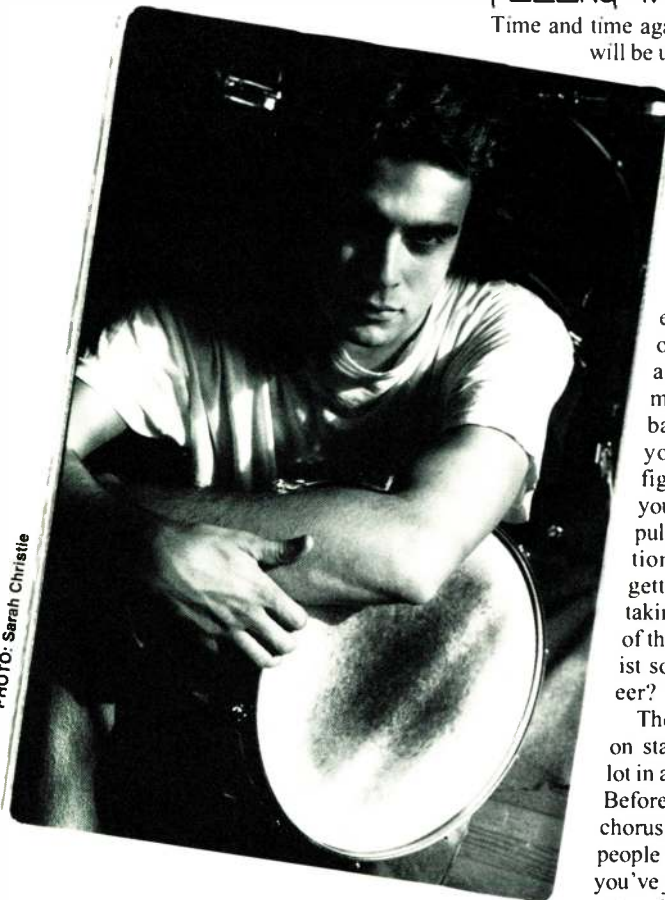


PHOTO: Sarah Christie

Andy Stochansky drums on Bob Wiseman's debut and followup albums. He is presently touring and recording with Meryn Cadell, Ken Myhr and The Full On Band and U.S. recording artist Ani DiFranco

# POSTURE

**Y**ou can probably effect the greatest change in your sound production, in the least amount of time, by working on your playing posture. The job we are asking our fragile little lips to do is much more strenuous than anything they were designed for. Therefore, we must use our bodies to help out as much as possible. We all know that we must support from the posterior up through the diaphragm, but it is all too easy to get lazy on this point, thus shifting unnecessary burden onto the chops. By always adopting the correct posture when playing, we will remind ourselves to maintain this essential support.

Proper posture is really a matter of common sense. When standing, the feet should be slightly spread, knees slightly bent, and the spine should not be bent backwards at a severe angle (this last fault can be found in many trumpet players). The elbows must be away from the body, and the horn should be held up at an angle approaching horizontal, though this will vary from player to player. It is safe to say that most developing trumpet players, and even many fine ones, reduce the resonance and certainly the projection of their sound by pointing the horn downwards. This is particularly prominent in classical players (who may develop it due to the common requirement of soft, isolated entrances).

Everyone's high school band director harped on the brass to get them to hold their horns up, and there is a good reason for this. Stand in front of a brass player and listen to the difference in sound when they point the horn down, or into the stand, and then with the bell pointed right at you. You will hear not only an increase in volume, but an improvement in sound quality and crispness of attack (to find the proper horn angle for you, see the exercise below).

The best sitting posture is a debatable issue, but I feel the best support is achieved by sitting on the edge of the chair, feet firmly on the floor, and with your back clear of the chair. When reaching for the high register, you should feel as if you are about to stand up from the chair, with the synchronous firming of the posterior and diaphragm. As with the standing posture, the elbows should be away from the body, and the horn should be held up.

*Chase Sanborn is a freelance trumpet player and teacher in Toronto. He has toured with Ray Charles, and is currently active as a jazz and/or lead trumpet player.*



## Exercise:

To determine the correct head and neck position, with the logical alteration of the horizontal angle for your horn, play a series of 25 Gs on the top of the staff. While playing them, slowly raise your head, along with your horn, from a downward pointing position, up past horizontal, to the point where the sound starts to choke up.

What you are doing in this exercise is opening and closing the throat aperture. Move the angle up and down until you can pinpoint the position where the sound is the most open. This is the proper angle for your horn (don't confuse the angle of your head and neck, which affects the throat aperture, with the pivot angle, wherein the horn itself must move slightly up and down to play different registers — in effect, transferring weight slightly onto the top or bottom lip to maintain the correct alignment of embouchure, teeth and jaw). You should make a habit of performing this exercise several times during the daily practice routine until this angle becomes second nature.

Once you have adopted the proper posture with your horn up, you must deal with the music stand, and position it or yourself, or both, in such a way that it will not interfere with your horn angle. My favourite position is to have the stand off to one side, leaving the horn free to project wherever I point it, and leaving both pages of the music unobstructed. This also lets me play right into the mic, if there is one. Unfortunately, there often isn't enough room to facilitate this position. In this case, I set the stand low, point the horn over it, and read down through my arms.

You will be putting in many hours of work trying to develop an open, freeblowing sound. Why let it get choked off by an obstructed throat, or buried in the music stand? One of the advantages of playing the trumpet is that you normally won't have to sit in front of one. (It can be a revelation when you do find yourself in front of other trumpets in the band. The sound is quite a bit more intense than in our normal comfortable position behind the mouthpiece! It may explain the slightly dazed look that can often be observed on the faces of trombone players.) Rest assured, however, that any discomfort felt by those in front of you will soon be replaced by admiration for the glorious sound emanating from your lips. Let them hear your princely call! ■

## REEDS & LIGATURES

The search for an "ideal" reed is endless, although an awareness of some basic principles can make the task more productive. It is a highly personal matter, and only the person who is to play it can make the final selection. It also takes experience to judge how a reed might sound to others, because vibrations not heard by another person are transmitted through the player's upper teeth to the ear.

There are variables which determine how a reed responds, such as the player's embouchure, the mouthpiece, humidity, or the type of ligature being used.

If a player takes in too little mouthpiece, the reed cannot vibrate fully, thereby giving a mush sound, while too much mouthpiece makes the reed hard to control, and may have a harsh sound. If the mouthpiece has a large tip opening, reeds have to be softer. Metal and hard rubber mouthpieces have a different response, although the sound can be very similar. Humidity also has an effect. When the air contains a lot of moisture, reeds tend to respond slower, whereas dry air tends to make the reed brighter and more responsive (this is one reason why I don't throw reeds away. If they don't work in the summer, they may work great in the winter when heating tends to dry out the air). Ligatures also have an effect, but I will discuss that later in this column.

The strength (a measurement of cane density) of reeds is marked on the box and the reed, but that can vary tremendously from reed to reed. Most brands are classified by strength: 1; 2; 3; 4; and 5 according to the resistance of the tip to bending as measured by a standard reed gauge, with number 1 being the softest and number 5 being the hardest. In addition, some brands use the designations "soft", "medium soft", "medium", "medium hard" and "hard". These measurements are made when the reed is dry and unplayed, and are only an indication of the resistance of the tip and not the general shape of the vamp. Each reed has its own characteristics as does a fingerprint. Even two reeds cut from the same piece of cane vary because the grain changes throughout the stalk of cane.

I recommend buying reeds by the box so you can compare and grade them yourself. I usually throw all the reeds from a new box into a bowl of water for about five minutes before I play them. Reed warping is caused by both an uneven grain and a lack of proper soaking, and it is not good to play on a warped reed as it has more of a tendency to split. I place the reeds on a piece of plate glass and then play each reed, good or bad, for two or three minutes. Reeds tend to last longer if not overplayed at first. I let them dry on the glass and do the same thing for the next three or four days. Then, I start picking the best reeds and putting them in order, good to bad. I usually polish the bottom of the reeds (the flat side that is against the mouthpiece), with wet/

dry sandpaper (400 grit).

This sandpaper works well wet or dry, but for this purpose, dry is fine. It is the black sandpaper used by auto body shops to smooth car finishes and can be purchased in any hardware store. I lay the sandpaper on glass and place a soaked reed (never work on dry or warped reeds) on the sandpaper. Place as many fingers on the reed as will fit and move the reed in a circular motion. It will pull at first, but as the bottom is polished, it will move freely. Be careful not to apply too much pressure on the tip of the reed.

Polishing the bottom of the reed makes it more responsive and can remove the airy or fuzzy sound left by the machines during reed production. The reed tends to warp after being played for awhile so polishing again will help this problem also. Do not use this method to try to make the reed softer, as the tip will become thin very rapidly and the reed will die.

I usually try to have four or five good reeds going all the time and I rotate them each time I play. The embouchure tends to alter itself to accommodate a reed as it gets softer, so I avoid this by rotating.

There are two main styles of reeds, American and French. The French style of reed has more cane left in the area of the reed known as the heart. This tends to give a darker sound, which may not be desired by jazz or pop players, but can certainly be overcome by using a smaller-chambered mouthpiece. It is important to use a brand of reed that matches the shape of the tip of your mouthpiece. The American style is quite flat across the heart, and tends to be brighter. I don't recommend to my students using the American style of reeds on the clarinet. There isn't enough heart in this style of reed to function in the high end of the clarinet, and the resulting sound will be harsh and brittle, if anything comes out at all. Sax players seem to like this style, mainly because of the brighter sound.

I have put together a list of reeds used by myself or players I have worked with. They are, in random order:

Rico	Mitchell Lurie
Rico Royal	Mitchell Lurie Premium
Roy Maier	Vandoren
LaVoz	Selmer
Brillhart	Olivieri (clarinet only)
Raffalt	Lamode
Hemke	

Rico offers a Plasti-cover reed. This reed is enclosed in a thin black plastic film which adds an extra bright edge to the sound and retards moisture absorption. Synthetic Reeds have been around for some time. Two I can think of are Brillhart Fibercane — made of a fibre plastic which resembles cane; and Beri — a clear plastic reed that works surprisingly well. Great for a doubler that has to pick up a horn that has been sitting for twenty minutes.

### Ligatures

This is of course, the device that holds the reed to the mouthpiece. It is important to use a ligature that fits the mouthpiece. Ligatures effect response — by the method it uses to seat the reed on the mouthpiece; and tone color — by the amount of contact it has with the reed and material it is made of.

It really varies with individual tastes. I don't care for cloth ligatures because I find the sound is dampened, although many players say it improves response. I think one of the better ones on the market for clarinet is the Bonade, and for saxophones, the Winslow.

I feel the more advanced players will notice the difference, whereas younger players are still getting the embouchure together and may not be sensitive enough to differentiate between ligatures.

One thing to remember is to never screw the ligature too tight — the reed needs only to be held in place. A tight ligature can cause the reed to warp. Some European players prefer using string to the traditional ligature. You won't find them putting the string on too tight!

A test to see if the reed is properly seated is to put your hand over the butt end of the mouthpiece and instead of blowing, apply suction on the reed and mouthpiece. The reed should stay closed against the mouthpiece for a few seconds, then open with a pop. This shows a good seal between the reed and mouthpiece. If this doesn't happen, the response will suffer. Try moving the reed around on the mouthpiece, and check it again. If this doesn't help, polish the bottom of the reed as described above. Usually this fixes the problem.

Here are a few ligatures that are popular. Try them out, you might hit on something that really completes the set-up you have been looking for:

Bonade (clarinet)	B.G.
Rovner	Charles Bay
Winslow	Vandoren
Harrison	Stanton
Sumner	David Hite
Lyben	Johnson
Gigliotti	Otto Link
Selmer (stock)	Portnoy
Leblanc (stock)	Berg Larson

*A Freelance musician in the Toronto/Hamilton area, Terry Basom has a BME from Kansas State University, and a Masters Degree in Woodwinds from North Texas State University. He is a full time faculty member in the Mohawk College Music Department in Hamilton, ON, and a part time teacher in the Music Department at McMaster University in Hamilton, ON.*





# IN THE **B**IG **P**ICTURE

**I**n this column, I'll touch on a few different vocal areas. First off, I'd like to talk about backing vocals. For many bands much like mine, backing vocals play a very large role in defining a sound, feel or direction. If you look back at some of the popular bands of the last few decades, you'll find that more than just a few of them used vocal harmonies as their "trademark" or "signature" sound.

Some bands that I grew up listening to which heavily influenced me were Queen, Boston, Eagles and Def Leppard. I've been recording seriously for about ten years. In that time, one of my main goals in life has been to achieve that "wall of vocal sound" (I know, what a goal in life — I should get out a little more!).

After logging many hours of experimentation in order to achieve that sound, I've come across a few things that may help you out. First is the importance of choosing your harmonies. Many people have the misconception that any and every song can have millions of harmonies plastered onto it. This may be true in theory, but every song should be treated differently. Backing vocals should be used to enhance a song (mainly a chorus) — not to spice up a lifeless melody or lyric. A good test that I, and many singer/songwriters use is to play and sing the song with just an acoustic guitar or piano, and judge the melody and music in this state. If what you're hearing sounds great, this proves that it stands up on its own and can only get better from there. After many hours of working out the rough edges of a song, you're now ready to put down the vocals.

Ask yourself if you've thought about the things that make a vocal work, or are you just singing a bunch of words to fill in the holes (like many of us have done at one time or another)? Does the vocal build nicely? Many times when singing a song, by the

end of the first verse I have sung my brains out, hit the highest note I could hit, totally exhausted the melody and squeezed in far too many words. As a song builds, the vocal should do the same. There's no point in blowing it all before the first chorus because you have nowhere to go from there. This style of singing can tend to be boring after a while for the listener.

Good dynamics are also a very important part of any song and vocal. The reason I keep talking about songwriting and singing in the same breath is because to me, they go hand in hand. You can't have one without the other if you expect the whole package to be viable.

There are some other things to think about in "the big picture". Are you singing the songs or playing the kind of music you can do best? So many times I hear a group or vocalist jumping on and off of any bandwagon of styles, in hopes of getting lucky and maybe having direction just fall out of the sky.

I'm not saying limit yourself to one kind of music or don't experiment — but I've seen so many people over the years that don't know what they want to do, and waste precious years on something they never wanted to be in the first place.

So, to a singer or artist, my best advice is to do whatever kind of music makes you happy, and don't ever change it for anyone but yourself. By doing this you'll either make it one day or you'll have had a great time trying. I think you'll see how the other approach has its drawbacks. There are so many negative things about the music industry that if you can't go out there every night and truly love what you're doing — I guarantee

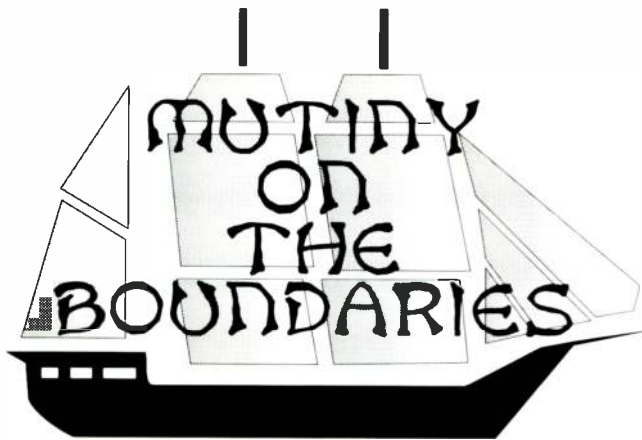
you won't be doing it for long (it sounds like I should be a rock psychiatrist!).

In the past, I've had many people ask me how to get a big "wall of vocal sound" when recording backups. There are no easy step-by-step instructions for anything this complicated. What I can tell you is that you don't need a million singers to achieve a large sound when doing a cluster of harmonies. I'll sing all the parts twice for a natural chorusing effect (this really thickens up the sound). Also, try to sound different from harmony to harmony. This adds other textures to the overall sound of the part, as opposed to it all sounding like one guy trying to sound like more. And if this doesn't work, get a million people together (pay them all union scale) and get them to scream on the count of four. Good luck!

