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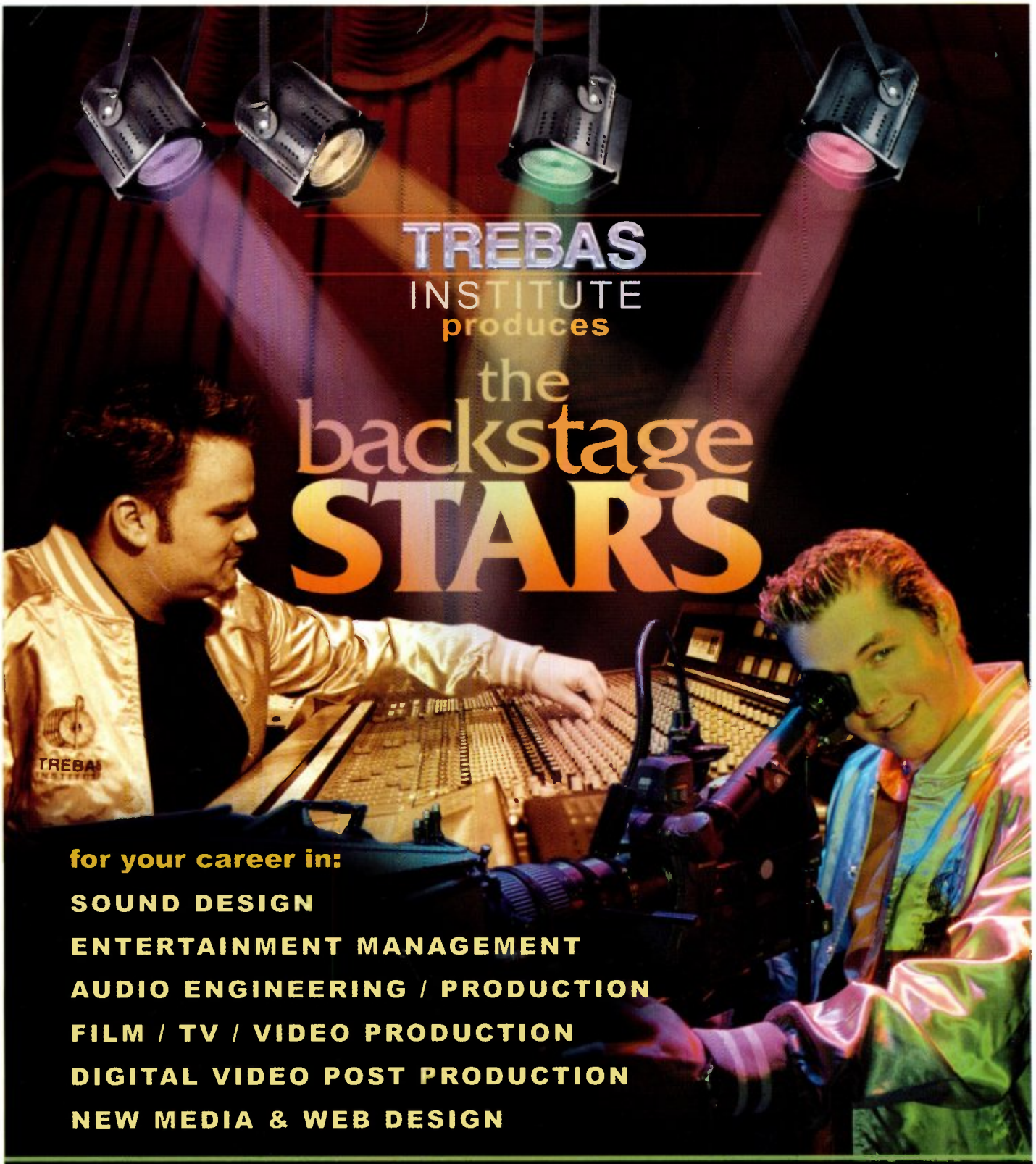

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FEATURES

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Choose The Chosen?

Dear *CM*,

Hey, I love the mag. I think you need to do an interview with the band The Chosen. I have a feeling they are going to go all the way. Their songs are very, very radio worthy. Vocals from Taryn Bugyra and guitars of Rick Styles and Jeremy S. The three have a mesh to them. Plus the bottom end of Luke Bugyra and the beats of Ray Brown fill in everything very nicely. You'll be seeing them in the future. Canadian musicians kick ass!

Rick Styles
The Chosen
Sault Ste Marie, ON

**Ed. Funny how band members always think we "need" to interview them...*

Wrongfully Crediting Writers

Dear *CM*,

This letter is addressed to Rick Rose, columnist for *Canadian Musician*.

Hi Rick,

I always enjoy your songwriting column published in *Canadian Musician* magazine. Your insights and background on songwriters is always of interest. I noticed, however, some factual errors in the current column (May/June 2003).

For instance:

1. None of the three Johnny Cash songs you mention were written by Johnny Cash. "Ballad Of Ira Hayes" was a Peter LaFarge composition; Erwin Rouse wrote "Orange Blossom Special" and Billy Edd Wheeler co-wrote "Jackson".
2. You suggest that Chubby Checker, Jerry Lee Lewis and Fats Domino "wrote" great songs. Only Antoine Fats Domino can be credited as a great songwriter. Jerry Lee Lewis was not a prolific songwriter and did NOT write any of his most famous songs; and Chubby Checker is only remembered for his record *The Twist*, which was written by Hank Ballard.

I'm happy to see that you included Chuck Berry in your article ... he certainly was a "great" songwriter, influenced several generations of recording artists with his songs ... and remains badly overlooked as one of America's all-time greats.

Larry Delaney
Editor
Country Music News (CMN)

**Ed. Thanks for correcting Rick. We apologize for printing these errors in the first place. We'll be sure to check our facts more closely. Rick also apologizes for any inconveniences his column may have caused.*

Yeah, this is the long version.

Mitch Merrett, lead guitar. Aaron Pritchett, singer/songwriter. The Aaron Pritchett Band.

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How To Raise $25,000 For Your CD

by Bob Bossin

A few years back, I went back into the recording studio for the first time in 15 years. I felt like an old gunslinger digging in the feed bin for the six-gun he stashed years before. I was none too confident. In fact, confidence seemed downright foolish. At the best of times, the market for Old Canadian Folkies is, er, *specialized*. Would there be an audience? Gigs? Airplay? Would I sell enough CDs to break even? Who the hell knew?

Like all of us who record folk music, I was not doing it for the money. Though money – indeed a lot of money – is involved. I figured if I cut corners, I could bring in an album for $20,000. I had $15,000. So I set out to raise $5,000. What happened astonished me. Some 200 people subscribed, donated, invested or otherwise chipped in – to the tune of $25,000. It was the single most gratifying experience of my working life. It felt like winning the Academy Award.

Others, I am convinced, could do the same thing. Sure, much of the support I received came from the friends and fans I've met over 25 years of playing. But there was something else going on too: I think people pitched in because they saw a chance to fight back – against mainstream culture; against the censorship of the marketplace; against a music industry that ignores folk music or bleaches it out or hypes it to death. Helping my project was a little (and sometimes not so little) contribution to the fight to recapture a corner of our culture.

If I am right about that, it means there should be solid support out there for your CD too. So here is how I raised $25,000, with no grants or record company money, and here is how you can do it yourself.

When to record: Somebody once asked Woody Guthrie how you get to be a musician. Woody replied, "Throw your hat on the road, lean your ass against a post and start practicing. When somebody drops a coin in the hat, you're a musician." If it is time for you to record, people who know you will think so too. Let them put money in the hat.

"If you don't ask, you won't get," as Grandma used to say. If you want money you have to ask for it. It is the most effective form of alchemy. Many people shy away from fundraising because they fear that the people they approach will resent it (and will be too tapped-out to give anyway). This is hardly ever true. People don't mind being asked, they just mind asking. Well, get over it. If it helps, remember this: you are not trying to get money from those who don't have it, you are offering an opportunity to those who do.

Know exactly what you want to do, before you ask for the money to do it. Nobody wants to buy a pig in a poke. What do you want to record and with whom? How much do you need and how will you spend it? How many CDs or cassettes will you press and when will they be ready? Even if the questions never come up, knowing the answers will make your pitch more effective.

Where to start: Insurance companies tell their rookie salespeople, "Start with the your relatives and friends." The companies know what they are talking about. Who better to turn to first than the people you know best? You really do have something important to discuss with them, so do. Approach them personally – the more personal the approach, the better: talking over coffee is better than talking over the phone; a phone call is better than a personal letter; a personal letter is better than a form letter.

What to say: How about, "Uncle Jim, I have started a new project, a big one and I'm pretty excited about it. I hope you will be too and I also hope you will contribute to it. Here's what I am doing and here's how I am hoping you can help."