Once again, I always like to remind people that what you've read here, or anywhere else for that matter, should not be taken as gospel. Music and the recording of it has far too many variables and eccentricities to even try to generalize it. So take the information that pertains to you — work with it, and hopefully it will work for you. ■



*Harry Hess is lead vocalist and principal songwriter for Harem Scarem. He runs his own 24 track studio where he records Harem Scarem and dozens of other artists. Harry's vocal chops can be heard on the band's debut, Lee Aaron's Some Girls Do album and countless demo recordings.*



This is the first of a two-part column on methods of structuring creative processes. Part one will deal with organizing the writer by setting concrete goals & directions (in a hypothetical project). Part two will deal with organizing the studio in a way which allows the creative writer to spend his time writing rather than wasting time dealing with technology.

A lot has been written lately about breaking through creative boundaries. The topic abounds in everything from music magazines to "Creative Cookery", with emphasis on ways to jolt oneself out of ruts by breaking out of personal boundaries into a new freedom. Well, I'd like to take a different stance on the issue: I'll discuss ways in which setting up boundaries can help enhance both your creativity and your productivity.

What is a boundary? A boundary is a set of limits, imposed either externally or internally. The limits imposed are either "hardware" physical limits, or "software" mental limits. "Software" limits may arise from deliberate, conscious choice (motivated from either internal or external sources), or they may be the result of totally unconscious assumptions that, in effect, do the choosing for you. Either way, the boundary sets limits as to what belongs within the chosen set of variables, with all else simply not belonging. This narrowing of the field of variables is a useful tool indeed to the creative individual.

When a person approaches an issue that requires a solution, such as creating the right music to a set of lyrics, there is an infinite range of potential paths that can be taken. There are so many possibilities that a person can be swamped with indecision. This is the infamous blank page syndrome, the writer's block, the moment that the beginning composer/artist dreads. The best way I know of proceeding from here is by recognizing that the problem in fact is the lack of boundaries. A set of boundaries allows one to focus his energies fully within an area that he has decided holds the best solution. This narrowing of focus is not a restriction of creativity, as you, yourself set the boundaries. It is instead, a way of maximizing your power by diffusing it absolutely as little as possible. This is not the time to be breaking boundaries, this is the time to be setting them up!

Let's assume that you have just been handed the script to *The Sandman*. It's your job to come up with the right musical approach to make the overall project as strong as it can be. It is also your job to come up with the finished tapes. The first thing you must do is set boundaries. Here's how:

1) Read the script, looking for emotions, setting, and any obvious clues as to style. Think; feel. Pay attention to any sound clues in the script as well, for they must coexist with the ambient sound. Visualize the lines being spoken (or sung) over different styles of music. Make up a list of possible approaches, excluding everything that you do not think worth considering. Repeat.

Following these directions will give you a "short list" of possible approaches to the "problem". The "short list" is a set of trial boundaries.

2) Decide which style or approach in your "short list" is the best. In my business, this is where I go and present my ideas to the director, who together with me decides on which direction to choose, a workable set of boundaries to work within. Of course, if I did not have to mesh my chosen approach with that of another artist, I could simply choose the approach that seemed best after shortening my list as far as I could. Either way, the first goal is to come up with a workable general approach to the problem in a set of boundaries that makes sense to work within. Once you have this, you can then make a great number of other decisions fairly quickly, through the setting up of a whole group of newer, subsidiary boundaries.

3) Look at the practical side of your task within the creative boundaries that you have set.

The first thing to do here is to choose your instruments. If your choice for *The Sandman* involved music ranging from symphonic to twisted voices and sounds from disassembled pianos, then you had better make sure that you can really get all of those instruments (and performers), or else you need new boundaries fast! Look at your deadlines. If you have chosen acoustic instruments, you must leave time for the performers' parts to be copied & arranged. If you do not have much time or budget, the best choice may be to use a mostly electronic score, perhaps enhanced with featured live instruments. This boundary must be set now, or you will be wasting your time considering options that are not within your final boundaries. If you need to hire people or rent equipment, make the arrangements now, as later you will not have time. If equipment rentals cannot be guaranteed for the time that you need them, then you must again set new boundaries, even returning all the way to step one if you need to. There is no point wasting time writing music for an orchestra that cannot be recorded on deadline. Grit your teeth and set new boundaries with a different ensemble that can do the job on time.

4) When this process is complete you are ready to begin composing your score.

Most composers today use some form of electronic assistance such as the ubiquitous MIDI-studio, even if only to allow them to hear draft versions of what will later be performed by live musicians. The problem with such a set-up is that it is easy to be distracted from the creative process by having to deal with technical matters. If you want a scraped piano sound next, you had better have one you can access in four seconds, or you will lose your concentration as you look for cables, sounds, or even equipment that you don't have! Computers, however, are very good at keeping track of things — provided they are given a set of very clear directions to start with. It is possible to set things up so that your set-up is working for you rather than against you, and that is what we'll cover next issue in "Creativity and the Cyborg". ■

*Doug Blackley is a soundscore composer and sound designer whose work has received numerous theatrical awards and nominations. He is based in Edmonton, AB.*





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# THE JEFF HEALEY

**F**ew bands can boast of such an intricate self-made infrastructure as The Jeff Healey Band. Since the band's inception at a 1985 jam at Grossman's Tavern in Toronto, the band has met with critical acclaim and has since gone on to sell over 3.5 million units world-wide with their first two releases, *See The Light* and *Hell To Pay* respectively. They've used that success to expand Forte Records, their own record and management company, and build their own private production facility — Forte Sound Studio. It is here The Jeff Healey Band's third release, entitled *Feel This*, was spawned.

All of The Jeff Healey Band members agree that tracking *Feel This* in their own studio (and abandoning the large scale corporate recording approach where dollars fly by the minute and botched takes cost), allowed the band the freedom to develop the project fully without time constraints. "Having our own production facility was just the next logical step in the development of The Jeff Healey Band as a whole," bassist Joe Rockman commented. Indeed, the JHB office began as an office in the corner of drummer/manager Tom Stephen's apartment and has now grown to a substantial consolidated organization in a single complex. "Part of the problem with the last two albums was getting a good place to hammer out ideas, record them, and mould them," Rockman continued, "We would have to jam out some ideas and zip into a studio to record them and get out again, always under the financial gun. At Forte Sound, we have the option of using the area as a recording, rehearsal, or pre-production area with plenty of

latitude to deal with schedule changes and technical problems. We mixed the album at Sounds Interchange, but we felt that the most vital part of the creative process should be done in privacy under our own roof. At first, we didn't have plans to record the album in our place — but the studio designer, Martin Pilchner of Pilchner and Associates, did a number of great sounding rooms here in the city and our place was putting out some great sounding demos of our work. It was simple to expand it that one step further to make it viable to record the album here."

The Jeff Healey Band is not the first Canadian band to develop a studio for their own use. Metalworks, a studio owned by the rockers Triumph, is another perfect example of a studio that began as a band-only establishment that went commercial. "What you hope for is that the money you dump into an album will return to you on the success of that album," Jeff said, "Instead of dumping money into someone else's studio, we dumped that money into our studio. The optimum work conditions we created contributed to a higher music quality and that's what sells records."

Memphis-based producer/engineer Joe Hardy became involved with the project, a large factor in the fresh sound of *Feel This*. He has worked previously with Z.Z. Top, Steve Earle, Tom Cochrane's latest success, and Colin James amongst others. Jeff commented on Hardy's involvement: "Joe (Hardy) had a special chemistry that integrated very well with all of us — actually helping to push us to a higher performance plateau. We were asked to contribute to a release called



# BAND

*The Last Temptation of Elvis* for the Prince's Trust while we were out on tour with Little Feat about three years ago. As it turned out, we had a day off in Memphis and our record company asked us to go to Ardent and we worked with Joe Hardy for the day, prior to any other Canadian band working with him. We enjoyed working with him, and had considered him to join us for the *Hell To Pay* album, but our schedules didn't match up. We had all but forgotten about him until Joe (Rockman) told us that Hardy was in town mixing something for the Leslie Spit Treeo, and suggested that we bring him by to check out the studio. We had such a great afternoon together; it was obvious that the chemistry was there. We approached him about a co-production situation and he was happy about it."

Tom interjected more about Hardy, "He's a master of song and instrument structure. Hardy made us look at arrangement relative to the song and each other more carefully than we ever have before. That resulted in JHB being more solid than ever before."

With respect to co-production, the band wished to experiment with more sophisticated production techniques but, at the same time, not diminish the importance of song quality. Healey cited that taking an arena rock route would make that occurrence a likely possibility (i.e.: make things so big and huge that the sound overwhelms the listener). "We tried to make things large," Healey commented, "but not exaggerated. I'll record guitar parts until there are no tracks left, given the opportunity. I've been doing that since I was a kid — you

know, ping-ponging back and forth on a two-track until the first track has vanished into a degenerated noise obscurity. But with *Feel This*, we managed to get a good blend of size and content thanks to the band, Joe (Hardy) and you (Richard Chycki).

"With all due respect to our past producers, any band with more than a half-ounce of musical integrity will input to a situation sufficiently to help guide the overall outcome. As we have matured, it became apparent that we had a fair bit to contribute to our own destiny and we should be acknowledged for that. Joe Hardy agreed."

Listening to the new record, songs like "My Baby's Lookin' Hot" and "Cruel Little Number" have a distinctly mainstream approach, dispelling the rumours of JHB being a blues band. The band maintains that they've always been diverse musically, but the blues aspect has always seemed to stick with them. Healey thinks that the band is about as close to the blues as Mozart is. *Hell To Pay* was a definite move in the opposite direction, i.e.: toward mainstream, albeit too much in retrospect says the band. *Feel This* is a blend of those two approaches. "We've taken advantage of our own personal and musical development since we came together as a band," Tom Stephen added, "and applied that to this record. This is our most collaborative effort to date. That includes input from within the band and our use of outside writers as well. The conditions under which we recorded were more comfortable than ever before, which reflects in our performance. With input from Tom Petty, Stevie Salas and Wil Jennings, combined with the

# JHB

available technology, *Feel This* is our most accessible, developed release to date."

Also featured on *Feel This* is the first appearance of Amanda Marshall, Forte Records' other signing. She was brought in to sing backgrounds on several cuts and is presently working on a release of her own. Healey had heard about her through an ex-girlfriend's sister-in-law. She was performing at Grossman's, coincidentally where JHB formed, on Healey's 24th birthday. The band went there to celebrate and were blown away by her performance. Joe Rockman approached the band about managing her when JHB was out on tour with Bonnie Raitt. They began working with Marshall on a consultation basis which eventually blossomed into a full scale management situation.

When asked of the band if the final product matched their vision of *Feel This* — a resounding "YES"! Jeff adds: "The three of us have really grown and we all have very different ways of approaching a situation, a different means to the same end, if you will. We all compromise in order for us to be fully satisfied. But like in any good marriage, it's not a solo project. It's the Jeff Healey Band, and band means exactly that."

## HANDS-ON INSIGHT INTO THE TRACKING OF FEEL THIS.

A quick explanation is in order here. I became involved with the Jeff Healey Band during the pre-production phase of the project as engineer. When Joe Hardy entered the scene to produce and engineer the album, I stayed on-staff as second engineer. As a result, I have a very close first-hand account of the technical goings-on behind the making of *Feel This*.

Forte Sound Studio presently centres around an Amek Angela 36"x 24" console and Studer A80 deck. For *Feel This*, a Studer D800-48 digital 48 track deck was brought in. The deck served

largely as a monitor console, with Neve and Raindirk strips processing the signal to tape. Monitors are SOTAs and NS-10s.

## DRUMS

Recording the drums proved to be a unique experience as they were recorded in the foyer of the Forte complex. This allowed us to capture the fabulous ambient characteristics of the oblong-shaped foyer, as well as the other rooms of the building



## THE BOYS AND THEIR

### JEFF HEALEY

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Les Paul custom - stock  
Gibson SG  
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Fred Gabersek Custom Guitar  
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Danelectro Tenor Guitar

Mesa/Boogie Mark IV combo  
Marshall 1959 Mark II Lead Head w/6550 tubes  
Marshall JTM45 Head (original) w/EL34s  
Marshall JCM800 100 watt Head w/EL34s

Marshall JMP 1959 100 watt Head w/EL34s  
Fender Bassman Re-issue  
Fender The Twin Combo  
Orpheum Combo  
Gibson Les Paul Jr. mini combo  
Fender 412 w/ Electro-Voice EV12LSII  
Marshall "Tall Boy" 412 w/Celestion G12Ms  
Marshall JCM800 412 Cabinet w/Celestion G12M70s  
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and . . . the elevator shaft. Close mics for drums included Sanken CU-41s, Sennheiser 421s, B&Ks, AKG 451s, Crown PZMs, and Shure 57s.



Miking up the elevator shaft gave us a very pipe-like ambience, especially effective for kick, with its thunderous subsonics.

The elevator was lowered to within six feet of the floor and the top half of a mic stand was gaffered to the underside steel supports

of the elevator. A Crown SASS dual PZM was attached to this stand. The elevator was powered back up and locked at the top of the shaft. Don't try this at home.

About 75 feet away from the kit, the kitchen U87s stole the show. Mostly tile, the polygon-shaped room provided a bright, well-diffused ambience. Campbell, the resident cook for the duration of the album and undisputed King of Garlic, had to cook out during drum tracking. These mics also proved useful for capturing slightly more esoteric sounds to tape including birds, leaf blowers, and the occasional Greek salad. Other ambience miking included a Sanken CU-44x at the top of the stair-

well, a dome-shaped, glass-filled area.

"I've never had such a great time as I did recording this album," Tom commented. "Recording at our place was so relaxing, and the technology we used gave us the confidence to really stretch our limits."

#### BASS

Rockman was isolated in the studio during the recording of the album. All of his tracks were cut with either of three Fender basses from his selection of seven. All tracks were recorded direct and via amp. The direct channel was through a tube buffered direct box, designed and built by yours truly. The Mesa/Boogie Mark IV powered 410 and 115 Fender boxes loaded with EV speakers. We miked them up with a tube 47 and Electro-Voice RE20.

Joe adds, "To work around Jeff's meaty guitar tracks and tenor guitar work, I opted for a thick, wide tone rather than a punchy, cutting track. We would have ended up interfering with one another and nobody would be happy. This way, I laid down a stronger foundation underneath everybody."

#### GUITAR

Loud. That's the first word that comes to mind when recalling Healey's formidable set-up for *Feel This*. Healey's guitar first ran through his effects pedals and then through the Korg A3. From the D.I.