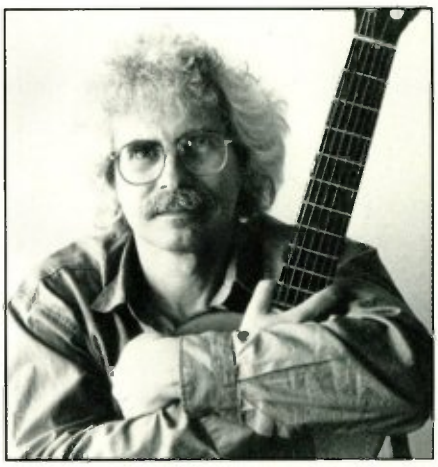
Always suggest an amount, or a range. This may feel awkward, but it essential for you and helpful to your potential supporter. Be gentle about it, be funny, embarrassed, whatever, but you must let them know how much money you are asking for.

Be careful what you ask for, because you might get it. If you only ask for $10 for an advance purchase, that is all you will get. You want to accommodate people's generosity at every level. In my case, I offered a "subscription" (an advance purchase with a few perks thrown in) at $50, and a special poor person's subscription at $25. "Donations" began at $100 (with a few more perks), and "investment" began at $300. At $500, you became a "partner." Professional fundraisers say always set your top category high because some people automatically opt for the second highest level, no matter what it is. And a few will go for the highest. I received contributions from $25 up to $2,000.

Perks: Offering perks is a good trick of the fundraiser's trade, but keep it in perspective: people are giving you money because they believe in what you are doing, not because of the fridge magnet. That being said, decide what perks might appeal to your supporters, and at what level of support to offer them. The list is limited only by your imagination: a baseball cap; one of your early "collector's item" albums; an invitation to a performance. I offered my subscribers an advance copy of the CD, their name on the cover, a chance to sing in the chorus, an invitation to the release party, my lasting gratitude and the opportunity to make an effective contribution to the arts.

Make it easy: The more your supporters need to do (or think about) to make the donation, the more they will put it off. So make it simple, from the choice of amount to mailing the cheque. Prepare a kit with information on the project, a form ready to fill out, boxes to check off and a pre-addressed return envelope. And be sure to include a date by which you need the money (which should be as soon as is reasonable after your contact).

Collect names and addresses. Next to your friends, your best supporters will be the people who have heard and liked your music. So have



forms or a sign-up sheet available at every gig.

Investors: Donors do not get paid back, investors do, at least if the record makes money. Some people will want that, others won't care. Some of my biggest contributions came as donations, not investment.

If you decide to seek investors, you will need to write a prospectus, however simple or informal. Your investors will want to know at what point repayment will begin and at what rate. They will want to know what interest you will offer, if any, and so on. This is a complex business, but here is a simple tip: repay your investors a fixed amount of money for each unit sold after a specific number of sales – enough to recoup your costs. There are other ways to repay your investors, but unless you have a secret desire to be an accountant, avoid them.

Offering a tax receipt: You may know a charitable organization that will take on your project, at least on paper, thus allowing you to offer contributors a tax deduction. This is worth pursuing, but only so far – your supporters are looking for an album not a tax shelter.

In-kind contributions: People are used to asking musicians for in-kind contributions (God knows!), but others can be approached too. In return for some recognition, businesses may be happy to contribute, or at least discount, goods or services. What the hell: the dollar you collect and the dollar you save on sushi for the band are each worth a dollar.

So that is how to do it. In my case, I wound up spending $40,000 (my original $15,000 plus the $25,000 I raised). I think, if you hear the album, you will agree that it was money well spent. Two years later, I have effectively broken even. I don't know what people in the music business would think of that, but in the folk business, it seems like a pretty good deal.

Bob Bossin is one of Canada's most treasured folk artists who can be found online at www.bossin.com. Also look for The Indispensable Stringband, *a two-disc box set containing 46 of the band's best work, including three new tracks recorded for Stringband's 30th Anniversary in 2001.*

What to look for in an Independent Record Label

Part II

by Dean Rudd

Contract and copyright laws aside, there are flags to watch for in even the simplest of record deals. The following are issues that need to be addressed before any deal is signed.

Some independent artists and labels like the idea of working on a "handshake deal." Whether you are a label or an artist, I strongly advise against this. Too many artists (and labels!) have been burned because there was no security in their business dealings. If you are just starting out working with a label, no matter how small they are, and no matter how small you are ... get it in writing. As a last resort, if you can't have a legal expert help you out, there are books in your local library that have "standard" recording contract and licensing forms in them that you can use as guidance.

Be sure to talk about the budget. Make sure you have a total budget put together and know who is paying for what at all stages of the production and marketing cycle. Don't get bogged down by the label in percentages of percentages ... be sure you know how much you are earning from each record that is sold and how many records you will need to sell before everyone breaks even. In the indie business, the more straightforward the financial aspect of the deal is the better. Also be sure that if the label is performing other business functions for you, such as booking that the financial details of that aspect are worked out so that you are comfortable with them.

If a label views you as an investment, they will want to sign you on to release an album, plus have the "option" to release one or two more albums before the opportunity is given to any other label. Options can work out just fine as long as your relationship with the label is good and they are selling your albums. My advice if a label is pushing for options is to make them conditional to your satisfaction. For example, you could allow the label the option for one more record so long as they manage to sell X number of the first album, etc.

In your contract, a territory of release will be specified. In this instance, it is important that the territory is limited to what the label is capable of handling geographically. If a label negotiates a worldwide territory with you (most often they do), be sure that you are entitled to income that the label might make from any licensing the release of your album to labels in other territories.

The issue of copyright will be dealt with under several different terms throughout the contract. This is an in-depth topic that requires more space than we have here to explain. There are a few different types of copyright and they are dealt with from several angles in your contract. It will be to your advantage to know this topic inside out (especially with regard to publishing) before negotiating any record deals.

The final macro-area where your artistic control is a concern is that of your image. You must be sure that the record label will promote you in the light you wish to be promoted. If you show up to the first date on a tour and the record company has delivered promotional whoopee cushions for you to give away on the road, will that fit your image or not? One of the best clauses you can have written in your contract is that you approve (verbally, or in writing) all the promotional photos, writing, images, and give-away products that the label will use before the label sends them out to the media or public.

Independent labels are an important part of the future of the music industry. Signed to indie record companies, artists have had number one singles and sold millions of copies of their album. Knowing what to look for in a successful independent label and the deal that you arrange with them will help you as a musician to build a team that can achieve goals like this.

Dean Rudd holds a Bachelor of Applied Business and Entrepreneurship, and is the label manager for Meter Records (www.meterrecords.com). Meter is home to such Canadian talent as One Shot Left, Jeffrey Caissie, Sons of Daughters, The Failure, The Browns, Darryl's Grocery Bag, and many others. Dean also plays guitar, sings, and writes in the band The Failure.

changes

CIRPA Announces Formation Of Ontario Music Industry Association

The Canadian Independent Record Production Association (CIRPA) is pleased to announce the formation of the Ontario Music Industry Association.

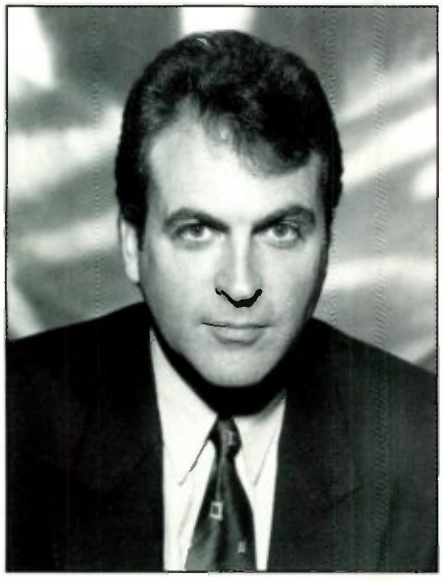
The Ontario Music Industry Association will create opportunities for Ontario-based companies and professionals involved in the independent music sector and will be responsive to the unique challenges that face Ontario music companies. The association will continue its roundtable discussions with the Ontario Minister of Culture to further the interests of all Ontario members.

"Clearly, Ontario, as home of the majority of the Canadian music industry, has a leadership role to play in helping to strengthen the cultural and economic vitality of the sector," says Pegi Cecconi, Vice-president of SRO Management Inc./Anthem Entertainment Group. Earl Rosen, President of Marquis Classics and a long-standing CIRPA director based in Ontario, commented, "For the past two years, we have been exploring the launch of an Ontario-specific division to serve the needs of Ontario companies through seminars, workshops and marketing programs, and by interfacing with government departments and agencies."

CIRPA is the co-founder of the Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent On Records (FACTOR), the co-founder of the Radio Starmaker Fund and was instrumental in the introduction of a new stream of revenues through neighbouring rights and private copying rights. CIRPA was responsible for the establishment of the Ontario Sound Recording Tax Credit (OSRTC) and was involved in the restructuring of the Ontario Media Development Corporation.

For more information, contact: The Canadian Independent Record Production Association, 30 St. Patrick St., Toronto, ON M5T 3A3 (416) 485-3152, FAX (416) 485-4373 (CIRPA), cirpa@cirpa.ca, www.cirpa.ca.

Toronto Awards Metronome Founder



John Harris

Founder and President of Metronome Canada Foundation, John Harris, was awarded a Toronto Canada Day Achievement Award at a ceremony in the Council Chamber of Toronto City Hall on June 11, 2003.

The annual award was presented to "honour his tremendous contribution to the community, numerous hours of volunteer work and dedication." Metronome Canada is the award-winning non-profit initiative to create a home for music in Canada. The unique "music city" will feature a music education centre, a concert theatre, a business centre for the music industry, a unique international culture festival and a major exhibit celebrating Canada's numerous contributions to the world of music.

"I am honoured to accept this award on behalf of the thousands of companies, volunteers and supporters of Metronome," stated Harris. "This recognition will help us continue to build support for a project that is uniquely valuable to Toronto's future and the celebration and development of Canada's music."

For more information, contact: Metronome Canada Foundation, 118 Sherbourne St., Toronto, ON M5A 2R2 (877) 411-SILO, (416) 367-0162, FAX (416) 367-1569, info@metronomecanada.com, www.metronomecanada.com.

Yamaha, Paiste Host 'The Hang'

Sean Browne, Yamaha's Pro Music & Audio Division Product Specialist Drums, welcomes the crowd to 'The Hang'.

Mark Kelso smiles during his performance.

Dave Weckl shows the crowd how it's done.

Yamaha Canada Music Ltd. and Paiste Cymbals held a drum gathering on August 24, 2003, at Bambu, a restaurant/club located right on Toronto's scenic waterfront.

The event was attended by Canadian music store dealers from across Canada and local Toronto musicians. Attendees were treated to stellar performances by Dave Weckl, Paul Leim, Paul Brochu, Randy Cooke, Mark Kelso, Wilson Laurencin, Vito Rezza and Al Webster. Each drummer took two to three songs to show off his chops to the one crowd that still *truly* appreciates drum solos. The crowd was treated to a seven-drummer performance at the end of the evening as all drummers joined together for a massive jam. All proceeds from the event were donated to the Coalition for Music Education in Canada. For more information, visit www.yamaha.ca.

All Majors Join Puretracks

Canada's leading music download service, Puretracks, has recently secured the involvement of all major Canadian record labels for the launch of the service this fall. BMG Canada, EMI Music Canada, Sony Music Canada, Universal Music Canada and Warner Music Canada have all agreed to provide content to the service.

Somewhat akin to the recently launched site from Apple, the Puretracks service will provide Canadians with access to high quality digital music in a Windows Media format for prices as low as $0.99 per song. Over 250,000 recordings by artists from around the world will be available.

"It's all about the music, and everyone behind the Puretracks service understands that," said Randy Lennox, CEO Universal Music Canada. "The Puretracks service demonstrates an undying commitment to delivering music the way the artists want it presented, in a pure, unadulterated format, and at a fair price. Puretracks delivers pure, virus free music files directly from the source, and makes the experience easy and informative."

The service also recently secured the involvement of various Canadian Independent labels in the Puretracks service. "We're very proud of our Canadian indie label agreements and feel that they will give us a distinctive advantage over other services. They provide the depth that rounds out the major label catalogues," explained Derek van der Plaat, Co-founder of Moontaxi Media, the company behind Puretracks. Stay tuned to www.moontaximedia.com for the latest Puretracks info.

Cool Edit Pro Rebranded 'Audition'

Syntrillium Software and Adobe Systems Incorporated have recently announced the introduction of Adobe Audition software, a tool for professional digital audio recording. Audition is a re-branded release of Cool Edit Pro, which is expected to begin shipping in August 2003.

In May 2003, Adobe acquired the technology assets of Syntrillium Software, including its flagship product, Cool Edit Pro. Adobe is excited about continuing to develop Adobe Audition as the digital audio tool of choice for musicians, audio professionals, and video professionals. Adobe Audition includes all of the mixing, editing, mastering, effects and analysis tools from Cool Edit Pro 2.1, as well as thousands of royalty-free loops. Check out www.adobe.com for more info.

changes

Completely Certifiable

Courtesy of the Canadian Recording Industry Association, www.cria.ca

Avril Lavigne
Let Go (BMG Canada/Arista) – Diamond

Blue Rodeo
Palace Of Gold (Warner Music Canada) – Platinum

Simple Plan
No Pads No Helmet ... Just Balls (Warner Music Canada) – Platinum

Michael Bublé
Michael Bublé (Warner Music Canada) – Gold

Jim Cuddy
All In Time (Warner Music Canada) – Gold

Matthew Good
Avalanche (Universal Music) – Gold

Bif Naked
Purge (TKO Entertainment/HRM Records) – Gold

Adam Gregory
The Way I'm Made (Sony Music Canada) – Gold

EVENTS

Canadian Country Music Week
Calgary, AB
September 5-8, 2003
(905) 850-1144, FAX (905) 850-1330
country@ccma.org, www.ccma.org

Western Canadian Music Awards
Regina, SK
September 25-28, 2003
(306) 780-9830, FAX (306) 780-9831
info@wcmw.ca, www.wcmw.ca

The College Music Society Annual Meeting
Miami, FL
October 2-5, 2003
(406) 721-9616, FAX (406) 721-9419
cms@music.org, www.music.org

Ontario Council of Folk Festivals Conference
Sudbury, ON
October 17-19, 2003
(866) 292-6233
info@ocff.ca, www.ocff.ca

Montreal Drum Fest 2003
Montreal, PQ
November 7-9, 2003
(450) 928-1726, FAX (450) 670-8683
angelillo@videotron.ca,
www.montrealdrumfest.com

Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC)
Louisville, KY
November 19-22, 2003
(580) 353-1455, FAX (580) 353-1456
percarts@pas.org, www.pasic.org

The Midwest Clinic (an International Band and Orchestra Conference)
Chicago, IL
December 16-20, 2003
(847) 424-4163, FAX (847) 424-5185
info@midwestclinic.org,
www.midwestclinic.org

International Association for Jazz Education Conference
New York, NY
January 21-24, 2004
(785) 776-8744, FAX (785) 776-6190
info@iaje.org, www.iaje.org

East Coast Music Awards
St. John's, NF
February 12-15, 2004
(902) 892-9040, FAX (902) 892-9041
ecma@ecma.ca, www.ecma.ca

Mobile Beat DJ Show
Las Vegas, NV
February 17-19, 2004
(585) 385-9920, FAX (585) 385-3637
webmaster@mobilebeat.com,
www.mobilebeat.com/djshows.asp

16th Annual International Folk Alliance Conference
San Diego, CA
February 26-29, 2004
(301) 588-8185, FAX (301) 588-8186
fa@folk.org, www.folk.org

Canadian Music Week 2004
Toronto, ON
March 3-6, 2004
(905) 858-4747, FAX (905) 858-4848
info@cmw.net, www.cmw.net

South by Southwest (SXSW) 2004
Austin, TX
March 17-21, 2004
(512) 467-7979, FAX (512) 451-0754
sxsw@sxsw.com, www.sxsw.com

Music Teachers National Association Conference
Kansas City, MO
March 27-31, 2004
(513) 421-1420, FAX (513) 421-2503
mtnanet@mtna.org, www.mtna.org

Music and Sound Expo
Minneapolis, MN
April 16-18, 2003
(760) 438-8001, FAX (760) 438-7327
musicandsoundexpo@namm.com,
www.musicandsoundexpo.com

Dallas Guitar Show and MusicFest 2004
Dallas, TX
April 17-18, 2004
(972) 260-4201
dallas@guitarshow.com,
www.guitarshow.com

Cape Breton Drum Festival
Cape Breton, NS
May 1-2, 2004
(902) 727-2337
bruce@cbdrumfest.com,
www.cbdrumfest.com

North By Northeast (NXNE) 2004
Toronto, ON
June 10-12, 2004
(416) 863-6963, FAX (416) 863-0828
inquire@nxne.com, www.nxne.com

Don't Get Scammed By E-Mail Hoaxes

music ON LINE

by Kelly Embleton

Most of us are trying to control the amount of spam e-mail we receive in our inbox daily. It seems to be out of control and is frustrating when only 5 out of the 150 e-mail messages in your inbox are not spam. I am willing to bet that at least half of your junk mail contains e-mail scams and hoaxes. Scams sound believable and may be tempting. If you are not cautious, you could find yourself in a *lot* of hot water.