## TOYS ... IN THE STUDIO

Ibanez TS10 Tube Screamer  
Boss CE5 Chorus  
Boss DD3 Digital Delay  
Boss PSM5 Effects Loop System  
DOD Wah/Volume Pedal  
MXR Noise Gate/Line Driver  
Sans Amp

#### JOE ROCKMAN

Fender "Mary Kay" Bass w/ Kubicki Electronics  
Fender Semi-Acoustic w/Piezo and Standard Pickups  
Fender "20 ton" Bass — Solid Rosewood Body w/ 59 Precision Neck  
Mesa/Boogie MK IV Combo

Richard Chycki Tube Direct Box  
Fender 410 cabinet w/EVs  
Fender 115 cabinet w/EV  
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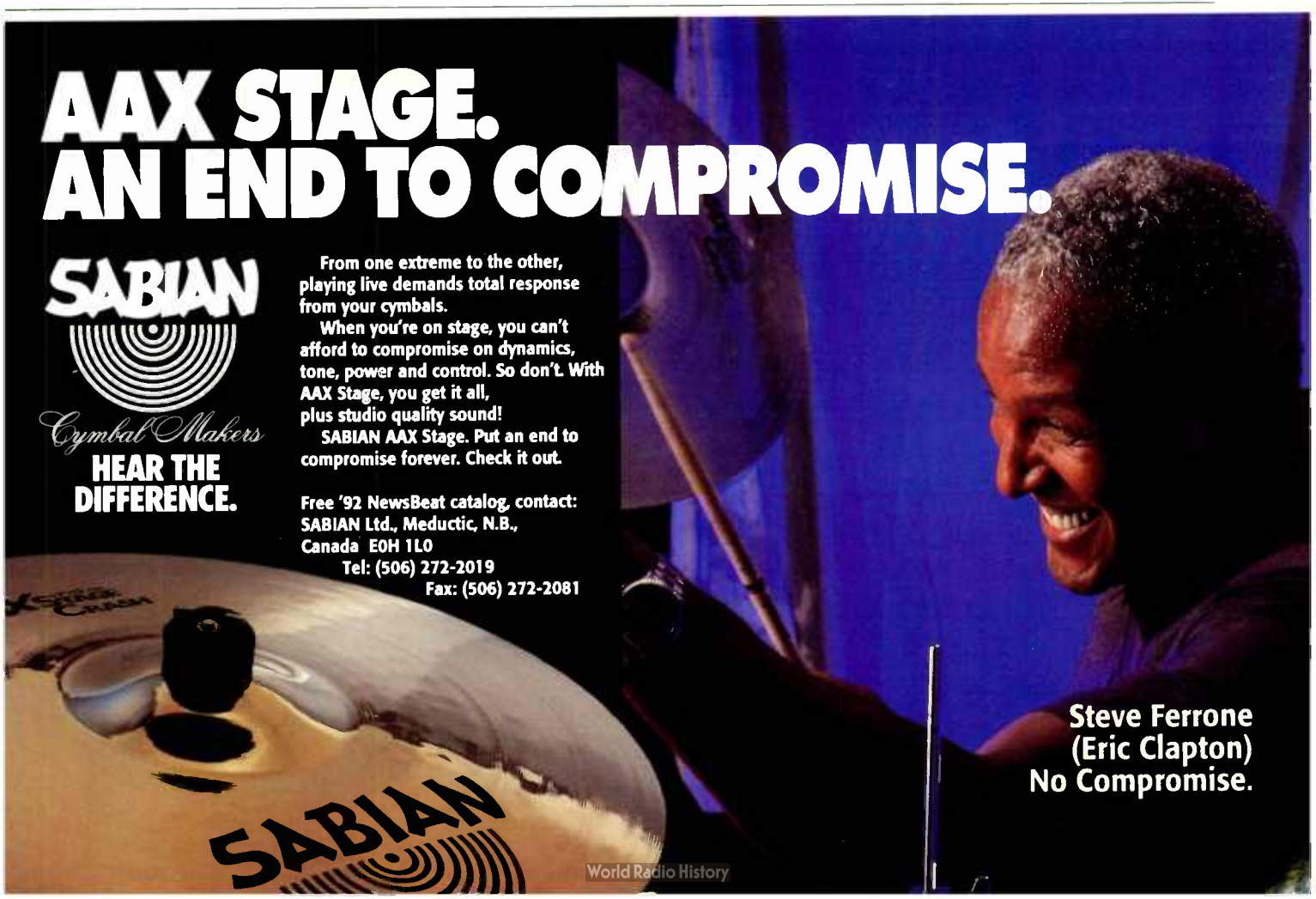
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# JHB

output of the A3, the signal was gated and split out to my Boogie

Mark IV, The Twin, the JTM45, the 1959 Mark II, and the Fender Bassman.

Other amps, as listed in Healey's setup, were substituted occasionally. The Mark IV also drove the Marshall Tall Boy cabinet for that extra low frequency response that Jeff really favours. We used an assortment of mics including Sennheiser 409s, 421s, Shure SM7s, Sanken CU-41s, and U87s to capture guitar tones to tape. Rockman occupied the studio while the band recorded live-off-the-floor bed tracks and likely would not have appreciated Healey's 300dB powerhouse chording. We resorted to a direct line to console connection via Healey's JCM800 amplifier and SE100 speaker emulator during the recording of guitar reference tracks.



At first, Jeff was somewhat edgy about the prospect of recording guitars away from his amplifiers in the control room. He likes the physical interface one gets

at high volume close by the amp with the guitar. At the same time, he hates to wear headphones and, to me, control room recording was the only logical answer. Did it work? Jeff answers: "I used to be adamant about maintaining physical proximity to my amps for that sustain. But you've since convinced me that hooking up a ton of amps loud enough will work and nothing, not even sealed walls, will stop it (laughs). In fact, the guitars sound better than they ever have before. I really enjoyed it. And the fact that I got a chance to not wear headphones and have a few laughs with Joe (Hardy) and you made things go real easy."

## VOCALS & ACOUSTIC GUITARS

A relatively simple setup, the CU-44x ran through a single Neve strip, then an Expressor and a little aural exciter. A U87 was substituted for omni-specific applications (the CU-44x is strictly cardioid).

## TRACKING

For those unfamiliar with the D800-48 deck, it has the ability to sample and fly up to four channels of audio simultaneously, totalling about 43 seconds. This gave us incredibly vast and efficient editing capabilities with all instruments and vocals.

To facilitate moving more than four tracks that had to remain in perfect sync,

it was necessary for me to jury rig a relay trigger mechanism inside the deck's remote that would be fired via the Mac and the TC 2290s switch outputs. Thank heaven for Radio Shack stores. Because Fortes' board is designed to handle a 24 channel deck, we constantly had to use rhythm track comp tracks and switch the multi-pin connectors around on the rear of the deck to access all 48 tracks. The album was recorded in two tracking/overdub rotations.

Because of the relative segregation of the band members, with no line of sight, it was necessary to interconnect them visually via a sophisticated video system. Tom had a pair of monitors to see both Jeff and Joe Rockman. Joe had a monitor to see Tom and added a strategically placed mirror to see both Jeff and Joe Hardy through the control room glass.

Finally, after all the mixing was done at Sounds Interchange Studio in Toronto, the band agreed that digital was the best way to go for its uncompromising sound quality and editing capabilities. To offset digital's ultra-linear frequency response and add that proverbial analog warmth, the masters were transferred across to 1/2", 30 ips analog and then reconverted back to digital, giving the listener the best of both worlds. ■

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ELECTRONICS



By Shauna Kennedy



The “Cinderella Story” of the Leslie Spit Treeo began back in 1990, when the songwriting team of Pat Langner, Laura Hubert and Jack Nichol森 quickly emerged as a talented, unpolished gem among the many street artists that peppered the vibrant Toronto music scene. Since being signed to Capitol-EMI, garnering a '91 Juno for Most Promising Group and having moderate success with their first release, *Don't Cry Too Hard*, the band has responded with a poignant, emotional sophomore effort, *Book of Rejection*.

*Book of Rejection* showcases the maturity of the band both in terms of their playing and songwriting. The album is starkly personal, but at the same time, the vibrant, hard-edged quality that took them from the street corner to the stage has endured.

“We learned a lot more recording our second album than we did with *Don't Cry Too Hard*,” says guitarist and vocalist Pat Langner. “We didn't know what to learn on the first one. I think with the first songs, we didn't write them with the intention of recording them.” The material from the Treeo's

first Capitol release had, for the most part, been written long before they were signed to the label, and allowed to develop without any involvement from a producer or studio through constant live performances on the street and in venues like Toronto's Sneaky Dee's.

Producer Chris Wardman, who captured their soaring vocal harmonies and the raw energy of the Treeo's material on *Don't Cry Too Hard*, continued on as producer for *Book of Rejection*. “I think that musically he (Chris) got the talent of the songs,” says Jack Nichol森 (guitars, dobro, mandolin and vocals). “In fact, he nailed some of them.” But the Treeo hopes that the future will see them co-producing their own material. “You hear horror stories about producers coming in and saying ‘You guys aren't playing on the record’, and we didn't want that,” offered lead vocalist Laura Hubert. “That's what we liked about working with Chris — he knew what everyone's capabilities were.” Wardman also contributed some of the additional guitars for the album, and brought in musicians Randy Bachman, who plays lead

# LESLIE SPIT TREEO

## Writing The Book of Rejection

guitar on the tracks "Redirected" and "In Your Eyes", and Jason Sniderman who provided keyboards for the album. The Treeo's sound was further augmented by bassist Frank Randazzo, who has played with the Treeo since before their signing, and drummer Joel Anderson, who recently departed to pursue other musical interests.

Although they had a great time working with engineer Joe Hardy, who recorded the beds at Toronto's Manta Eastern Sound Studios, and mixed the album material at Ardent Recordings (Memphis) and Sounds Interchange (Toronto), studio recording is still an area the Treeo are rather naive about. "Everything affects us creatively, and everything stops us creatively," says Hubert, "It's a lot more hassle actually, to sing a song with drums and bass — sometimes the song gets lost."

"We miss busking in the sense that we were on our own time," says Langner, who feels that their involvement with a major label has taken away the simplicity of just making music together. Hubert agrees that creatively, their lives as street entertainers

were comparatively easier. "No sound-checks, you know — if there's a sound problem, you take your cases and move down to Edward's Bookstore (known among many Toronto buskers as one of Queen St. West's acoustically-superior doorways)." She also noted that there is an element of atmosphere on the street that augments the performance. "Every space is different, and that affects how you play within that space."

While on the street, the challenge for the Treeo was to be heard above the traffic and noise — Nichol森 says that going into the studio presented a new set of challenges for them, but also uncovered a better understanding of what each individual's musical contributions were. "In the studio, you have to learn more about everyone else's playing, and how to play off of each other — so there are certain adjustments that have to be made."

*Book of Rejection* "appears to be a concept album," says Hubert, "and it does seem to have a certain emotional flow to it — and in that sense it is. But, at the same time, we were never planning that. I think the songs are darker in the sense that we're searching for different kinds of emotions, saying the unsayable."

Much of that emotional searching comes from the songwriters' experiences in theatre as actors and playwrights. In fact, *Book of Rejection* was presented as a play by the Augusta Company, a small theatre company in Toronto, prior to the album's release, featuring the Treeo in performance. "I think of theatre and performance and writing — any kind of creating — in the same way," says Langner, "It's the same experience, the same response. You write a song because of something, and you write a play because of some-

thing. Songs are just small plays." Hubert also believes that their thespian pursuits have strengthened their songwriting and performing abilities: "When you're acting you see, one of the things you have to learn is how to be able to draw from past experiences, or — if you don't have that experience — to imagine that experience. I suppose acting has helped in that way. You know, I can be singing a song straight, and then sing a line like 'sometimes I wish' (from the album track of the same name), and suddenly realize that I really, really wish — and that shows through, especially in a live situation. You have to be able to share it. For instance," offers Hubert, 'Book of Rejection' is a song that, well, you don't have to go very far to search for the motivation to sing that song."

Much of the lyrics contained in *Book of Rejection* seek to involve and ask questions of the listener by way of the tense that they are written in. "I think there's some theatrical influence in that too," says Langner, "because if it's 'I, I, I' on the stage — it's just a soliloquy. But if it's 'you', it's bouncing back and forth and the audience becomes a character too." Nichol森 offers that it also has much to do with the fact that their writing is always a collective effort: "There's three of us, so it's never an 'I' kind of thing."

Hubert feels that it's important to evoke some sort of reactionary response from the audience: "We're all big advocates of listener's rights, reader's rights, and you know — giving them the responsibility, the respect — which is sometimes like a game," she says, of the constant action/reaction between the musician and the audience. "In a club sometimes, you send people home deaf for two days. Is that just rock 'n' roll? That's what we're asking, 'how do you want to participate, what are your limitations? Let us know.' We always ask that of ourselves."

*Book of Rejection* busts through some of those limitations with some strong statements contained in the track entitled "She's A Slut". Touching upon the song opened a floodgate of insight from the band. "Initially, Capitol was really, really nervous about it," says Hubert, "but then they went 'Hey, you know what? I finally get it!' The band feels very lucky to have their label behind them on this one. "I think after they saw the song presented within the context of some shows," added Langner, "they could see how the people responded to it."

"My mother doesn't like the song," continued Hubert, "because she doesn't like the word. She knows what I'm trying to say and she appreciates what I'm trying to do, but she's afraid of the controversy." The controversial word 'slut' has been opposed to in certain situations, including a concert at a football stadium in Acadia where the band were told that performing the song would violate their contract with the venue.

Lyricaly, says Hubert, the term is meant to represent much more than its literal translation. "I could have just as easily sung 'He's a corporate businessman', you know.

## LESLIE SPIT TREEO



There's so many levels to the song. It's not just about a lady of the night, it's about how we all 'sell' our skills and how we all 'slut' our services and how we all 'whore' our minds."

"If we'd intellectualized a little bit more," says Langner, "we could say that it wasn't a very intelligent choice of words for a song — it's a gut response. In terms of it being a 'successful song' that no one will have any problems with, it's not very intelligent, but that wasn't the point."

"And it is just one word," adds Nichol森, "that's the only word that they're objecting to. There's tons of words that surround that one word in the song, so why not get them all?"

Can such a base level of censorship on

music lyrics be so clearly defined? Langner points out that there are many songs containing no objectionable words that would be better deserving of that kind of evaluation. "We understand radio's hesitancy, but at the same time, we don't agree that there's any reason why that song can't be played when there are so many other songs that are victimizing women and are an accepted norm."

Langner notes that another 'shock factor' of the in-your-face lyrical impact of "She's A Slut" comes from the fact that it is sung by a woman. And Hubert's emotional and animated vocal performance intensifies that impact. "It's an important song live," she says, "it's effective, and it should be heard . . . it's empowering for us, as women, and it's also empowering I think for all of us as human beings. Right now, with the issues of sexism and feminism and violence against women coming to the surface of the news, everyone's a little nervous with what they say to each other. Men are afraid, because women are trying to find their way. What is harassment, and what is not? We have a tendency to cry 'Sexism!' because you have to say it out loud and point it out in order for it to be understandable and to identify it."

For Hubert, performing the song meant coming to terms with a personal incident that caused the song's creation.

"That song took a long time to surface. Now I can sing it — I think I waited long enough to be able to sing it with humour and sarcasm and make a point with it. Writing the song was a reaction. It wasn't a guy calling me a slut, it was another woman, and I really believe that some women don't help these issues either because we're so used to being in competition with each other and set up to mistrust each other."

Her delivery is mocking and arrogant. The lyric stings like a slap in the face. "A lot of people won't like hearing the word," predicts Hubert. "I don't like the word either, but everyone has memories about being called 'slut'. It's when women do it that it becomes a weapon. Once, this guy came up to me after a show in Buffalo and said, 'you know, it reminded me so much of living at home with my mom, and every time a girl would call she'd say: 'Oh, that slut so-and-so called. I don't want that little slut in the house', so you see, it comes from both sides. You can't point to these things and say 'guy's fault' or 'girl's fault'."

So does the Leslie Spit Treeo believe this song makes a difference? Says Hubert: "There's so much room for celebration and respect. I'm not trying to change the world here, but in my everyday life — with being in a band and being on stage, and my place in rock 'n' roll history — that song is really important."

"The whole point is — we started it. We trust each other, we help each other, we have something between us that is unique. We recognized it on the street. We're going to do something about this because it doesn't go away, it's not going away. But," she adds, "there's a little bit of change." ■

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# SLOAN

BY TIM ARSENAULT

PHOTOS: LAURA BOREALIS

**P**lease don't call Sloan the next Nirvana.

The members of Halifax's premiere alternative band practically beg you to lay off the comparisons to Olympia, Washington's — nay, the world's — favourite practitioners of tuneful noise.

For one thing, their hands are full just being Sloan. *Smear*, the band's Geffen Records debut, has just hit stores in Canada, with U.S. and U.K. releases slated for January. A teaser EP entitled *Peppermint* was released on the band's own Murderecords label this past summer, but a buzz has been swirling around the band for months. That accumulated burden is starting to take its toll.

"The last thing I want to see anymore is comparisons to Nirvana. We don't need that kind of weight on our shoulders, first of all, and it's just such an easy target," says drummer Andrew Scott, 24. "One time, I read in the paper that we sounded like the Sex Pistols. That's just such a base level of vocabulary," adds bassist Chris Murphy, 23.

Today's vocabulary lesson contains band names like Swervedriver and My Bloody Valentine, but Scott proudly points out that Sloan is following a lengthy tradition of Halifax-based alternative rock. It's just that this time, the rest of the country and a major record company have been paying attention.

"Halifax has had such a rich punk rock scene. We're part of the fifth generation of the Halifax music scene," says Scott, "But the industry here is so centred around Celtic or more mainstream music. The fact that we got a showcase at the East Coast Music Awards (in February 1992) shows that times are changing.

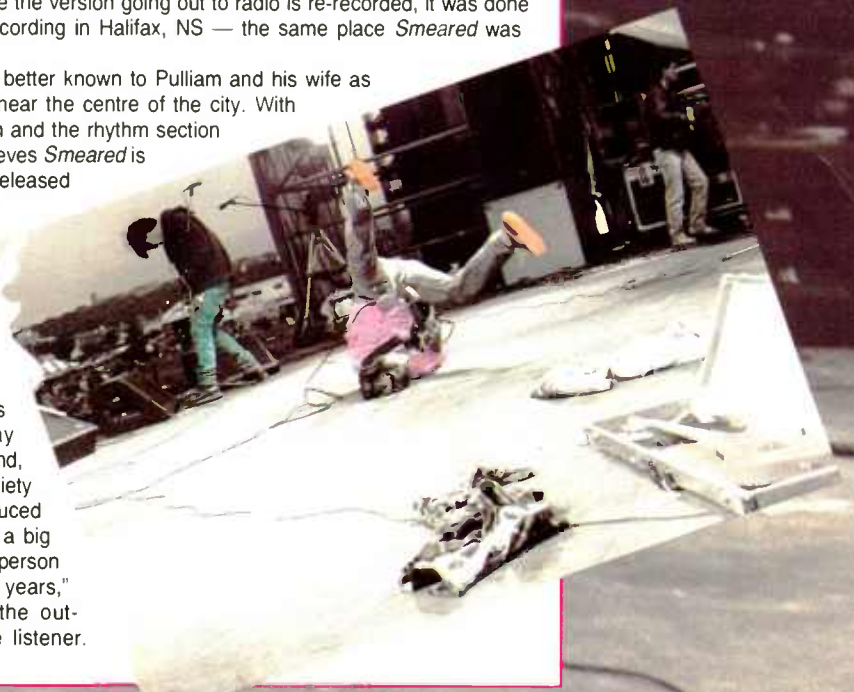
"It's totally timing for us. When we recorded our tape, we didn't expect for a second it would be picked up by any label. We just wanted to put it out ourselves, sell a couple of thousand copies and make our money back. It's just that the music industry's been turned on it's ass with Nirvana — its been said a million times. A&R guys are going berserk looking for holes in jeans, flannel shirts and loud guitars."

A few non-mainstream rock acts from the East Coast — Basic English, Jellyfishbabies and October Game, a band featuring a singer named Sarah McLachlan — took a stab at making a name for themselves on a larger scale in the '80s, but Sloan has the benefit of the timing Scott mentions, and the muscle and alternative marketing tactics of Geffen, a company that can say it's been there and done that with Nirvana, Sonic Youth and Teenage Fanclub.

*Hear and Now*, a 1991 compilation of Halifax bands sponsored by CKDU, Dalhousie University's campus radio station and Terry Pulliam of SoundMarket Recording, included Sloan's first release, "Underwhelmed", a ditty that's just been released nationally to radio in a re-recorded version. While the version going out to radio is re-recorded, it was done at Pulliam's SoundMarket Recording in Halifax, NS — the same place *Smear* was recorded in a matter of days.

SoundMarket Recording is better known to Pulliam and his wife as their home on a busy street near the centre of the city. With guitars recorded in a bedroom and the rhythm section in the living room, Pulliam believes *Smear* is one of the few internationally-released albums to be recorded in such a domestic setting. "We try to have a live feel by recording the rhythm section live. Then we do a lot of overdubs. We just build like crazy over top of that," Pulliam says.

The varied *Smear* sounds produced by guitarists Jay Ferguson and Patrick Pentland, both 23, are achieved in a variety of ways. Pulliam, who co-produced *Smear* and *Peppermint*, is a big fan of signal processing: "As a person who worked in radio for 10 years," says Pulliam, "I know it's the outrageous stuff that grabs the listener."





I've been a guitarist since I was a kid and I've got tons of gizmos here. It's like a toy room.

"And contrasts are important," adds Pulliam, "By using dynamics, you keep it interesting. It's the same thing with having a gritty sound up against a soft sound." Pulliam captures these moments with a Tascam MSR 16-track recorder with DBX noise reduction and a British-made Studiomaster 16 Mixdown Gold board. Guitars were usually recorded with the Shure SM57 mic or the new AKG D112. An AKG C414 was used for vocals. All these microphones, as well as a Sennheiser 421 and Yamaha MZ205 were used on the drums. Some of the guitar parts were even played on Pulliam's \$90 Sears Clearance Centre model!

Murphy says that Sloan went into the studio in December, 1991 to do as much recording as it could and with as many ideas as they could handle. Nine bed tracks were done in five hours for what would eventually be *Smeared*. "We decided to record it in about a day. Patrick didn't even know we were recording and didn't have any money to put into it. Patrick got promoted to guitar, I got demoted to bass. We just played all the songs we knew. I don't know who does this, but we didn't really think about concept or anything. Everybody was in one room, the bass done direct, the guitar amp upstairs and everybody listening on headphones. Then, whenever we could afford it, we'd go in and do overdubs. It was done so that at the East Coast Music Awards we could give out some tapes — and we got a really good reaction."

Scott, a powerhouse drummer, implies that Sloan's combination of songwriting smarts, melodic sense and intermeshed abrasive guitars comes from nowhere and everywhere. "It wasn't until we recorded our tape that we really tried to develop a sound. It has its derivatives. Our influences shine through as much as anybody else's, but I don't necessarily think that when we put it all together we sound like anybody in particular."

The band members feel Vancouver remixer David Ogilvie, whose credits include Skinny Puppy and Babes in Toyland, has taken their efforts to a more accomplished level with his work on the *Smeared* tapes in a Los Angeles studio. "The songs sound so much clearer and not as muffled," says Scott, "The biggest problem with *Peppermint* was probably the drums. It was recorded on half-inch tape with 16 tracks, every track pretty much used up on each song, and the first thing to go in that situation is the drums. So, when we remixed it, we bounced it from half-inch to two-inch and just spread the tracks out more. It let the tracks breathe, so it sounds a lot bigger."

Murphy says the band was fully participant in the intense mixing process. "Originally, we booked five days thinking that was exorbitant. But we did about a song-and-a-half a day. We'd do a mix and go out and listen to it in a car or on a small speaker just to see how it translated to different listening situations. It's just a process of elimination — this down, this up."

Ferguson much prefers the sound of *Smeared* to the EP: "*Peppermint* was just badly equalized . . ." he says — but if Pulliam had had his druthers, he would have left things a little dirtier: "They had a million dollars worth of gear available. They call it *Smeared*, but I think I would have smeared it a little more. It's a little crisp — but it's not that much different than the original."

Scott suggests that anybody wanting to truly get "smeared" should attend a Sloan gig. "We're loud and a

CANADA'S GRUNGE ROCKERS GET SMEARED

lot dirtier when we play live. Every time we play, you get a different show."

All Sloan songs so far have been credited to the group, although Murphy says this is mostly to allow for a friendly distribution of

## SLOAN

publishing royalties. "It gets collaborative. Somebody usually writes most of it, but then everybody gets to put in their two cents worth."

"I think the next album will be a lot different. We all write songs and the songs we write individually don't sound like anybody else's," says Scott, "The first tape is mostly Chris, but the next one will be everybody."

Ferguson, coincidentally wearing a Sonic Youth T-shirt, says he sometimes gets asked by guitar players about any weird tunings he may favour. He sounds disappointed with his own answer. "I don't know . . . we tune down to a low D sometimes. I saw Sonic Youth play and their set list shows a different guitar tuning for every song."

Murphy laments that much of the day for Sloan is now taken up with work not directly related to making music, regardless of tuning. "We were writing songs at a faster pace than we are now," he admits, "We have to do a lot more administrative stuff and learn a little bit about the business. Not that we want to be businessmen, but there is money changing hands, and although I don't care about making money, I do care about people making money

off of me."

But in a scene that one observer estimates might have about 60 bands of varying abilities, how was Sloan singled out for all this attention, including a bidding war between Nettwerk and Geffen? (Geffen tipped the scales when the company's Todd Sullivan heard the band in Vancouver on the advice of MCA Canada's A&R director Cameron Carpenter.) "I think us touring in the spring had a lot to do with it," Scott suggests, "We were playing a lot of cities and nobody had a clue who we were, really. I think word gets around from that. We did a live thing on MuchMusic when we were in Toronto at the beginning of May, which helped a lot in selling out our first show in Toronto."

"When we went to Vancouver, it was a big gamble and we lost all kinds of money doing it. But now you've got the mountain coming to Mohammed. People are coming here now," says Murphy.

Consistency might also have something to do with it. Bands on the Halifax scene often make more line-up changes than an injury-ridden sports team. "We were in that pattern for a while. We started in February of '91, but I was in Black Pool until November of that year. It was bizarre and it was political," recalls Murphy, "I had sort of been fooling around with Sloan — my attitude was sort of flippant."

Sloan, which took its name from the nickname of a friend, has also steered itself against all the hype and its evil twin — the backlash. "Anybody who's gained as much attention as we have in the last six months knows there's always going to be somebody who wants to burst your bubble," Scott predicts. "I'm sure there are people out there who are bitter and jealous — like I would be, a little bit, of somebody else's success. But I think there are a lot of people who want us to do well. A bad review is not going to ruin our careers. Everybody can't like everything. We've got a lot of good songs in us that we haven't even played yet. I think we'll be around for quite a while."

The members of Sloan hope that the attention they're getting will spill over to other East Coast acts. To an unprecedented extent, that's already happening. Seattle's Sub Pop record label has been scouting the city's two alternative clubs — the Double Deuce and the Flamingo — and the largest number ever of major record company talent scouts are expected to attend the 1993 East Coast Music Awards in Halifax this coming February.

Pulliam, who works with many other bands, sees Sloan being important to the whole scene. "They're the harbingers. I think there's two or three other bands that could do the same thing."

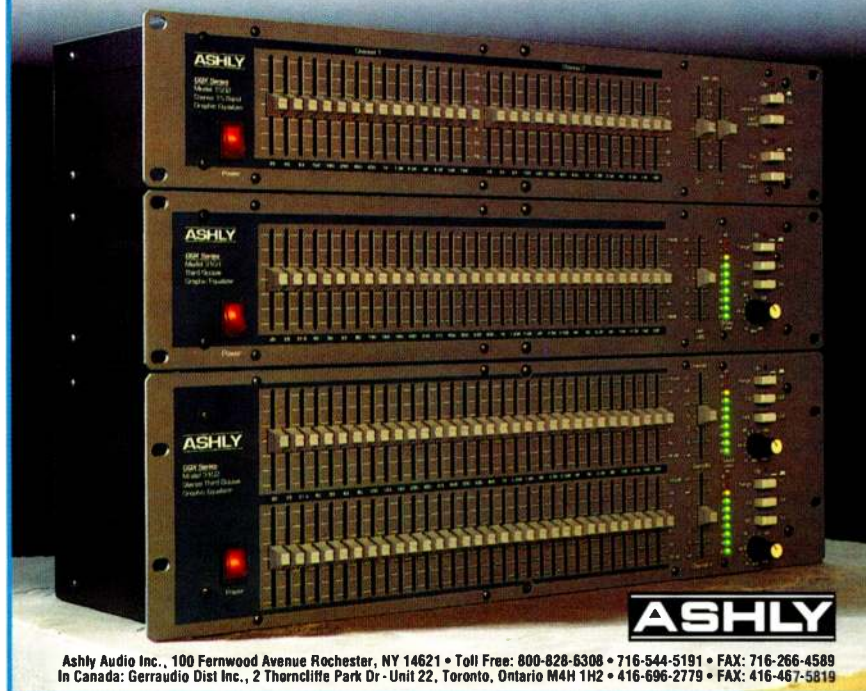
Murphy agrees, but also extends his hand in friendship to some of the traditional musicians. "There are people listening to what's happening on the East Coast — and not just the fiddle music. I identify with the fiddle music too, because it's got a real independent spirit. My hat goes off to people who are touring Nova Scotia.

"People are listening down here. Mission accomplished. We've already won."

*Tim Arsenault is an entertainment writer with the Chronicle-Herald and the Mail-Star in Halifax, NS.*

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# FUTUREBEAT

## A Round Table Discussion on The Future of Drumming

BY BARBARA STEWART

### PART ONE:

#### THE CHANGES THEY ARE IN TIMING

*Looking towards the future, how will performing change; how will studio work change?*

**Dave Clark:** "I believe that a live performance for a drummer at the turn of the century is going to be more and more visually-oriented, because we live in the "visual" generation. Visually appealing, since some people can't understand the kinaesthetic pleasure of the actual movements, or they don't understand the compositional elements, or perhaps they're just too young. From a studio point of view, the drummer will have to become more and more exact, and deliver better quality — the sound will have to be continuously refined.

"The day of the studio drummer is dying, and will continue to die. It's been proven for two reasons: first, the advent of new and mini-technologies which saw a burst of drum machines and samplers over the past few years; and, fundamentally more important, recording technology is now becoming accessible to the average person. This second point — that anyone can now access recording technology, will allow them to make recordings while experimenting in their basements or office. The day will come when people will no longer have to hire session musicians."

**Gregor Beresford:** "Performance drumming is very emotional, and you can be open to let yourself go; there's a real thing happening where you can be improvisational, whereas studio recording should be kept loose. There are two ways in which you can approach studio drumming: either really structured and having a set idea of what you want to do; or, to have a rough type of framework and try to come up with ideas on the spot. Sometimes this really works! It's a surprise, but it can work. When you let go of everything, things just pop into your head. You might find that letting the music flow into you helps your creativity. But you still have to be focused enough to hear the whole picture. Studio drumming also means that you have to be more precise, and be aware of how you hit the drum."

**Darrell Mayes:** "It's more fun to play in a studio. You are creating

CONTINUED . . .

# CONTRIBUTING DRUMMERS

something, like having a baby. You go into the studio, get together with some people, and the end result is a product that you can see, hold — and most importantly, feel.”

**Glenn Milchem:** “In the studio, versatility is really important — to be able to go in there and play your butt off from the moment you go in, until the moment you’re finished. It’s hard work — and a real task. You are always working under time constraints. A luxurious scenario is when we have four or five days to do a whole album, but I’ve also been in situations where I have one day to do the entire album. At any time, you have to be focused, intense and always remain cool. You put everything you have into it. And it’s the same live. You can’t lose your focus, whether you’re on stage or in the studio — you have to give 110% all the time. If you’re serious about drumming, then you have to be able to do what is expected of you. You have to be really dependable.”

**Bruce Mollet:** “The demands on the performing drummer are starting to mimic those of a studio drummer. It’s tougher to make a living.”

**Phil Whipper:** “In the studio, a drummer doesn’t have to depend so much on tuning, which can take up to several hours just to do properly. The drum sounds on a computer chip can be programmed into the trigger, and then you can play the drums you want, and get the sound you want, because it’s pre-recorded; So the drummers are not so dependent on different conditions that affect the way a drum sounds — no more long hours of tuning.”

## PART TWO: PIPE DREAMS

*What new technologies or developments would you like to see in the future to make your job easier?*

**Dave Clark:** “Environmentally-conscious equipment from drum manufacturers. Recyclable drum heads. Drummers go through a phenomenal amount of drum heads and sticks, and they are in no way recyclable. I cringe at the thought of throwing them out and contributing more garbage to our already garbage-infested world. There should be less packaging for drum equipment and some sort of financial incentive to recycle drum heads.”



### Gregor Beresford —

Gregor has been playing drums since he was seven, “so that means I’ve been at it for almost twenty years.” He’s been with the Bourbon Tabernacle Choir for over four years now, and loves every minute of it.



### Bruce Mollet —

Bruce is a very versatile drummer. Right now he’s part of Canada’s country giants, Prairie Oyster, but he’s also worked with Corey Hart, Ray Lyell and the Storm, Mary Margaret O’Hara, and Mindstorm, a heavy metal outfit.



### Phil Whipper —

Phil drums for West Coast retro-popsters Jho Nek Bhone. He has played the drums for over 10 years, and started out in classic form, on upside-down ice cream tubs.



### Darrell Mayes —

Darrell has been with the Colin James Band for six years. He started playing the drums at nine after he got a small kit for Christmas... and he’s never looked back. Right now, he’s working on Colin James’ latest release.



### Vince Ditrich —

Currently with Spirit of the West, Vince is a walking who's who of the West Coast music scene. He's played with everyone: BTO, Sue Medley, Doug and The Slugs and Rock & Hyde. He is a frequent contributor to *Canadian Musician*, and is the proud owner of the world's largest collection of boxer shorts.