You should be cautious of any messages about making money, requests for bank account information, passwords and credit card numbers ... these messages are probably scams and hoaxes. Simply delete these messages when you receive them or block the e-mail addresses using your spam control filter if you have one implemented. Also, do not send these messages to anyone else.

Definitions:
SCAM: A fraudulent business scheme; a swindle
FRAUD: A deception deliberately practiced in order to secure unfair or unlawful gain
HOAX: An act intended to deceive or trick

Common Types of E-mail Scams and Hoaxes

a) Information Verification – messages request verification of e-mail addresses, credit card numbers, passwords and bank PIN numbers.
b) Stolen Credit Card – these messages can sound very believable. The message states that someone has been using your credit card to make fraudulent purchases and they need to verify your info.
c) Show Me The Money – These messages usually state that someone overseas desperately needs your help in retrieving money that is being held in another country. If you spend money to help them, they will share the money with you when retrieved. A common example of this was the Nigeria e-mail scam that lured in thousands of people into spending a tonne of money.
d) Work From Home – messages contain opportunities for you to stay at home and work and earn $$. There are some legit companies like this but they rarely e-mail these opportunities to you.
e) Credit and Loans – messages state that your credit can be repaired and you can receive loans and credit cards with huge dollar limits. Block and delete these messages, all the spammers want is your financial information.
f) Business Opportunities – messages try to obtain personal information in order for you to start your own business and make tonnes of money right away.
g) Loose Weight and Diet Right – these messages try to sell you supplements and pills to loose weight and diet correctly. Most require you to order so if you do, now they have your payment info and who knows if these products even exist.
h) Investments – investment schemes guarantee high rates of return without risk.
i) Free Vacations – most messages state that you have won a free vacation to some tropical island. They want you to send them your information and a fee to book the trip that doesn't even exist.

Detection & Prevention Tips

- Legit companies and institutions will not ask for your social insurance number, bank PIN code or and financial information in an e-mail where it is unsafe and not secure.
- Be sure to check the return e-mail address against the address the message was sent from. Scams and hoaxes don't normally have the same return and sent e-mail address.
- Don't give out your e-mail address on a site if you are not familiar with the site or if there is not a Privacy Policy available on the site.
- Be wary of e-mails that greet you as an old classmate, relative or friend.
- Don't reply to junk mail, even if it has a link to remove you from their mailing list. Simply block this e-mail address using your spam filter.
- Don't fill out online forms on sites for free goods or contests that you are not familiar with or are not credible.
- Don't forward on "chain-letter" messages to your friends.
- Do not open any e-mail attachments if you are not familiar with the sender.

Be extremely wary of e-mail messages like the ones mentioned above. Nine out of ten times these messages are scams and hoaxes. Don't be lured into e-mail scams and hoaxes, they can quickly lead to problems and financial disasters.

Kelly Embleton is Computer Services Coordinator for Norris-Whitney Communications.

Resources

... **Froogle**, at www.froogle.google.com, is a new service from Google that makes it easy to find information about products for sale online. By focusing entirely on a product search, Froogle applies the power of Google's search technology to a very specific task: locating stores that sell the item you want to find and pointing you directly to the place where you can make a purchase. If you sell products online, make sure you are listed in Froogle.

... **Guitar Books Plus** is your best guitar resource! Guitar Books Plus carries over 1,400 guitar books, CD-ROMs, DVDs, software and videos on guitar technique, guitar instruction, guitar customization and repair, guitars of past and present, bass technique, amps, guitar guides, playing guitar, guitar legends, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, vintage guitars, guitar lessons and more! Visit this site today at www.guitarbooksplus.com.

... **Yorkville Sound** has recently launched www.gibsonguitars.ca. The Canadian Gibson distributor designed the site specifically for Canadians offering them a look at Gibson, Epiphone, Original Acoustic and the rest of the Gibson family. Visit the site to find out all the latest information.

... The **Montreal Drum Fest** will be taking place on November 7-9, 2003. For more information on the show, visit the Web site at www.montrealdrumfest.com.

... **MyOwnMusic.net** is a place where independent artists and musicians, striving to gain exposure, share information and utilize resources, can connect with, and support one another. This resource is located at www.myownmusic.net.

... **Musician's Health**, located at www.musicianshealth.com, is an educational Web site devoted to the understanding and the explanation of musician's injuries, along with guidelines regarding injury prevention, optimizing your musical performance, and for achieving an optimum state of health.

ROAD test

Garrison G-35 Guitar

by Levon Ichkhanian

In the acoustic guitar market it's a challenge to keep up with new manufacturers and even older ones with their newest models and innovations. I still remember playing an Ovation when it first came on the market. Its tone and feel were different than any other guitar around at that time – innovative indeed!

In 1993, Chris Griffiths started his first company in St. John's, NF. Griffiths Guitar Works – selling high-end custom-built acoustic and electric guitars. Griffiths Guitar Works has grown from a one-man repair shop to the largest custom guitar store in Atlantic Canada. Griffiths was unsatisfied with the guitars that he was importing so he set about as a custom builder to create something that would satisfy him, as well as his customers.

What makes Garrison Guitars unique is the Griffiths Active Bracing System. This bracing system is the integration of the binding, kerfing, bridge plate and all the braces into a single-unit glass fibre component, which activates the top by having all parts vibrate in unison. It also provides enhanced structural stability through this single-unit brace, which means no matter where you create a vibration inside your guitar the resonance has an uninterrupted path to travel throughout the instrument.

All Garrison Guitars come with the Buzz Feiten Tuning System. Guitars are generally intonated with each string to itself (equal temperament) the Feiten tuning system follows a piano's which is tempered tuning. In this system each string is not only intonated to itself, but also to every other string. Furthermore, to eliminate sharpness in the first three frets, the nut is moved a prescribed distance closer to the bridge.

These guitars come with a variety of solid choice tonewood configurations in the tops, back and sides and fingerboards. There are a lot of choices for every player's needs and preferences in sound and feel. In just the tops alone there are four different choices – Western Red Cedar, Sitka Spruce, Englemann Spruce and Mahogany.

Garrison guitars are available in seven different models: G- 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 41, 50 and the recently released G-4.

G-35 Specifications

Top: solid Sitka Spruce – gloss finish
Back & sides: solid Canadian birch – satin finish
Neck: solid mahogany
Fingerboard: solid ebony
Bridge: solid ebony
Nut & saddle: TUSQ
Rosette: contemporary pattern wood inlay
Inlays: abalone dots
Tuners: Garrison individual gold-plated
Strings: D'Addario EXPs
Warranty: 5-year transferable
Intonation: Buzz Feiten Tuning System
Nut width: 1.7 inches
Scale length: 25.4 inches

G-35 Options

Left- and right-handed
12-string
Cutaway
Fishman Prefix – this acoustic guitar preamp includes under saddle pickup.

First, let me say the instrument is visually stunning. Its weight is comfortable, all the joints are smooth and it plays and feels very even. The first thing I noticed after I tuned it was how loud it is and how well in tune it plays all over the fingerboard. It has a crisp and bright sound with lots of resonance and delivery no matter what position or string you are playing. The guitar is very responsive and well balanced whether you strum, pick or fingerstyle. The added options that are already part of the guitar are: The strap jack on the end is already routed to take in a cable jack when amplification is considered (removable endpin jack socket). The G-35 also comes with a reinforced side, this allows you to upgrade to a pick-up system at a later date after you have purchased the guitar.

The G-35 is an exceptional guitar, with lots of thought and hard work having gone into the making of it. With the added features and benefits of the solid wood choice tonewoods, the Griffiths Active Bracing System, the Buzz Feiten Tuning System, D'Addario EXP strings, optional Fishman pickups, included hardshell case and five-year transferable warranty at the price point – you can't go wrong.

Check one out at your local music dealer.

Until next time!

The manufacturer's suggest retail price for the Garrison G-35 is $1,199.

For more information, contact: Garrison Guitars, PO Box 13096, St. John's, NF A1B 3V8 (709) 745-6677, FAX (709) 745-6688, info@garrisonguitars.com, www.garrisonguitars.com.

Multi-instrumentalist Levon Ichkhanian is an active D'Addario clinician. Levon has played on over 30 commercial CDs. He is sought after for his unique sound on soundtracks and commercials. Levon's newest release Travels *features Alain Caron and Wilson Laurencin and is a follow-up to* After Hours, *which featured John Patitucci and Paquito D'Rivera. For bookings and CD purchases contact Levon through www.levonmusic.com.*

Manufacturer's Comments:

What can we say? The guitars sell themselves. We feel they are a great value in these price points. We'd like to tip our hats to the continuing support we get from our friends at TUSQ, D'Addario, Fishman and Buzz Feiten Tuning Systems as well as the 63 guitar-a-holics that work every day on every Garrison Guitar.

— Chris Griffiths, President, Garrison Guitars

KORG

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D16XD

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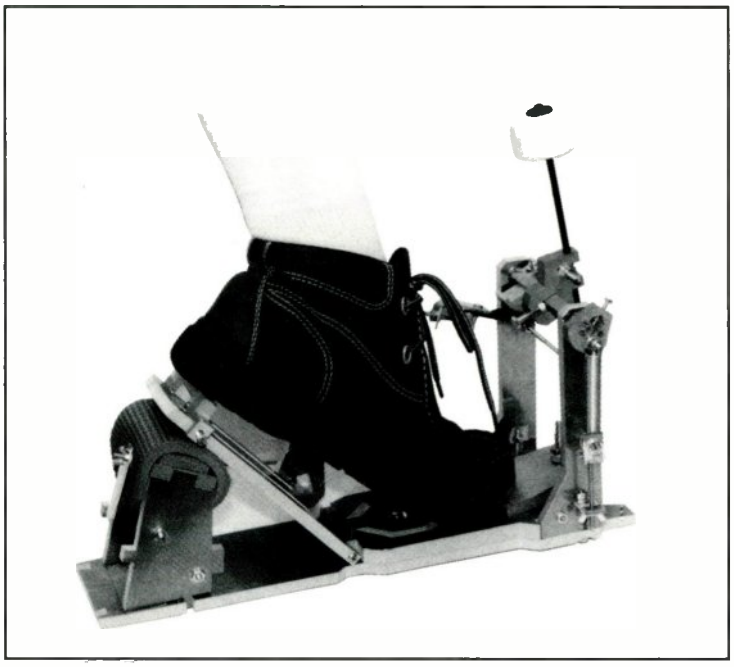
ROAD test

Smart Pedal

by Chris Taylor-Munro

Flying in the face of convention often leads to innovative ideas. Drumming has been with us since the dawn of time, but the "common" drum kit of today has its origins a mere 100 and some years ago.

The drummers of New Orleans (pronounced N'awlins) were expanding their creative ideas in the late 1890s by adding cymbals or "clangers" of Chinese and Turkish origins. African tom toms were fixed to the bass drum for a greater variety of sounds. The bass drum was traditionally (and still is in orchestral and military applications) played by hand. The marching band approach with separate snare and bass drum had to be combined for the new breed of drumming. Hence the necessity for a pedal to strike a floor mounted bass drum. The first practical drum pedal was designed and manufactured by William F. Ludwig in 1909. In 1927 Chick Webb and Jo Jones mastered the "hi-boy", now called the hi-hat. During the 1950s, players such as Louie Bellson were adding second bass drums to their setups. So in 1964 an Australian inventor named Don Fleishman designed the first "twin" or "double" pedal as it is commonly called today, enabling drummers to get rid of the second bass drum, use less space on stage and decrease the amount of gear you have to lug to gigs. A heel driven pedal apparently attempted in the early 1900s, but the toe driven pedal prevailed. Until now?



Sonor has its splitboard, heel and toe "Giant Step" pedal. Dualist uses a "Speedswitch" that depresses the right beater on the down stroke and the left beater on the up stroke and Hamilton, Ontario's Smart Pedal has abandoned the toe element altogether for a heel driven technique.

Owner and designer of the Smart Pedal, Peter Onyszkanycz first developed a prototype in 1995 and has built and sold 40 pedals to date. His technical background prompted him to experiment with the heel driven approach as he felt it was a more efficient and natural motion than lifting the toes (heel down method) or the entire leg (heel up method). Try this quick experiment to understand the thinking behind the Smart Pedal. Sitting down on a kitchen/desk chair or on your drum throne simply plant your toe and raise your heel then allow it to drop back to resting position. Now lift the toe and plant it repeatedly by lifting the leg as if you're playing the heel up method, arguably the most popular with today's modern drummers. Feel the difference? Although it feels somewhat foreign at first for those of us already playing (heel up or heel down) you have to admit less energy is exerted.

The Smart Pedal is somewhat industrial in terms of aesthetics, but is definitely a solid piece of gear. It's constructed entirely of heavy gauge steel for the base plates and heel board making it heavier than any single pedal I've ever encountered. The base plate measures 17" in length from the hoop clamp to the heel stopper making it longer than any single pedal. All the typical adjustments such as spring tension, beater shaft length and angle are done so using bolts, washers, and butterfly nuts and are relatively easy, but a small wrench or set of pliers is needed to secure the aforementioned bits properly. Peter plans to standardize each fastening component (size and type) for future models.

Some adjustments are not found on your typical toe driven pedal making initial setup more complex. For instance, the heel stopping plate can be set at a variety of heights to suit your personal comfort level regarding heel angle. I experimented with all four heel angles and found my comfort level varied depending on the height of my throne. Peter recommends the highest stopping level for keeping the minimum knee angle and maximizing heel angle. With this setting you have to lower your throne (and your entire kit for that matter) to play the pedal comfortably. As with any new technique you'll be working certain muscles not previously exercised and will notice fatigue sets in sooner, but I found by the third day it was no longer an issue.

Another adjustment not found on "common" pedals is the distance the beater rests from the head once the heel plate hits the stopper. When following the recommended setup instructions the beater makes contact with the head under its own momentum. Most of you are scratching your heads wondering how this can be. Don't fret ... so was I. The beater is connected to the heel plate with a mechanical arm and nylon strap combination. For the last 5 cm of travel the beater continues past the stopping thresh hold of the heel plate. Accuracy was my first concern, but the motion is continuous and surprisingly fluid. I was able to execute quick doubles within minutes of set up and with very little movement of the heel plate. Some beater flutter does occur if you don't have the arm adjusted properly so tinkering is advisable.

With the market saturated with many drum pedals already the Smart Pedal is somewhat of an enigma. Whether or not the heel technique is better is for drummers to decide. It's refreshing to see people such as Peter explore new ideas and I encourage everyone to do the same. Free demonstrations of the Smart Pedal can be seen in Hamilton, Ontario with Peter himself or check out the Web site.

The manufacturer's suggested retail price for the Smart Pedal is $540.

For more information, contact: Smart Pedals for Drums, 829 King St. E., #2A, Hamilton, ON L8M 1B1 (905) 545-0992, www.homestead.com/playsmart/pedals.

Manufacturer's Comments

The best way to see this idea in action is to contact us at Smart Pedals in Hamilton. Nothing is better and more convincing than a real life presentation. We invite anyone who is interested to come see the pedal in action!
— Peter Onyszkanycz, Smart Pedal

ROAD test

HALion 2.0

by Alec Watson

Not unlike a certain loveable, large green ogre, HALion 2.0, Steinberg's streaming sample player, has "layers." One might even go as far as saying that HALion is a "parfait" among software samplers.

Layer One

Upon arrival, I was impressed to find that HALion purported to be the most complete cross-platform plug-in I had ever seen. Straight out of the box it can be installed as a Mac VST, PC VST, or PC Direct-X plug-in. Of course nothing is ever that simple ... unless perhaps you are talking of a "parfait" among plug-ins. Not only did it easily install and plug-in to Cubase for Mac, Cubase for PC and Sonar for PC, it was stable on all three systems. **All other manufacturers please take note:** not only is this apparently possible, but Steinberg has made it look easy.

Layer Two

With glee, I reached into the box for the manual. NO! It wasn't because I was going to read it! Well, actually it was, but I didn't "NEED" to (a very good sign). Anyway, I was happy to find four CDs of samples from Wizoo; which include a 250 MB piano sample, a very good nylon string acoustic guitar, a bass sample that has good tone, mutes and slides, a series of drum kits, an organ, Rhodes, some synths and a disc of loops. More than a nice touch, some of these samples are VERY good. I should however mention that I was less than enthused by the piano. One would think that a 250 MB sample, likely 200 MB larger than most "good" sounding keyboards would be a pretty good sounding piano...

A streaming sampler can play "un-looped" samples as well as the normal "looped" variety. A low note on a real piano sustains for 60 seconds! Now normally, when playing a piano, one doesn't hold a note down for that long. In the past, manufacturers have used this to their advantage by seamlessly looping the low notes (the samples of the low notes may only be a couple of seconds long in order to shorten sample size). On a streaming sampler such as HALion, samples can be played in their entirety. HALion holds a few seconds of the sample in RAM, and then as the sample nears completion, it will start "streaming" the rest of the audio from you hard drive. This can make VERY realistic samples. The piano that comes with HALion is of the full-streaming variety (plays long and un-looped) but it is only one velocity layer from their "Grand" sample. It turns out that samples of different velocities, as well as streaming, are necessary to make a great piano sound. You're going to need to get a bigger sample set if you want a realistic concert grand.