### Glenn Milchem —

Glenn has played with Blue Rodeo since December 1991, and appears on the band's latest release, *Lost Together*. He's been playing drums for almost 20 years, and has appeared with the likes of Andy Curran, Change of Heart and Andrew Cash.

Vince Ditrich: "Equipment that moves itself. I'm just as much a furniture mover as I am a musician. My drum kit is tremendously heavy, bulky — and takes up a lot of space. It takes at least ten trips to the truck and back to load it. I get a sore back, I'm all sweaty and most importantly, I'm so exhausted after moving my drums around, I don't even feel like playing. Realistically, I would like to see synthetic percussion instruments that can be played musically as opposed to just the samples on the sampler. What I would like to see is more versatility with sampling, so it would sound like a real instrument. Changing the sound on the fly. A sampler is just a picture of a sound, it's not actually a sound. It doesn't have that extra dimension."

Darrell Mayes: "I would love to have a monitor small enough that it would fit in my ear. Right now I'm using a 6" x 8" box that gives me cowbell clicks, to monitor the click-track."

Glenn Milchem: "I'd like to see some gear that doesn't break! I'd like to find some cymbals that don't break, some sticks that don't break."

Bruce Moffet: "There's one thing that I would like to see manufactured. I know Ayotte has designed it, but I think it's still too expensive to make. There's a throw-off on a snare drum that enables the snares to be either on or off. Ayotte has designed a snare throw-off that is geared in such a way that, for example, if ON foley was at 12 o'clock and OFF foley was at 8 o'clock, you could set the lever in between 12 and 8, and it wouldn't move. Which would allow you to go from a tight snare drum to a loose snare drum sound, or anywhere in between, without making adjustments — with just a flick of the unit."

Nick Trehearne: "A comfortable drumstool! One that isn't made of vinyl, so my bum isn't soaking wet at the end of the night. And one that gives some type of support for my back. It seems so simple."

Phil Whipper: "A piece of equipment that allows you to tune drums properly, and faster! That's really the only thing that I'd like to see. Tuning is a very difficult process, which takes years and years of experience to do properly."

CONTINUED . . .



### Dave Clark —

Dave is 27 years old and has been playing the drums since he was 14. His parents bought him his first drum kit to keep him from his other aspirations: being either the Prime Minister or Bobby Orr. Now he's keeping time with the Rheostatics, and can be heard on their latest release, *Whale Music*.



### Nick Trehearne —

Nick is one of the West Coast's most promising young drummers, performing with one of the West Coast's most promising young bands, Spiral Jetty. The band recently won this year's Rocktoria concert, Victoria's respected "battle of the bands". Although only 18, Nick has been playing drums for eight years.

## PART THREE: FUTURE... PERFECT?

*What does the future hold for drummers? What skills are important to the drummer of the future?*

**Gregor Beresford:** "Drumming is becoming key to the whole sound of the song. Time is important. To be musical and to play other instruments as well is important; to understand the musical world and have a clear concept of other musicians. That's what's becoming more and more important to the drummer — to be sensitive to the whole."

**Dave Clark:** "The only definite statement you can make about the future is that equipment will cost more. Music and drumming will just reflect the culture: the chaos, dissonance — anything can and will be recorded. Music tends to pre-date the society it exists in. So the drummer will have to grasp this feeling and run with it. The most important element for the future of music, musicians and drummers, is that each and every one of us needs to maintain a great sense of humour. No kidding — to be a musician in Canada is very difficult, and humour is the key."

**Vince Ditrich:** "Strict time-keeping would become ever more important to drummers of the future; but also, it has always been necessary, and will continue to be so, that the most in-demand drummers are as stylistically versatile as possible. A lack of versatility will be pushed aside as technology expedites the creation of purer and more varied compositions, which are derived from a broader cultural base."

"The future's focus will be on simplicity, strict time-keeping and textural playing. As much as technology is taking over the world, there is still going to be a place for the actual, physical act of drumming. Something about drumming is so ancient and so primal that it will always remain. So the drummers who exist will have to learn how to play as exactly as the computers. Which is happening already — most of the successful drummers are accurate time-keepers."

**Darrell Mayes:** "It's important for drummers to be versatile enough to travel, which is a skill in itself. The lifestyle of a drummer — travelling, gigs, setting up and taking down

your drums — this is the mechanics of the job. Going on tour, being on call to do different sessions . . . so many times, other things get put on the back burner — relationships, your life. So a drummer should know how to travel well and be road-worthy. People skills are important, to be able to talk to people and carry yourself well, and be able to deal effectively with other musicians."

**Glenn Milchem:** "When the drum machine really started happening in the early '80s, I thought that everyone would have to learn to play like a drum machine. Drumming would be perfect, but also incredibly stiff. But, as it turned out, certain things have stayed the same. A drummer has to have good feel, has to have good time, has to play with a click-track in the studio as well as being able to push a band live. That won't change."

**Nick Trehearne:** "It's hard to think of the "future" of drumming without thinking of my own future. Lessons are perhaps the first thing on my agenda, I believe that lessons can help you feel a lot more at ease, so you know all the musical ins and outs of drumming. Lessons give you the background which helps your strength and confidence while drumming — and they help develop you technically and professionally."

"Now, in music, there's more of a supply and demand criteria. The songs are getting more polyrhythmic and sophisticated, and that makes it harder for the recreational drummer. I would like to be more versatile. In preparing myself as a drummer, I like to look at past musicians and drummers for guidance and inspiration."

**Phil Whipper:** "An attitude that I come across quite a bit is that people believe drummers don't have a sense of rhythm, melody, or experience with harmony. Because of that, drummers often get accused of not being musicians. Drummers today have to learn to be really diverse. I play everything from country to R&B, and original pop — I even try my hand at jazz."

**Bruce Mollet:** "I think that a more symbiotic relationship between humans and machines will become prevalent in the future of drummers' abilities. It's funny, some-



times records are just machines, and sometimes records are just players. And I see the future as a blending of the two. Drums in popular music are for the most part, time-keepers. The history of drumming has proved that it can be much more expressive and much more of a language than strictly time-keeping. Look at how drums were used for communication — it's a shame that drumming is relegated to the role of being strictly a time-keeper in popular music, because it can do so much more." ■

# FUTURE BEAT

## Product News



## MAPEX DRUM LINE



The Mapex drum line is comprised of four distinct series: the Orion Custom (professional maple series) and the Orion Studio (professional birch series); the Saturn Series (maple-mahogany-maple); the Mars Series (mahogany); and the Venus entry level sets.

Features offered include the Mapex "Freedom Lugs" (full length lugs mounted 4mm off the shell with only two contact points for maximum shell vibration and projection) and the "Zero Contact" tom mounts and floor tom leg mounts to remove any interference with shell resonance.

Mapex hardware features the "Pro Lok" system of adjustment that allows up to 170 lbs. of hand pressure with a single lever for fast and easy adjustment.

A full complement of snares is available from 3.5" piccolo to 8" deep shell (in maple, birch, brass or chrome) as well as rackmount systems and accessories in single or double tiered, straight or curved configurations.

For more information, contact: Gibson Music Canada Ltd., 25 Coronet Rd., #10A, Etobicoke, ON M8Z 2L8 (416) 239-6543, FAX (416) 239-6573.

## LATIN PERCUSSION DJEMBE



The LP Djembe is designed to be lighter in weight and easier to tune and maintain than the traditional djembe.

The shell is made from Siam Oak, a wood that is environmentally correct in that its supply is always being replenished. The LP Djembe's construction helps to eliminate cracking problems, unlike solid shells in general. The gracefully shaped shell has been designed to produce the big bass-toned sound that djembes are known for, yet be light in weight. The contour of the upper portion of the shell makes the instrument easy to place between the legs and play.

With traditional djembes, tuning the drum requires that a heater be used during performance, and changing the head is often complex. The LP Djembe, tuned using a shell-hugging traditional rim with scaled down side plates (similar to those used on congas), allows for easy maintenance and head replacement. The skin chosen for the instrument is thin enough to offer a wide range of percussive expression, yet durable enough for extended playing.

For more information, contact: Efkay Musical Instruments, 2165 46th Ave., LaSalle, PQ H8T 2P1 (514) 633-8877, FAX (514) 633-8872.

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## Product News



## SABIAN 12" B8 PRO CHINA SPLASH

Sabian has announced the addition of a 12" size to the recently introduced 8" and 10" line of B8 Pro China Splashes.

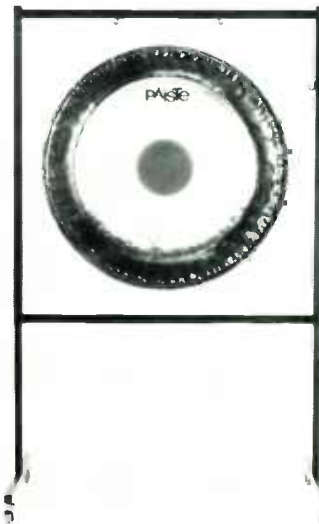
The China Splash is an upside down cymbal with fast, raw and cutting sound characteristics. Says Jose Rossy, formerly with Weather Report, currently with Robert Palmer: "The sound of the B8 Pro China Splash is very fast, 'trashy' and colourful."



The small size of the splash makes it easy to place in a set-up. It can also be mounted upside down on a cymbal, eliminating the need for another stand.

For more information, contact: Sabian Ltd., Meductic, NB E011 1L0 (506) 272-2019, FAX (506) 328-9697.

## PAISTE PLANET GONGS



Paiste has announced the creation of a completely new line of gongs: Paiste Planet Gongs.

The sound characteristic of Planet Gongs is comparable to that of Paiste's Symphonic Gongs in diameters 20"/51cm through 38"/96cm. Planet Gongs are tuned in conformity with the natural harmonic series based on orbital properties of the Earth, the Moon, the Sun, and the Planets according to calculations of Hans Cousto (a German Gnostic). Their sound colour is mysterious and unusual, according to the manufacturer.

States Robert Paiste, head of Paiste Sound Development, "with these gongs we not only expand our world of sounds, but we also open completely new possibilities and dimensions to human beings. Already, these gongs have been used in concerts and for the positive stimulation of the human body and psyche. Our transition to the 21st Century is marked by immense global problems; completely new ways of thinking will have to be devised and enacted to save our environment and well being. These gongs are a result and an expression of the 'Zeitgeist' that seeks these new ways of thinking and behaviour."

Planet Gongs are available in 14 models including Pluto (38"); Moon, synodic (26"); Platonic Year (32"); and Day, sidereal (28").

For more information, contact: Artep, 1435 St. Alexandre, #1160, Montreal, PQ H1A 2G4 (514) 842-1649.





## SHOGUN WHITE OAK STICKS

Shogun White Oak sticks are made from high quality Shira Kashi White Oak from Japan. The series consists of ten models available in both wood and nylon tip versions.

Shira Kashi Oak is a dense wood which provides added stick weight and power for full drum sound and strong sound projection. According to the manufacturer, the hardness of the oak wood tips makes cymbals sound brighter and provides excellent definition. Shogun sticks are computer matched for weight, pitch and density and feature a distinctive grain pattern.

For more information, contact: Vic Firth Inc., 323 Whitings Ave., #B, Dedham, MA 02026 (617) 326-3455, FAX (617) 326-1273.

## ACUPAD DRUM PADS



The Acupad system features Remo coated Ambassador drumheads, fully tensionable with standard six-lug, chromed steel rim configuration and piezo sensors which utilize transparent energy transfer technology to provide the feel and response of acoustic drums.

The pads deliver fully dynamic touch sensitivity with even response across the playing surface, and are fully compatible with all drum machines, modules and trigger interfaces. Pads mount with an internal indestructible steel mounting clamp which accepts standard 7/8" (22mm) tom arm and tightens with a drum key. Also included is a keyway for memory lock hardware.

The pads are available in black, white, electric blue, hot pink and special order mirror-chrome finishes.

For more information, contact: Acupad Systems, PO Box 488, Destin, FL 32540 (904) 654-7783, FAX (904) 837-0760.

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Special effects are finding increasing acceptance as both drummers and percussionists seek new and different sounds to augment their set-ups. In response, Sabian has introduced 'CD' Cymbal Discs, an inexpensive and easy to position alternative effects option.

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Cymbal Discs produce clear, bell-like sounds with tightly focused and cutting tonal qualities reminiscent of a pitched (but not tuned to a specific note) crotale. Available in 6", 8" and 10" sizes, they can be positioned singularly or in groups of three on special Sabian Cymbal Disc Holders, or mounted elsewhere within a drum or percussion set-up (i.e. atop a cymbal or clamped to a hi-hat rod) for use in a wide variety of creative accent, effect and rhythm applications.

For more information, contact: Sabian Ltd., Meductic, NB E0H 1L0 (506) 272-2019, FAX (506) 328-9697.

# Product News



## MEINL LIVE SOUND CYMBALS

Meinl Cymbals has introduced the Livesound line of cymbals.

The Livesound range is manufactured from high quality German Bronze, selected by Mr. Roland Meinl, and each cymbal bears his name. The range offers a 14" Classic or Soundwave Hi-hat, 14", 16" and 18" Crashes, a 12" Splash and a 20" Ride. Livesound marching band cymbals are available in 14", 15" and 16" matched pairs, complete with leather straps.

A special introductory set is offered consisting of a 14" pair of Classic Hi-hats, 18" Crash and 20" Ride packaged in a recyclable cardboard box with handle.

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

## REMO FALAMS K-SERIES DRUM HEADS

The Falams K-Series (Fabric Laminated System) heads combine the toughness of Kevlar with the stability and all-weather performance of Mylar film through Remo's patented lamination process.

The Kevlar material is bonded between two film layers to become totally waterproof and virtually indestructible, according to Rob Carson, marching percussion specialist. The 14" and 15" batters are available in Coated, Smooth White, Ebony or Natural super weight film, with or without Clear Dot reinforcement. Snare sides are available in Smooth White.

For more information, contact: Remo, Inc., 12804 Raymer St., North Hollywood, CA 91605 (818) 983-2600.

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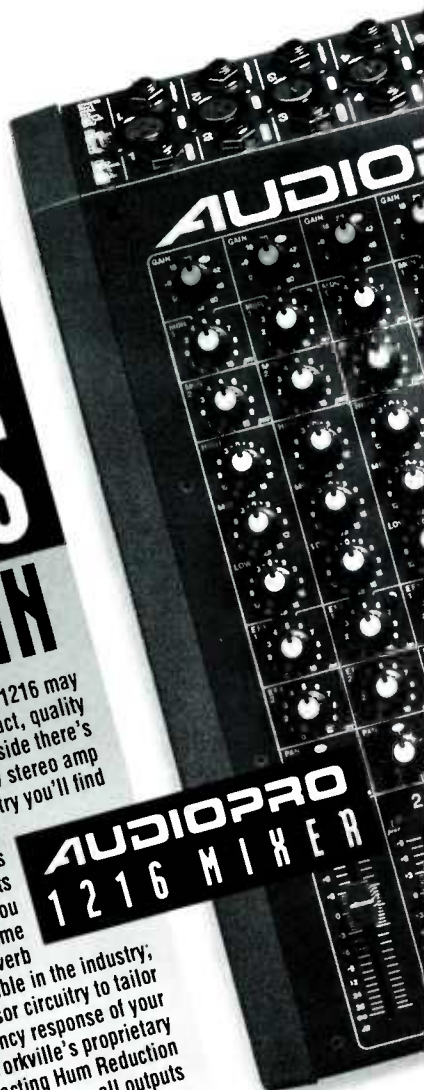
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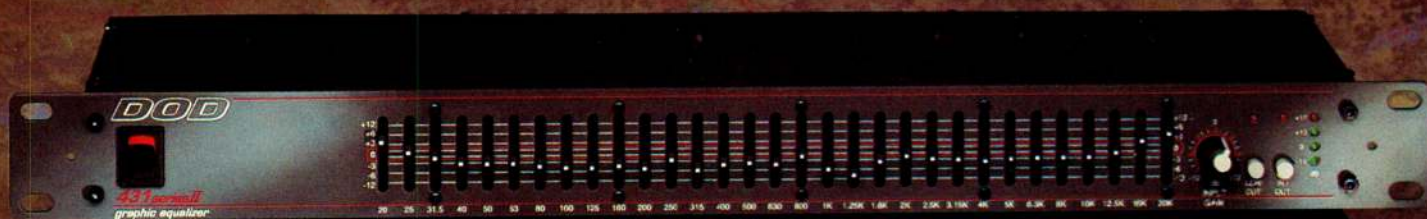
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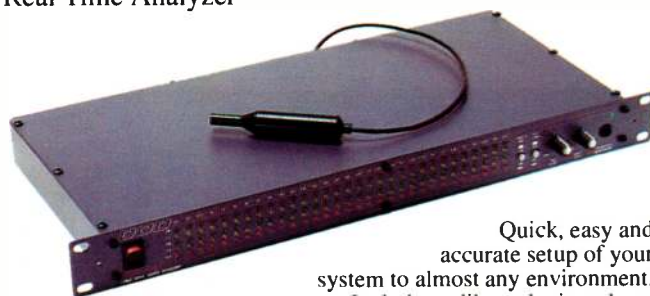
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# TO OR TO MIDI OR MIDI

**M**IDI technology has been considered a tool in aiding and enhancing the performance and compositions of musicians. But what happens when something goes wrong — especially after investing (a lot) in the latest and greatest MIDI “stuff”?

Throughout the year, I have written about music and MIDI, starting with a system overview and breaking down the component parts and touching upon them in subsequent columns. Hopefully, the columns have given an informative starting point in the terminology and ideas behind the use of MIDI. This article will touch upon the question of the necessity of MIDI, by looking at the pros and cons of some actual experiences of musicians using MIDI.

You can often get so caught up with all of the advancements in MIDI technology, that you forget the “music”. This is more evident when things go wrong.

A musician friend of mine I spoke with not too long ago, Mike (keyboards for Britton), had the unfortunate experience of meeting the MIDI “ghost”. This occurs when you’re on stage, and your zillion-dollar set-up goes belly up. Fortunately for Mike, he knew what to do, and resorted to manual control. A few days later, he plugged it all in and it worked fine. Hmm . . . how strange this MIDI can be! Not only keyboardists encounter these MIDI “ghosts”, guitarists may as well. Musician friend Chris Gauthier (a guitar session player) was once at a gig and found out that his MIDI-mapping had been inverted! Luckily, he managed to bypass all of his MIDI gear, continued to play, and no one knew the difference. Rob (keyboards for Harem Scarem) once phoned me from the East Coast and needed parts for his board. He fortunately had enough time for his “specialty” MIDI keyboard to be repaired.

My pals knew how to trouble-shoot, but it is amazing how dependent we get on a technology, and only when something goes wrong do we see how vulnerable we are (too bad MIDI software programs don’t offer a panic button!). I have met and spoken with many musicians who have been under the impression that the latest MIDI gear (software) is the be-all and end-all of creating that hit tune. Well, sorry, but this is not so. MIDI is a technology that is a tool, and only that! It is still the songwriter and performer that gives existence and purpose for MIDI — not the other way around. A studio owner/producer friend of mine, Avery, told me recently, “In my experiences in recording, MIDI is useful

for expanding the sound palette, but without a performance being there in the first place, no amount of hardware or software will save the song.”

With all of these multi-stack racks and keyboards, one can get lonely sitting behind all that MIDI gear, and that situation itself in turn, has the potential of stifling one’s performance. A musician friend Gregg (keyboards for The Life), has taken the approach of literally taking MIDI out front by using remote control. He finds that being able to have the freedom to roam the stage and groove really enhances his performance. The point is, that instead of having MIDI devices hindering the “performance” aspect of playing, it is possible (with a little ingenuity) to allow them to add life to it.

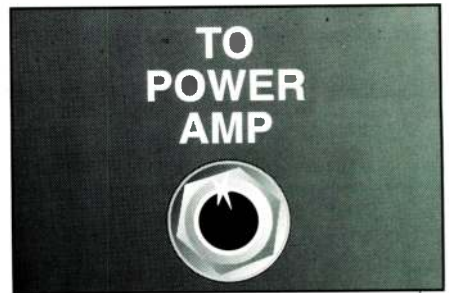
Being a MIDI consultant, I am always asked, “What’s the best system?” Perhaps the answer to that (or a better question) is, is MIDI a necessity in your musical endeavors and do you really need it? The reason why I am taking this approach or line of thinking, is that sometimes, the humanistic qualities of a performance can be greatly hindered by technology if not used in the correct way. In actual fact, if not used at all, the music’s integrity may well be preserved in a truer sense.

MIDI has taken us into a realm of confusing simplicity. When it works, we are in heaven, and when it doesn’t work — we want to blow it up! Tom, a Macintosh computer specialist/musician friend of mine says on this subject: “Technology of MIDI and computers in general is of such that it gives the performer a very powerful tool in expressing his or her emotions, but at the same time, the technology can distort a musician’s ability to be a ‘basic’ or ‘root’ musician (without that technology).”

The deciding factor on using MIDI still remains with the musician. Although MIDI allows us to do things quickly and easily, after all is said and done, music is the key — and the key to music is to enjoy it and have fun — with or without MIDI! ■



Paul Lau is a freelance MIDI consultant and musician in Toronto.



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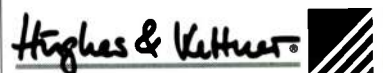
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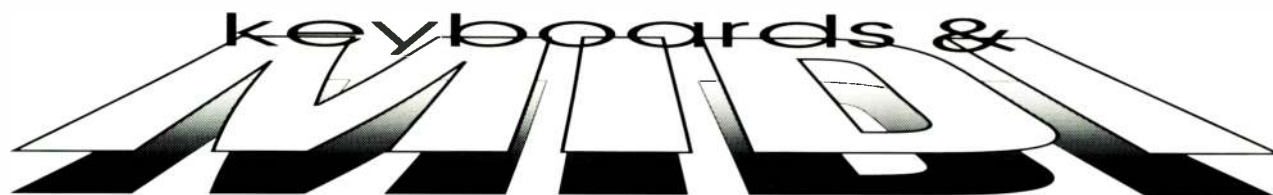
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I remember my first experience with multiple keyboard rigs and MIDI. I hadn't been working as a live sound engineer for very long, so I was a little unfamiliar with key set-ups. I had patched in all the key lines from top to bottom and began sound checking. I asked the keyboard player to give me his first keyboard. Receiving no signal, I proceeded to go through the motions of troubleshooting the problem.

Exhausting all the possible problems and still not getting a signal, I moved on to the next keyboard. Now, a new problem, signal on two channels. Scratching my head and becoming very distraught with all of this, I began discussing my problem with the keyboardist. Actually, I accused him of having faulty gear or tampering with the cables when I wasn't looking! He assured me that he wasn't and asked if I'd ever heard of MIDI? Trying not to look too stupid, I said "yes", even though I had no idea what he was talking about. Cluing into the fact that I was full of shit, he proceeded to fill me in. I was amazed to find out he could play one keyboard and use the sound of another or combinations of all of them. Feeling rather embarrassed, I apologized for threatening his life and continued on with my sound check.

Keyboards are probably the most complicated of all instruments. With technology advancing as fast as it does, it's probably the most costly of all instruments. With the introduction of sampling and sequencing, most earlier keyboards have quickly become obsolete.

With the ability to sequence, many groups have opted to eliminate the keyboard player and put the money towards other things — more elaborate equipment, or more likely, in the remaining members' pockets. The major downfall with sequencing is the drummer has to wear a set of headphones, which can become pretty annoying and uncomfortable after a while. He must also be able to play along with the click that only he hears. This requires a precise sense of timing. Another problem commonly experienced is that of the sequencer malfunctioning. This can be the result of many different things. Most commonly bad discs or low supply voltage causing the unit to shut down. Once this happens, the song is usually finished and it's on to another. Remember it's only a machine! I still like to see music played live by musicians.

I find keys probably the easiest instruments to make sound good but usually the most

difficult to mix. The biggest reason for this is the vast imbalance of the individual patches. With some work, the keyboardist can match most of the outputs so that the levels are fairly consistent. MIDI tends to complicate things a little if you're unfamiliar with the band. You can lose your mind trying to figure out what sound is coming from where. Keyboard players are usually stuffed into some corner in the back, so more times than not you'll never be able to see which keyboard he's playing either. Take advantage of your P.F.L. (pre fader listen) feature (if so equipped), to help you locate the key(s) being utilized. Knowing how to blend all the different signals is another difficulty. If you're unfamiliar with the songs, your best bet is to make yourself up a chart detailing the various changes. Another good thing to try, is to make a board tape of the show, and sit down with the keyboard player to make notes.

One other problem often faced is that of hums and buzzes. This is generally the result of ground loops caused by having too many audio grounds. This can usually be easily corrected by lifting the audio grounds on the direct boxes. At no time should you ever lift a hydro ground. This is both very illegal and could cause serious damage to the keyboards themselves. The use of a spike protector and/or a power conditioning module will help protect the electronics against damage caused by bad power often found in some of the older clubs.

I find that most technicians (myself included), from time to time will either have the keys too loud or not loud enough in the mix. It's very important to take the time to really listen to the original (in the case of covers) or sit down with the band and a live board tape to discuss the appropriate levels required in particular songs. Some songs will be keyboard dominant and others guitar.

During sound check, try to get as many different patches as possible and set your input gain to the loudest one. This will eliminate the possibility of distortion at the input stage in the event of a real strong patch. Watch out for low end subsonics. These will be very costly if you have to re-cone or replace low end drivers. If your mixer is equipped with a low end roll off (shelving button), I'd recommend using it. You'll still get an adequate amount of low end without chancing damage. If your keyboardist is using Moog Taurus pedals, I'd advise you to insert a compressor on that channel as well as the shelving feature.

With so many different sounds, it's very difficult to say how your rails will end up. I usually find it necessary to give a 3 to 6dB boost at 10 or 12 kHz to aerate brass or woodwind patches. A 3 to 6dB cut in the low mids (around 400 Hz) will help eliminate a lot of the woofiness in synth and piano patches. With so many different algorithms utilized in producing the various sounds, most flute parts will require boosting to cut, even if the output volume of the patch is at its fullest.

Very little effecting is needed on keys. If anything at all, I'll use a little reverb on some solo parts just to help it cut a little more and give it some ambience.

Several keyboard players will also handle the necessary percussion parts in songs via rhythm machines or samples. Be very careful with inexpensive machines used to create claps. The output volume for a clap is about 1/10th the output of a kick drum pad. One slip of a finger and you could be dodging speaker fragments!

Whenever possible, try to take an individual line for each keyboard rather than one line from a key submixer. You'll find yourself chasing that rail up and down forever trying to balance things out. It may seem simpler at first by running one line, but take the extra time if you have the available cabling and channels.

Keyboard players have to remember that the engineer's job is to keep a controlled constant mix of the entire band, not to become a volume pedal for you. Take a little time and work with your soundman to get the output of the individual patches as close as reasonably possible. It's a little bit of work but they'll love you for it. Remember, good sound is the key to success! ■

Al Craig is the owner/operator of The Ontario Institute of Live Sound Engineering and Recording, and A.C. Sound and Lighting, located in London, ON.



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# Like a Bump on an ANALOG ANALOG

**T**he speed and acceleration of the development of modern technology in recent years has been much like a steam engine going downhill with lots of coal and no brakes. There was a time in the early-mid sixties, when bands and producers couldn't believe the flexibility and sonic quality they were able to achieve with four-track 1" recorders. At present, I know more than a few musicians with eight-track on quarter-inch or cassette synced to their MIDI set-ups and a DAT recorder for mixing down. With such equipment, it is quite possible — and you won't be the first — to release a CD from your bedroom.

To illustrate this a little further, listen to any of The Doors' albums. Chances are, it was recorded on some variety of very expensive and state-of-the-art four-track. In the final stages of their career, technology may have progressed to eight-track 1" or maybe even 16-track 2". Meanwhile, many of the current albums you have in your collection have been recorded in the artists' or producer's "home studio" or some description of makeshift recording set-up. Jethro Tull's latest release, *Catfish Rising*, was partially recorded in Ian Anderson's basement studio, and the album sounds pretty damn good. The contents of his studio are not itemized in the credits, unfortunately, but, considering Debbie Gibson has a really big SSL board, a 24-track 2" recorder, and vintage tube vocal mics in her basement studio, I'd probably be scared to find out what Ian has. Yanni, Jim LaMarche, Tomita, Robert Fripp, Brian Eno and countless others have released good-sounding albums recorded in their modest home set-ups. Chrissy Steele's debut album, *Magnet to Steele*, was recorded — of all places — on a boat called Grand Marnier while boogieing down the Pacific Coast, and on Fostex equipment (what the hell was Brian MacLeod thinking?). When I listened to the live two-CD Uzeb release for the first time, I remember admiring the clarity and cleanliness of the recording. I checked the credits and was horrified to discover that they had

simply taken a 2-mix feed from the live board into a portable DAT recorder and called it an album. Nothing wrong with this, of course, but is the professional recording studio slowly going to hell in a wheelchair with my job as engineer shackled to the handlebars?

By far, the most common format for a studio is 24-track 2". Its popularity has remained because of its sound, reliability, and the fact that you can take your 2" tape anywhere in the world and find a comparable studio in which to continue the project in question. This universal acceptance does not work in the world of digital. Not only is a Mitsubishi 32-track digital or Sony 48-track digital room stupidly expensive, but the studio manager is laughing all the way to the bank because he knows that you'll be hard pressed to find another format-compatible room if you feel like taking your project elsewhere, so he knows he can charge you these exorbitant rates and get away with

it because . . . you're trapped! So, in order to remain accessible to the widest range of clientele, a 24-track 2" recorder is a pretty safe shot. Dolby SR is good for shutting up the "well, digital doesn't have any tape hiss" whiners. Hell, if it's going onto cassette, which is inherently noisier than rush-hour traffic in Manhattan, they're never going to hear the difference. So, anyway, that's what I've got. A 24-track 2" recorder, a nice 32-input console, monitors from hell, and lots of pretty coloured lights in my outboard effects racks.

Okay, so what? Lots of studios have that. Besides, Fostex and Tascam have achieved the ridiculous: table-top 24-track 1" recorders. Granted, they are definitely for The Rich Musician Only, because you need a console, mics, and outboard gear to go with it, but they are coming down in price even as I write this. And, realistically, a 24-track 1" Tascam is never going to sound anything like a 24-track 2" Studer, no matter what

*Eric Abrahams is Chief Engineer at Cherry Beach Sound in Toronto. Credits include Kim Mitchell, Trash Gallery, Roxy Lane and Russian Blue, among others.*





We're not one to throw stones. However, big mixers with zillions of knobs and switches may be impressive on stage for rock acts, but for broadcast work, post production, theatrical productions and similar applications, they're overkill –

## David vs. Goliath.

and probably just a little over budget.

When you need expandability, cost-effectiveness and a compact size consider the DCM-100 Digitally Controlled Mixer and MIXTAB™ Controller. The DCM-100 packs a full-featured, 8 stereo channels (16 input) mixer in a single rack space, complete with EQ, muting, panning, and more.

The DCM-100 isn't congested with knobs and switches. Instead, there's the MIXTAB human interface. This fully featured, compact remote controller (only 10 inches square) provides eight channels of hardware knobs, switches, and faders to control one or more DCM-100.

It works and feels like a traditional mixer. Editing the mix is a snap, thanks to LED null indicators that allow for easy level matching before you record new mixing moves. For easy automation, all DCM-100 parameters respond to the industry standard MIDI protocol.

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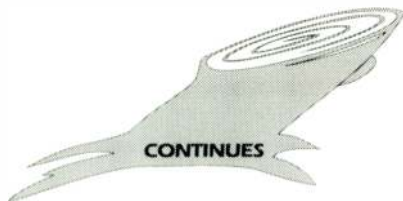
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# RECORDING



the salesman tells you.

The point is, having The World's Greatest 24-track Analog Studio ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH ANYMORE! There are too many 24-track studios out there, though most are, at best, mediocre and, at worst, too rancid to describe without getting myself into heaps of trouble. To stay on top, some new ideas and new technology must be implemented once in a while. This is not to say run out and spend all your money converting the whole studio to a digital format. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. Analog is far from dead, especially with Dolby SR and new tape formulations that are virtually noiseless. But that doesn't mean it couldn't use some help . . .