Layer Three

HALion is compatible with almost all the major samplers available, giving you an almost limitless sample library. It can import Akai, Roland, Giga, SDII, Soundfont and E-mu samples. I tried out a few different samples I had around. Akai and Giga, both imported easily, though it did take some playing to get Giga's 1 GB piano to play properly. I also had to refer to the manual to figure out how to import. Not unlike their competitor's software, the import page is somewhat "cludgie." It seems to me that in a user-friendly program like HALion, where you needn't worry about whether the sample you are playing is the same bit depth and sample rate as the song you are playing it into (it does this so well, you don't even know it is doing it) that there should be a more user-friendly interface for importing. Though, as I mentioned, several manufacturers have adopted a suspiciously similar style.

Layer Four

Sampling! I'd forgive you for thinking that there are so many sounds out there, that one wouldn't ever actually create samples of one's own anymore. I thought that I would give sampling a shot, as back in the old days I used to pride myself on my personal sample library. Wow! It was easy. The interface for setting up velocity crossfades and key mapping was excellent and intuitive. I am looking forward to building a streaming sample library of my own.

Layer Five

New gadgets: Full 5.1 surround sound support! In the 1,600 MB of samples that come included, one will find surround samples. HALion supports up to 32-bit/96 kHz sampling rates. A set of envelopes are included that can be synched to the tempo of the recording software and a powerful set of filters (12/24dB Low Pass, 12/24dB Hi Pass, Band Pass and Notch). Yes, this means that you can make your samples zip, zip, zip and pop in time with your music.

Conclusion

All good software should, in fact, seem like it has layers. A well thought out piece of software should install and be used easily; making the new user look like an expert in minutes. An easy-to-use interface must conversely have the depth for the advanced user to take creation further than possibly even the original programmers intended. Simply put, good music software should allow the user to be creative and not be a tech. For simplicity, functionality and depth, HALion delivers.

The manufacturer's suggested retail price for HALion 2.0 is $599.

For more product information, contact: Steinberg Canada, 12 Upjohn Rd., Toronto, ON M3B 2V9 (416) 789-7100, FAX (416) 789-1667, info@steinbergcanada.com, www.steinbergcanada.com.

To the current rumour suggesting Shrek *is looking for a record producer to expand upon last year's hit single, Alec Watson exclaims: "Pick me, Pick me!"*

IT'S THE NEW SOUL OF MY STUDIO

> RAY CHARLES

When recording legend Ray Charles and Grammy-nominated engineer Terry Howard (Barbara Streisand, Stevie Wonder, Fleetwood Mac) decided to upgrade Ray's recording studio, they chose SONAR as their central production technology. Ray and Terry could have had any software they wanted. And they both agreed that SONAR could do it all.

Whether restoring Ray's classic recordings, or working on his new album, SONAR delivers the performance they demand. With unlimited audio and MIDI recording and mixing, a centralized interface for improved creative workflow, integrated audio looping tools, automatable DirectX effects, and low-latency DXi software synths, SONAR provides you with the industry's most complete production environment for Windows.

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2.0

SONAR™

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- Global control surface support, with presets for MotorMix, Tascam US-428 and others
- Multi-port drum editor
- ACID file export
- More

PHOTO: DENNIS SHIRLEY © 2002

SONAR is available at music retailers worldwide.
Find out more at www.cakewalk.com/SONAR or call 888.CAKEWALK (617.423.9004 outside U.S.).

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Fretboard Frenzy

Fretboard knowledge is foundational to the advancing guitarist since understanding all scales and chords requires first knowing where to locate and identify the notes. Due to the great amount of notes that are available on the guitar, memorizing them can be quite an undertaking. Sometimes even seasoned players are unable to randomly choose any note and name it, particularly above the 12th fret. In this article, you will learn the basics of a strategy for dealing with this issue.

Traditional Fretboard Method

When deciding to memorize the fretboard, many people simply single out the individual notes and play them, repeating until memorized. This is a random and difficult way to proceed and not recommended.

The amount of notes to commit to memory is overwhelming, which is why many players only memorize the first few frets or a few favoured strings.

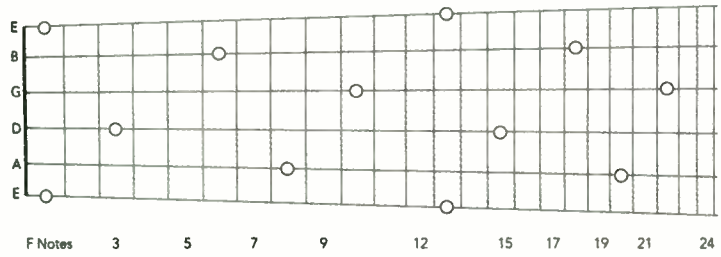
If you have spent any time at all playing the piano, you quickly realized how easy it was to learn the keyboard. It is visually laid out before you; there is a continual repeating pattern of black and white notes that extends from the lowest note to the highest. Although the guitar fretboard does not seem as visually simple, there are definite hidden repetitive patterns that, once revealed, enable the guitarist to see musical constructs throughout its entire length. This allows for easier memorization and a more systematic approach to learning notes, scales and chords.

The Warped W

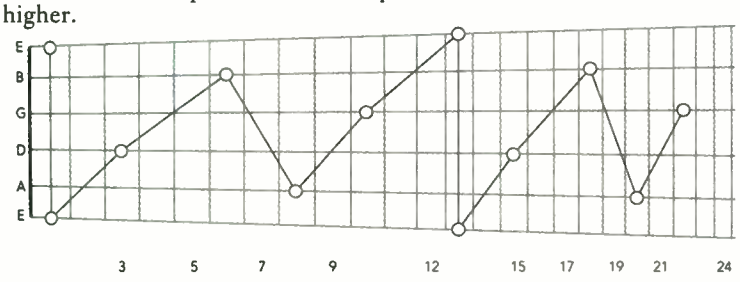
Finding a pattern on the fretboard and learning how it repeats makes memorizing it easier, since we only need to learn it once and then transpose it as needed.

F Notes

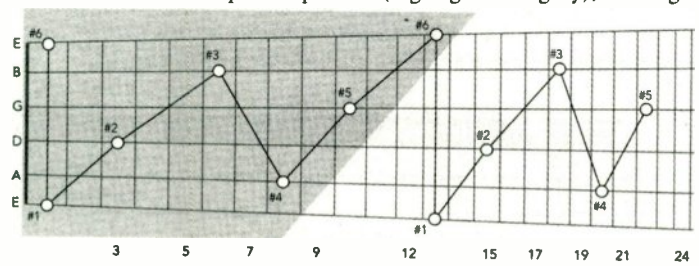
The following diagram illustrates where all the F notes, in all octaves, are situated throughout the entire fretboard.



If we draw a line through the notes, joining them all together, a visual pattern emerges from the 1st to the 12th fret. It looks like a warped W. The same pattern reoccurs from the 12th fret to the 24th fret, an octave higher.



We will now create a numerical sequence, assigning each note a number representing its position in relation to all the other F notes in the pattern. There are six notes in the warped W pattern (highlighted in gray), although the sixth does not recur in the higher octave.



If you randomly choose any F note on this graph, you will be able to find the next F above or below by simply observing which number it is in the sequence and moving up or down in order through the warped W pattern. For example, if you choose the F on the 4th string, 3rd fret – #2 on the sequence – you can find the next F by going down to #1 or up to #3.

The warped W pattern is effective because if we commit it to memory, we need not learn 126 or so individual notes on the fretboard. We can find any note at any time using the pattern. The key is to spend the necessary time to familiarize yourself with the pattern and the overall flow of how each note within it connects to the next.

Vivian Clement is a jazz/blues guitarist performing in the Toronto area. She has a book published by Alfred entitled Fretboard Knowledge For The Contemporary Guitarist. *Presently Vivian is writing a book on being a studio musician as well as completing her second CD. In the summer she teaches for National Guitar Workshop and Guitar Workshop Plus. Vivian works in her recording studio "Exodus Studios" in Mississauga. Her Web site is www.vivianclement.com.*

keyboards

Finding Room In The Wall of Sound

Trying to find a place in an extremely dense track to insert a meaningful keyboard part can be frustrating. There are times when the best possible approach is to leave well enough alone, go the hell home and take the time you would have burned up in the studio going through each and every sound you can possibly tweak out of your gear in a vain effort to find something that works, and use it to learn a few other instruments. Failing that, there are a number of ways to penetrate that wall of sound that's keeping you out of the mix and contribute to the track in a way that satisfies your needs as a player as well as the needs of the song. Obviously if you want to be heard you should avoid areas in the register that are already cluttered. That said, there's something to be said for just lying there in a comfortable spot in the track and being felt.