So, my boss and I put on our thinking caps to try and figure out how to get some fresh ideas happening and target a wider market before getting the steamroller treatment from the monster known as Consumer Affordable Technology. Discover — or better yet — create a new need in the recording market and fill it. Do it better than is

necessary before anyone else catches on to what the hell it is we're doing. We tossed ideas around, some of which were utterly ludicrous, and the rest just seemed that way. We eventually narrowed it down to three choices:

1) Relocate to Antarctica and grab a monopoly on all recording on the continent, particularly Department of Tourism advertising campaigns and naturalist recordings of copulating penguins.

2) Relocate to California and develop a new kind of floating floor that will absolutely guarantee a disturbance-free environment during recording sessions even if the entire state decides to move six feet to the left halfway through the session.

3) Expand the studio into other areas of the musicians' and recording market by offering new facilities and services that generally have not been implemented together in such a fashion. This would result in abilities and flexibility that otherwise could only be achieved by going to two or more outside facilities, and dealing with the inconvenience of transporting materials between the two, timing availabilities of the two unrelated facilities, technical miscommunication between studios, etc. By supplying all necessary services under one roof, all this time-consuming b.s. is avoided, and the product is achieved faster and better than it could otherwise.

After extensive debate, we decided to go with option 3. For options 1 and 2, Pizza Pizza delivery would have been too slow to satisfy musicians during late night recording sessions.

The pursuit of this idea has, thus far, resulted in three companies co-existing in our building: Cherry Beach Sound, a 24-track analog recording facility; Grooveline, a digital mixing, editing, and mastering suite; and Cherry Beach Rehearsal Studios, containing 24-hour access, individually secured and isolated rehearsal spaces. The eventual desired result of this idea has not been realized. There are thousands of square feet of real estate available for other companies wishing to join this entrepreneurship.

It just goes to show that with all this technology bouncing around, some of us still think that the best recording situation for many musicians can be realized by offering decent quality, necessary and accessible services, and not a lot of often unneeded "status quo" technology. Things to consider when you're looking for the right recording environment.

We bet you can't do this in your bedroom. And, if you can, you should be working for us or Quincy Jones. ■

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(Hal Blaine with David Goggin)

Ever wonder what it would be like to be the most recorded musician in popular music? This biography spotlights Hal Blaine, drummer extraordinaire, and his life experiences. His work with Phil Spector and the Wrecking Crew sessions, his touring experiences and other hit-making pressure sessions are amusingly revealed in this rare glimpse of a golden age.

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**Great Rock Drummers of the Sixties**

(Bob Cianci)

This book gives a retrospective on some of the greatest drummers behind the creation of rock music in the sixties. Presented in a biographical/photo format, the book also lets us know what's happened to these drummers. Some of the artists covered include: Keith Moon, Bobby Elliott, Sandy Nelson, Dino Danelli, Jerry Edmonton, Kenny Jones, Ringo Starr, Hal Blaine, Ginger Baker, Mitch Mitchell, Charlie Watts, and more.

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(Steve Savage)

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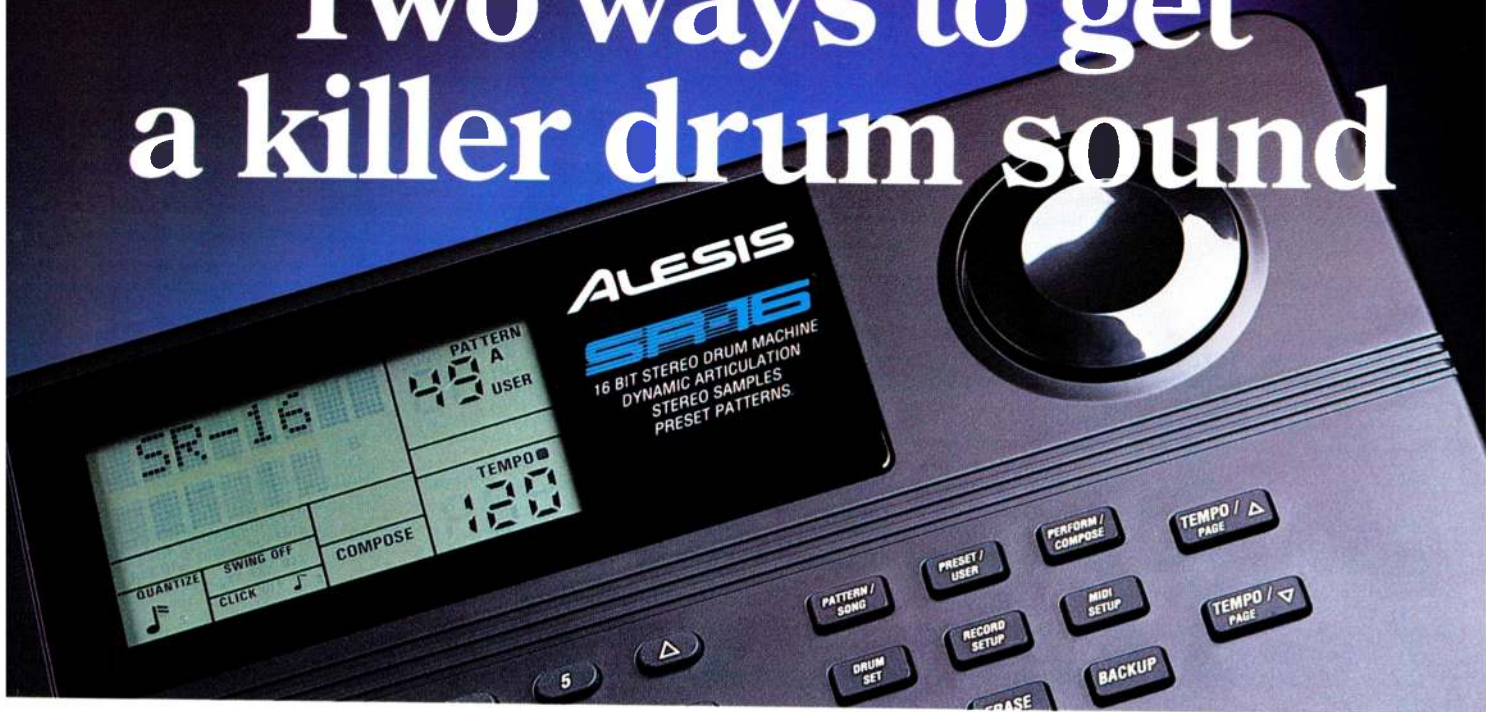
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# INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC PUBLISHING

**T**here are two ways to make money in the music industry if you are a songwriter: by selling beer or selling music.

Selling beer is done by playing in clubs. Your success is determined by the cash register receipts at the end of the evening.

Selling music is done by selling recorded product. Your success is measured by the amount of recorded product you sell.

The former is commonly known as the bar band. The latter is the recording artist. Most songwriters prefer the latter.

The first step you must take towards a recording career is to consider yourself a songwriter. Whether or not you can play an instrument, the expression of yourself in the form of a song is the art form or the product that is the backbone of the music industry. A common expression is: "it's the song that's the star". Many great songs are "written in the head" first. They are then transposed to instruments and paper later.

Not all artists are writers. Many successful artists rely on the compositions of others for their material. These are known as interpretive artists. Their artistry is in the interpretation of the music. However, under our system of copyright, it is the author, or the writer of the music, who is financially rewarded for the use (sales, radio airplay) of the product in the market. This is because the author owns the rights in the music and can sell it or license it accordingly. And to whom would you sell or license your song? To a publisher.

What does "publish" mean? To "publish" your song means "the issue of copies of the work to the public". Once you have written your song you have a musical work which is unpublished. Once you have had it performed in public (radio broadcast) or have issued copies of it to the public (selling recordings), you have a published work.

Copies of the musical work can be distributed in any form — by sheet music, piano rolls, song books, records, cassettes, DAT tapes, compact discs and any other material that can be used to support your musical composition.

Music publishing is easily understood when compared to publishing a book. It is conceptually easy to understand book publishing. The same principles apply to music publishing.

Book publishing is selling a book or a literary work. Music publishing is selling a song or a musical work. The objective is the same in both cases: to have the work "exploited" in the market. Copyright — the right to exploit the work solely by the owner — is of little value unless the author gives it to someone who has the resources to take the product and sell it in the market. This is the publisher.

The author of a book will take his or her book to the publisher. The author will grant the publisher the right to do what the Copyright Act gives the author the right to do — to reproduce the work in any material form.

The book publisher will make and sell copies of the book. The copies will be sold in retail outlets. The book publisher will administer the copies, keep track of sales and account to the author. For every copy sold, the author will receive a royalty. A royalty is a payment. It is a percentage of the sale price that is contractually determined between the publisher and the writer.

The book publisher may "exploit" the work in other ways. It may license the work to be adapted as a movie script for a film. There may be rights in a sequel. The publisher will explore all potential sources of revenue for the book. These "income streams" earn money for both the author and the publisher.

Music publishing works on the same principles. The publisher will ensure that copies are distributed in the market. The Publisher will sell the song to other potential users — for example, as movie scores, or commercials if appropriate. The music publisher relies on two main sources of revenue: mechanical income and performance income.

## MECHANICAL INCOME

What are "mechanicals?" Mechanicals mean mechanical income, from the sale of the product. A "mechanical" is the actual physical support system which holds the song — be it a piano roll or CD. It "supports" the song. The right to receive payment for each record sold is a copyright. It is granted to the owner of the copyright by the Copyright Act. For every record sold, there is a mechanical rate that must be paid to the publisher, who has been given the right to collect the mechanical royalty by the author. If that rate is five cents per song, and there are ten songs on the album, the mechanical rate is 50 cents for each album sold.

Record companies (the mechanical user of the copyright) pay the copyright owner (the writer, but usually publisher) the right to use the copyright holder's songs on the "mechanical device", such as records, tapes, and CDs. These are mechanical royalties. They are not to be confused with the royalties paid for retail sales of the record.

## PERFORMANCE INCOME

The Copyright Act gives the owner of the copyright the exclusive right "... in the case of a musical ... work, to communicate the work to the public by telecommunication ...".

The performing right is thus a right to be compensated when radio broadcasts your copyright, or when your copyright is performed in public.

You receive payment from airplay in Canada from SOCAN. SOCAN is a collective. Most songwriters are familiar with SOCAN. It collects royalties for performance of the song on behalf of all copyright owners. It distributes the royalties according to its internal formula based on use by the radio station.

## WHY COLLECTIVES COLLECT YOUR ROYALTIES

Why must a "collective" enforce your copyright this way? Simply, one composer cannot monitor the thousands of users in the world that may be using his or her song at any given time. It is impossible to enforce one's copyright on an individual basis. That is why a performing rights society, such as SOCAN, exists. It exercises copyright collectively. This is why it is called a collective.

The same principle applies to mechanical rights. If you wish to record a cover song, you must obtain a mechanical licence. In other words, while SOCAN governs the right to perform the song, you must also have the right to make and distribute copies (mechanical reproductions) of the song.

To obtain a mechanical licence in Canada, you may apply to the Canadian Musical Reproduction Rights Agency (CMRRA). If CMRRA does not represent the copyright owner, and therefore does not have the authority to licence that work, you must apply directly to the publisher or copyright owner for a licence to mechanically reproduce the work.



Martin Gladstone practices law in Toronto and is a member of the Toronto band The Acoustics.

## SUMMARY

Music publishing consist of two main sources of income: mechanical income and performance income. If you have a product on the market and you own the copyright, you will be paid a mechanical royalty for each unit sold, and a performance royalty each time your song is played on the radio. Collectives exercise your copyright on your behalf and collect and distribute copyright royalties to you. ■

P R O D U C T  
 N E W S

# GRIP-MASTER TREMOLOCK

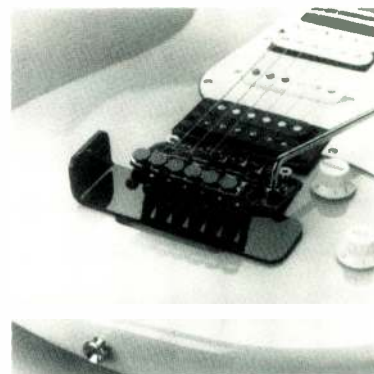
Grip-Master introduces Tremolock, a tool for keeping floating tremolo systems level while changing strings and cleaning or customizing your guitar.

Constructed from high-strength, engineered plastic, Tremolock features a bevelled surface and a non-skid, non-scratch rubber base-pad.

Once Tremolock is in place, the tremolo system cannot fall into its cavity. All six strings can be changed at once with no problems in re-tuning. Easy access is provided for cleaning, changing pick-ups, or customizing.

Tremolock is ideal for all players wanting to avoid time-consuming maintenance and costly set-up charges.

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



# TRACE ELLIOT TAB-100-15 COMBO



Trace Elliot have announced the official release of their latest combo for acoustic and upright bass.

The TAB-100-15 is a development of the popular TAB-100-12 combo and features a 15" kevlar speaker for players preferring a sound with a warmer low bass response. The unit features the same preamp as the original TAB-100.

Included are two independent channels with their own EQ trim controls, enabling the player to mix in the sound of a second piezo pick-up mounted on the fingerboard of the instrument to emphasize the attack of "slapped" notes if desired. Also featured are a five-band master EQ, a Pre-Shape facility, a notch filter to eliminate feedback and Trace Elliot's patented Dynamic Correction facility to preserve true acoustic tone.

The TAB-100-15 is available in either vinyl or natural wood finish and remains highly portable, measuring 430mm x 340mm x 310mm.

For more information, contact: Trace Elliot Limited, Galliford Rd., Maldon, Essex, CM9 7XD England 011-44621-851-851, FAX 001-44621-851-932.

# HUGHES & KETTNER TUBEMAN

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P R O D U C T  
N I W S

# KURZWEIL K2000R

The K2000R is a rackmountable stereo digital sampler/synthesizer that offers 8 MB of on-board sound ROM (expandable to 24 MB) and 16-bit sampling capabilities.

The K2000R's sampling input option offers a wide array of inputs including stereo analog, AES/EBU, SPDIF and optical. Sample rates supported are 48, 44.1, 32 and 29.14 kHz. The AES/EBU or SPDIF inputs are software controllable and can be used as digital outs.

The K2000R offers extensive MIDI capabilities. The unit can transmit on three MIDI channels and receive on 16. The K2000R has a stereo multi-effects processor that can produce effects including reverb, delay, chorus, flange, rotary simulation and EQ. The output section has ten analog outs, which include four stereo pairs (or eight individual outs) and a stereo master pair.

The unit offers two SCSI ports, allowing multiple units to be "daisy-chained" together and share common SCSI drives. Both internal and external drives are supported (a list of recommended internal drives is available), as well as the new SMDI standard which allows sample data to be transferred via the SCSI port rather than the MIDI port. Sample RAM can be expanded to 64 Meg by



using four 16 Meg SIMMs. Battery backed program RAM, used for loading and saving programs, set-ups and sequencing information is expandable to 768K.

For more information, contact: Young Chang (Piano) Canada Corp., 130 Royal Crest Ct., Markham, ON L3R 0A1 (416) 513-6240, FAX (416) 513-6252.

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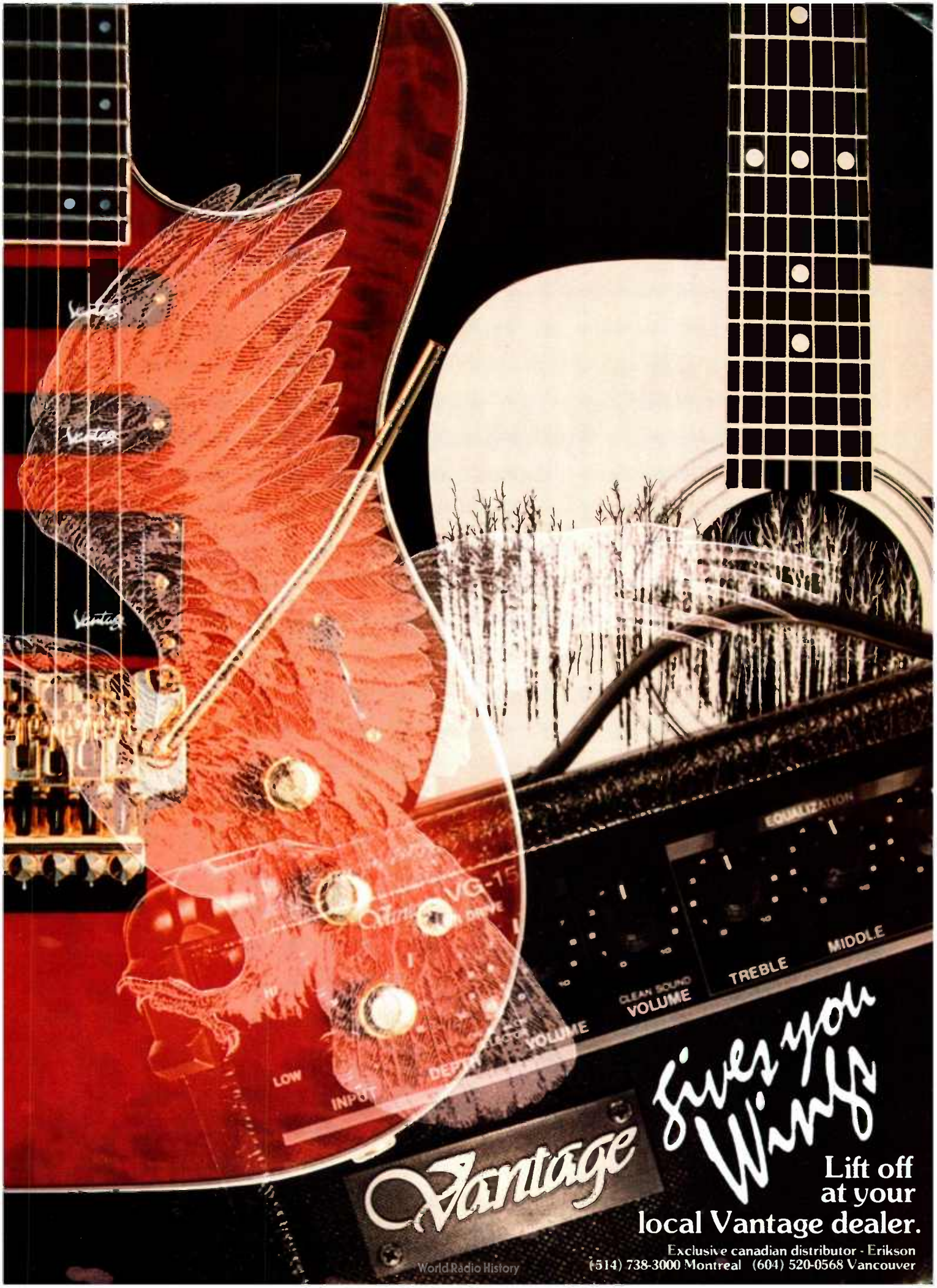
The Digitech RP-1 guitar effects controller/processor is a single foot-controlled unit that offers high-quality effects, user programmability and a MIDI controllable preamp processor.

The RP-1 has 23 different effects, with up to nine available at one time. The unit comes equipped with a total of 128 programs: 64 user-definable patches and 64 presets. Each patch and preset offers a programmable master volume and seven band graphic equalizer. In addition, the unit features a 20-bit VLSI, providing the guitarist with strong processing capabilities while maintaining transparent, natural sound. The RP-1 offers a 20 Hz-18 kHz bandwidth, combined with a 90dB signal-to-noise ratio and THD of less than 0.08%.

The RP-1 also functions as a preamp with a programmable speaker simulator for both live and studio applications. Three MIDI jacks, as well as effects send and return allow other pedals and effects to be used simultaneously. Both stereo and mono amplifier channels are offered. The unit is encased in a rugged steel chassis for protection. A super-twist LCD screen displays program titles and effects during play and parameters during programming. Program number and headroom are both displayed by LEDs.

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





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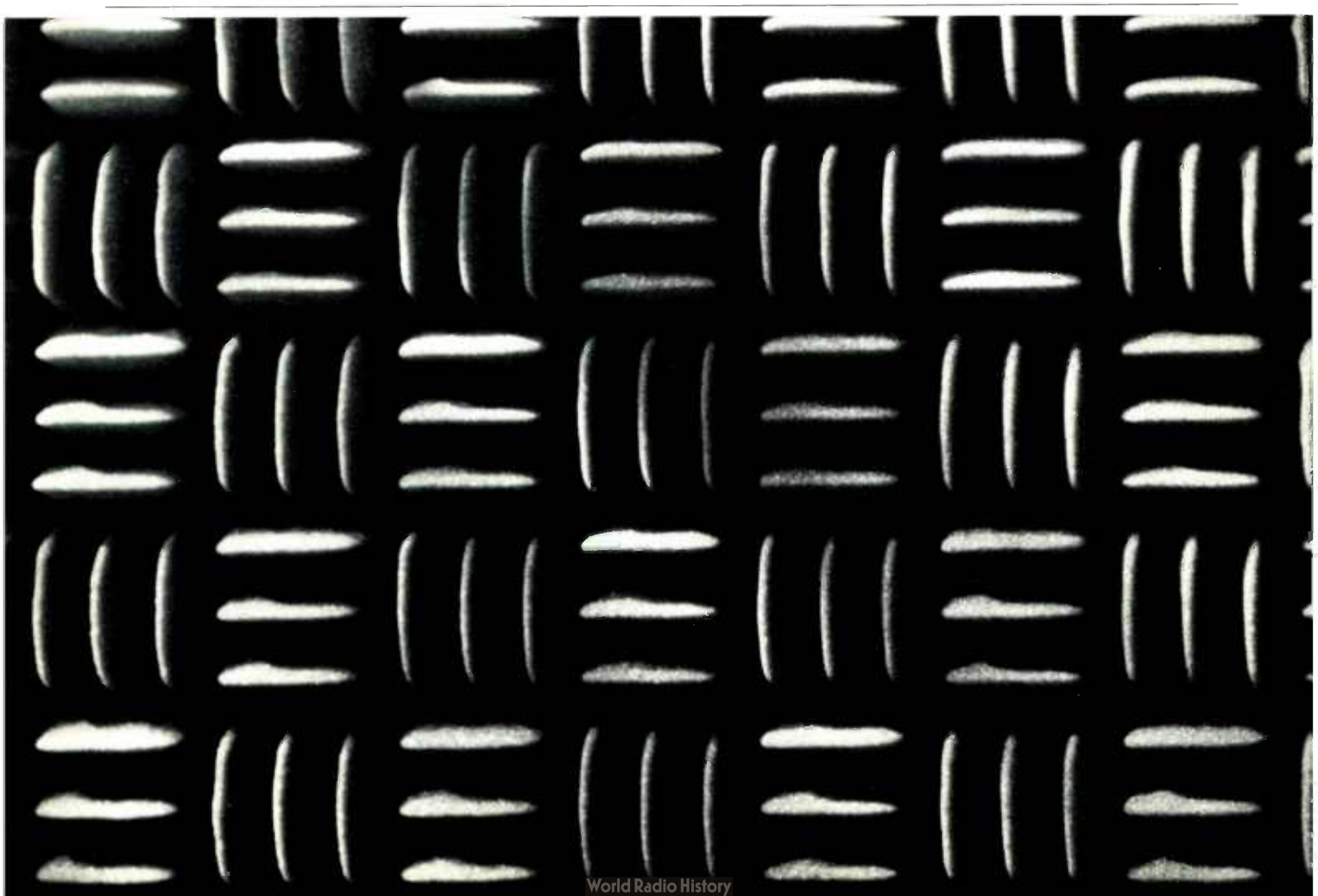
Stick Enterprises has introduced the Grand Stick, a 12-stringed model of their touchboard instrument. Both their standard 10-string and new 12-string Grand now feature a universal, omni-adjustable bridge/tailpiece unit (patent pending) which allows both height and vibrating length of individual strings to be set and fixed in place.

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The Ensoniq KS-32 is a 76-key weighted action synthesizer with velocity and channel pressure response for true piano action in a MIDI controller keyboard.

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An onboard 24-bit dynamic processor provides 13 different effects algorithms, including reverbs, chorusing, flanging, phasing, distortion and combination effects. Up to 16 internal and external sounds can be combined in split and layered set-ups to create a Performance Preset, with control over volume, panning, transposition, key range, effects bussing and other parameters. For MIDI control, any track can be used to control both internal and external sounds, or can be set to transmit over MIDI exclusively. A special "Make Default Preset" button makes working with external MIDI gear easy — with one button push the user can go from playing a

single internal sound to having an instant Performance Preset, with sound layering and split points already defined. The KS-32 holds up to 100 Performance Presets in internal memory.

The KS-32 also features a 16-track sequencer with 96 PPQ resolution, with 8,500 note memory standard, expandable to 58,000 with the optional SQX-70. Real-time and step-entry recording is supported, and extensive editing control is provided with the ability to audition every edit before saving. The KS-32 holds up to 70 sequences and 30 songs, and sequences can be saved to RAM cards or via MIDI System Exclusive.

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

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# Showcase

by Penny Campbell

## KATHLEEN YEARWOOD

*Style: Alternative Folk*

*Contact: General Delivery, Redwater, AB T0A 2W0 (403) 398-2151*

*Dead Branches Make A Noise*, the 10-song release from Alberta singer/songwriter Kathleen Yearwood, is probably one of the most beautiful, yet most disturbing records I have received this year. Her Celtic influenced blend of traditional folk music and politically-charged lyrics draws the listener in, transfixed. Yearwood's superb soprano vocals and immaculate production is in haunting contrast to the jolting lyrical content of her songs. One reviewer commented "This is what happens when angels and demons collide". Songs like "O' Kanada", "Well Fed White People" and the frighteningly honest "Gynecologue" bring the listener face-to-face with the ugly truths and grim realities of the human condition that we try to ignore in order to live with ourselves. Listening to this record is sort of like driving by a fatal accident on the highway. You don't want to look, but at the same time, you can't turn away. Yearwood's songs draw you in, the music lulls you into a state of serenity. Then, her passionate — at times angry and provocative words slap you back into reality. This record is a brilliantly-executed sample of folk music for the '90s, a return to the '60s activist tradition of Joan Baez, with a contemporary sound and feel for today's culture and political environment. I'm keeping this one in my collection.



## CHOCOLATE BUNNIES FROM HELL

*Style: Punk/Metal*

*Contact: Coalition Entertainment Group, 155 Toryork Dr., #15, Weston, ON M9L 1X9 (416) 744-7473, FAX (416) 744-7883*

What do you get when you put together five slightly off-the-wall individuals from Manitoba together with a basically straight ahead producer from Toronto? You get *Profligate Wisdom* the independent CD release from Chocolate Bunnies From Hell, a collection of very cool, ironic, humorous and very original tunes. The Bunnies teamed up with producer Arnold Lanni (*Frozen Ghost, Wild T & The Spirit*) two years ago, and the collaboration has proved very successful. The production is clean and clear, as is Lanni's style, which on one hand gives the record a great sound, but on the other hand, takes away some of the wonderful "grunge" that the music should have. The Bunnies' sound at times is reminiscent of early Queensryche or Iron Maiden (vocalist P.J. Burton can match tonsils with Geoff Tate or Bruce Dickinson easily). Guitarist Alfie Catolico provides some tasty guitar work on tracks like "Pale Green Skin" and the best track in my opinion, "I'm A Pig", which, given the success of bands like Ugly Kid Joe and Nirvana, should do well on college radio. Two tracks have been serviced to radio independently — a wicked cover of the Animals classic "We've Gotta Get Outta This Place" and "Answer The Francophone", a cynical and humorous plea for Canadian unity. It's refreshing to see a Canadian band that's not afraid to write songs about Canada, to hit home on political issues one minute, and worry about getting laid the next. It's certainly enough to have scared off the ultra-conservative Canadian music industry execs, who probably wouldn't take a chance on a band this unique. The Bunnies are making an impact at college radio as well as some major AORs in Canada, but would probably fair well in markets like England or Germany, where originality and wit in music are better understood and accepted.



## BRASS BIKINI

*Style: "Alterna-funk"*

*Contact: Gabrielle Roddy, Split Inc. Records, (416) 947-1101*

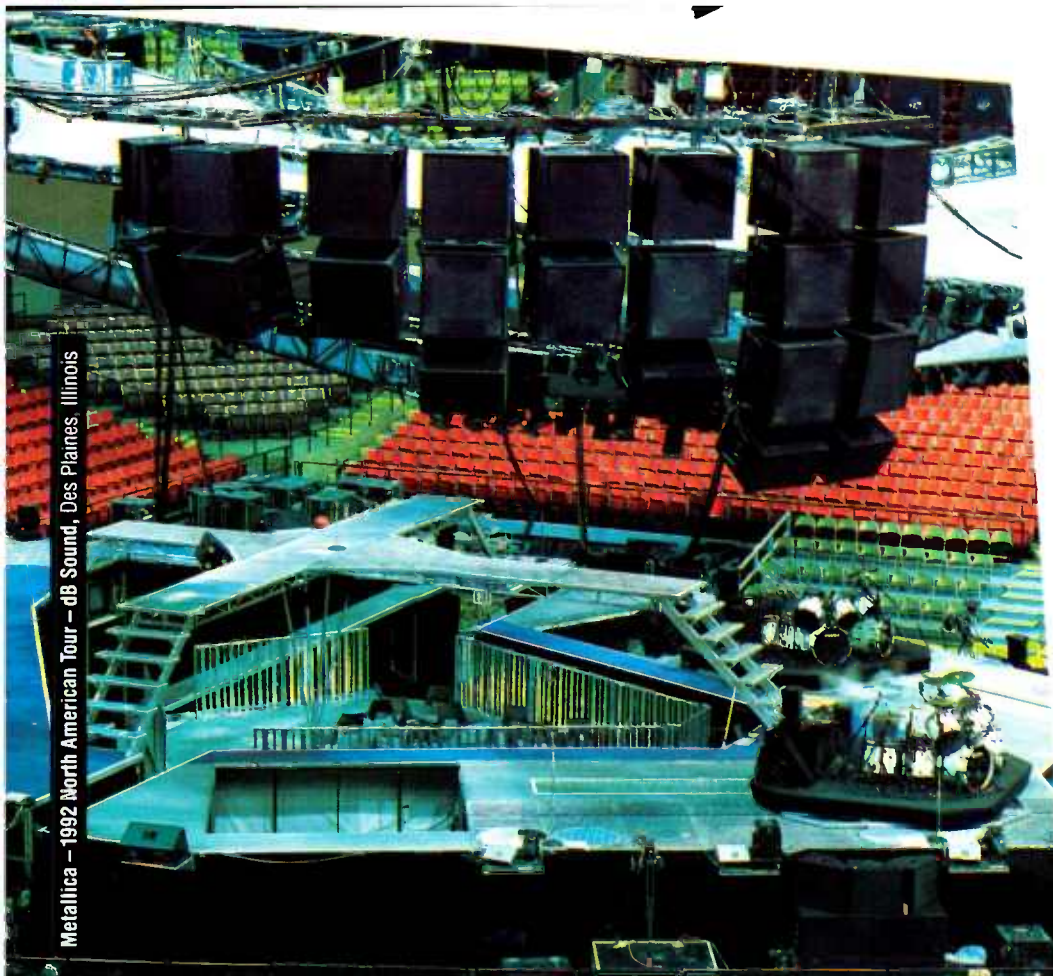
I had to steal a quote from Brass Bikini's press package to figure out how to describe their delectable debut CD entitled *Tastes Like Chicken*. The five-piece Toronto band (six if you include Pete the bagpipe guy) has become a hot property, getting favourable press and radio airplay across the country. Their blend of funky rhythms and provocation and witty lyrics are a real treat for the ears, and the band is a very tight, very talented unit, obviously having honed their craft well playing in live situations. But the driving force of Brass Bikini is lyricist and lead vocalist Gabrielle Roddy, who possesses a knockout voice and a sharp, sardonic wit that comes through in her lyrics. The songs on this CD range from funky to country, ironic to poignant, political to hysterical, all delivered with equal "punch". Also notable is the guitar work of Rob Kemp and the drums of Matt Dematteo, who also doubles as producer. I'm sure people will hear a lot more from Brass Bikini. They definitely are hard to miss!



If you are unsigned and would like to be a part of "Showcase", send us a complete bio, glossy black and white photo (no colour, no photocopies), and a cassette of your music. Also include an address and phone number where you can be reached. Some artists appearing in "Showcase" will be featured on *Canada's New Rock*, a syndicated national radio show that also features unsigned artists. Send your complete package to: Showcase, *Canadian Musician*, 23 Hannover Dr., #7, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A3.



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