While going out of your way to write a part specifically intended to get lost in the mix may not sound like the most glorious way to spend an afternoon in the studio sometimes merely thickening the track is all that's necessary. Find a place not too far outside the low to mid range and lock into the dominant rhythm. I like to use a fairly percussive sound and limit the range of notes used to between a interval of a fifth to an octave; accentuating shots in the guitar part, or the snare with my right hand and covering the bass in the left. EQ the sound carefully and the part will sit well inside the track without turning the whole thing into indecipherable mud.

Listen for tones and textures that may be missing from the track and find a sound that sits in the song easily and makes a subtle difference. I usually listen for melodic elements that are shared by several instruments – sticking to single notes or wide intervals and resisting the temptation to grab huge fistfuls of extended chords. Take care to lock tightly with the overall groove; enhancing the depth of the track through the application of simple counter melodies and contrary motion using the basic changes. Identify common notes between chords and hold them across the barlines, altering the texture and intensity of your sound, (using volume, FX level, parameters etc.) concentrating on shifting dynamics to imply movement and adding harmonies sparingly.

Part of the difficulty inherent in finding a place to wedge a keyboard part in the "ear splitting, wall of mud" variety of tune is that it often seems as if the guitarist and bass player have filled in every sonic nook and cranny (they love to do this) leaving little space for anything else (the rotten, selfish bastards). You must outwit them.

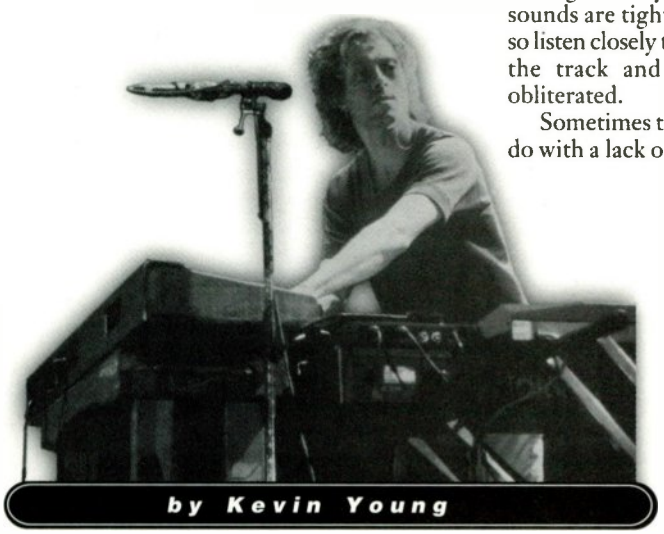
The part that the song needs may be the one that's already there, but no one is playing. If you listen closely in the studio you may find a melody or rhythm implied by the mess of feedback, reverb and cymbal decay that underlies the existing parts. These little sonic gems may disappear during mixing as sounds are tightened and EQs are tweaked so listen closely to the ambient sounds within the track and cop the lick before it's obliterated.

Sometimes the problem may have less to do with a lack of space and more to do with the fact that while there is plenty of room in the arrangement, most of it is necessary. Again subtlety is key – concentrate on recycling elements of the dominant melodic ideas present in other voices when soloing or writing signature lines. Use intervals instead of full chords for accompaniment and float simple melodies or chords over top using open voicings that draw on extensions played by other instruments that, (though the melody and rhythm may be different) seem to naturally follow what precedes them by echoing similar harmonic elements.

Whether you're laying down a piano track, or thick, heavily effected organ or synth sounds, in either of these scenarios it's important to maintain a consistency of tone and feel throughout. You may find that what sounds fine in the context of a rehearsal or live gig just won't wash under the magnifying glass of the studio, where every hiss, crackle and warble can be heard with humbling clarity. You want to be solid but careful not to rehearse so much that you bleed all the spontaneity out of your performance. Almost any exercise is good for working up consistency, but I prefer running through two different modes or harmonic minor scales simultaneously in contrary motion. The slight differences in fingering for each hand require more concentration to achieve fluency.

Harmonized arpeggiated chords around the cycle of fifths or up and down various scales are useful for precisely the same reason. Begin with similar motion and then move on to contrary motion subbing extensions for 1-3-5-7 to cover as many types of melodic movement as possible.

Whenever possible record what you're working on. The best way to identify inconsistencies in your playing is by listening outside of the moment in which you're actually doing it. At the least you'll be able to identify problems and fine-tune your parts. And at best you may end up with something on tape that is usable when it's time to record for real. Sometimes a specific performance is the only one that will do the job. Capture that performance with as high quality a recording as you can. It may not be as technically sophisticated as what you might get in studio, but what it lacks may very well be more than made up for in vibe. Sometimes low-fi quality is exactly what gives the sound or part more sparkle.



by Kevin Young

Kevin Young is keyboardist for David Usher and Moist.

How To Be A Better Bass Player

Every now and then I am asked if I have any advice for bass players. Here, I have come up with 10 basic principles to keep in mind while on your journey down the "low road." Next issue, "Why Bass Players Shouldn't Get a Mic..."

1. Play BASS

This sounds simple. On the surface, bass seems pretty simple. Four strings, one note at a time, how hard can it be? The answer is, not hard at all. Generally, the bass is not a solo instrument. Ask yourself, "Do I need to be in the spotlight all the time, feeling the love and devotion of all those who surround me?" If the answer is yes, the bass guitar is not for you.

2. Show Up On Time And In Tune

No one likes to be kept waiting. And don't bitch when the singer is chronically late.

3. Make Sure Your Gear Works

See above.

4. Get It Right The First Time

You are in the studio. Don't assume that just because the drummer got 75 takes that you will be afforded the same opportunity. Always assume that you will not get to do it again. Besides, if you don't know your part after playing it 75 times along with the drummer, then maybe the bass guitar is not for you. And the lead guitar player will be upset that you cut into his/her noodle time.

5. Get It Right Every Time

See above. Singers have tantrums, guitarists have substance abuse problems and drummers are, well, drummers. It is up to you to provide sanity, clarity and consistency.

6. Thou Shalt Not Play The "D" Or "G" String

Remember, these two strings' sole purpose is to provide tension across the neck of the guitar. The "G" string is also a handy place to hook your pinky while you are playing.

7. Thou Shalt Not "Pop"

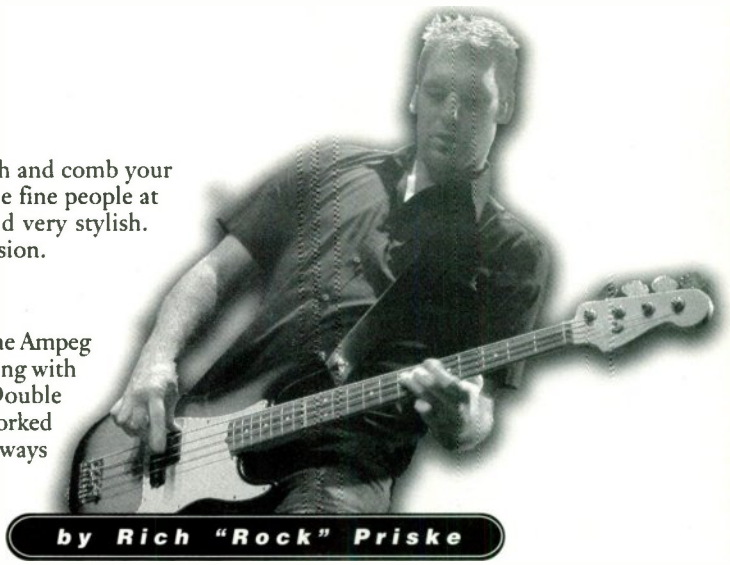
See above. Unless your name is Flea, or Larry Graham.

8. Look Sharp

It cannot be said enough, personal grooming is very important. Wash and comb your hair, brush your teeth and use deodorant. Clothes make the man. The fine people at Kappa sportswear make clothes that are comfortable, affordable and very stylish. Remember that you never get a second chance to make a first impression.

9. Play Good Gear

There are really only two or three guitars and one amp worth playing. The Ampeg SVT bass amp is the industry standard for a reason. You cannot go wrong with either a Fender Jazz or Precision bass (pre-CBS, of course, with a Double Whammy installed if you so choose). Practically every producer I have worked with over the years has asked for one or the other. And remember to always string your bass with DR strings, or stray dogs will bite you.



by Rich "Rock" Priske

10. Learn To Count, Know Some Good Drummer Jokes

This is your only defense when the bass player jokes start flying. And they will...

Rich "Rock" Priske is bassist for Matthew Good.

percussion

Drum Solos And Other Beasts Of Burden

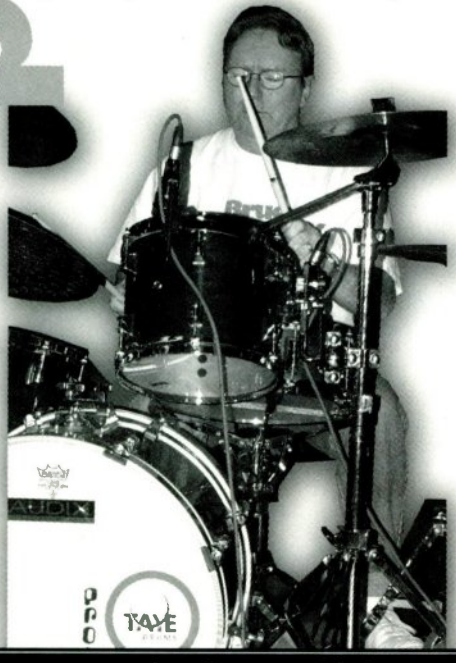
The dictionary defines **solo** (n. pl.) as; 1. Music, a composition or passage for an individual voice or instrument, with or without accompaniment.

Now I have to say I looked everywhere for the words fast, furious, tricky, polyrhythmic, flash, unbelievable, humanly impossible, independently unsurpassable ... but no matter where I looked I could not find those descriptive nouns, verbs or adverbs for the word solo.

I really wanted to, because that would then help me to help countless others to understand the drum solo. There are a great deal of training exercises drummers must succumb to, to achieve the solo! I'll try to divide and sub-divide these whole perceptions into a reasonable paradox of actual importance, (you know, standing is more tiring than walking) thereby initiating the novice to expand a greater knowledge of the consequences of their actions.

What does that mean? Confusion. That's right create a state of confusion. This is numero uno in a solo. Should I explain, or simply dance around the question?

The first thing one must have to complete a dramatic earth shattering solo is a thousand-piece drum kit, you know 600 drums and gadgets, 400 cymbals, strategically placed of course, to gain the greatest possible photographic angle to appear in the magazine of choice ... smile ... click! (We ain't get richa, but we've got our pitcha, on the cover of...)



by Bruce Aitken

Once this is achieved, it's possible that some actual drum studies may be required. Now before you get comfortable, these are not your regular lessons. No, no, no. These would be lessons in very important areas such as, say, umm, face distortion.

Face distortion is a very important part of soloing. The more grotesque a face one can pull the greater the chance of the solo being successful. One must spend a great deal of time and effort perfecting this very difficult exercise. I mean there's the long face, the double face, the about face, the two face, the face off, the face lift and countless others. There are many books on the subject; a couple I would recommend would be syncopation and the modern face and virtually any issue of modern face, or my all time favourite, face control.

Another little ripper would be exercising body control, or lack of it.

The body should move with the groove. It's imperative that when performing the solo that every body action be totally exaggerated. The greater the exaggeration the better, It gives the impression you are doing more than you actually are, a counterpoint to this is of course the mandatory stick twirling. The history of the twirl is short and exact. The hand is quicker than the eye, end of story. Vital point here when the camera is in your face twirl the stick right back in its face.

So now you have it, a massive kit, the ability to pull faces, great distorted body moves and the twirl. Did I leave any thing out? Let's see now ... no, that's about it, but somehow something seems like it's missing. Oh no! I guess you should have some drumming ability. The faster you play, the more people you impress, got it? Great. Play fast, loud, long and with tonnes of movement. But what about slow, sparse, musical, intelligent, dynamic, moods and other less crowded words?

Some drummers worry about keeping the audiences' attention. Not me. The average attention span of a drummer is two to three days of drum solos. It must be – just look at all the drum festivals around the planet. Have you ever seen a bass guitar festival?

But there's another part to the success of the drum solo – talking to the crowd! Explaining why you have the kit, the face, the moves and the twirl.

Next golden rule – answering a question with a question...

Q: "Hey Mister, why did you go out of time just then?"

A: "Well, have you ever cast your eyes on such a magnificent tom-tom holder?"

Or the ability to answer the question with the answer from another question...

Q: "But can you show me how the independence actually works?"

A: "Well the face really has to be worked on and so does the twirl ... that answer your question? NEXT!"

Now here's something I recommend for the finish. The solo ends. It's fast, incredible, independently impossible and dynamically moving in all styles and all meters. The crowd goes crazy. Then you front up to the microphone and mumble something like, "To be really successful you have to practice this for 20 years relentlessly..." Then proceed to play 2 & 4 on the snare and 1 & 3 on the kicker, 8th notes ride or hi-hat! The message to an unsuspecting audience is simple.

You spend 20 years playing time, with no fills to boot and then suddenly one day you wake up and bingo, you've turned into Terry Bozio! I hope this advice will turn you into the greatest drum soloist on the planet. It works for me.

Bruce Aitken is a drum instructor/clinician based in Marion Bridge, Sydney, Cape Breton Island. He teaches approximately 60 students per week, is the founder and organizer of The Cape Breton International Drum Fest (www.cbdrumfest.com) and endorses Taye Drums, Paiste, Audix, XL Specialty Cases, Promark, Otarion, Rhythm Tech and Remo Drum Heads. He plays in recording sessions regularly and is also the drummer with the award-winning Canadian blues artist John Campbelljohn (www.campbelljohn.ca). Bruce is a consultant for the Drum Department of MacKenzie College in Sydney, NS. For more information visit www.bruceaitken.com.

More Fun with Triads

In the last article I wrote about soloing using triads as source material for improvised melodies. This is a technique that brings a different sound to your solo. I discussed using triads that are built from your scale choice for the particular chord you are playing and kept it pretty inside. (For example D maj. Triad on a C dom7 chord.) I thought we might take it to the next step and look at some of the triads available on dominant chords.

I've always thought of these as upper structure triads because they are based on the upper partials of the chords (♭9, 9, #9.etc.). However it has been suggested that these are actually middle structure triads because a chord actually can be thought of as having fifteenths, seventeenths and higher but generally I like to refer to these triads as upper structure triads. If you are curious you can study these higher structures in Vincent Persichetti's text *Twentieth-Century Harmony Creative Aspects and Practice.*

All right, down to business. When we look at the scale choices for a dominant chord we have many possibilities. Mixolydian, Lydian ♭7, the inverted or dominant diminished and whole tone are just some of them. Each one of these scales gives us specific triad choices. I often (not always) pull some of the triads out of the inverted diminished scale because I like the sound. For example if I play an A (the 13th) an E (the 3rd) and a C# (the enharmonic ♭9) on a C7 chord I create an A maj triad. I can also play an F# (#11) an A# (enharmonic dom7) with the C# and build an F# triad to play with it. I guess it's starting to become obvious that you really need to know the upper partials of all the chords and be able to access this information quickly. I found that learning basic left hand piano voicings (3, 5, 7, 9 or 7, 9, 3, 5) and playing the chosen triads over top of them very helpful. I always try to hear what I'm going to play before I play it but sometimes I just experiment with the sound and see if I like it.

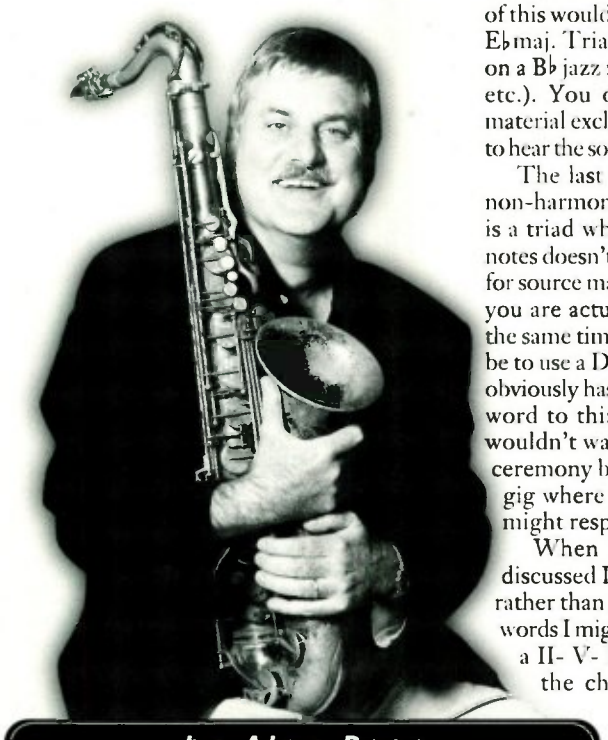
In the way we can pull triads from the modes of the major scale it's also possible to pull triads out of the jazz minor scale (melodic ascending) and use any of the triads found. For example there are two major triads found on the 4th and the 5th degrees. An example of this would be to hear an Fmaj.triad and an E♭maj. Triad over any of the modes found on a B♭ jazz minor scale (A alt. E♭ Lydian ♭7 etc.). You of course would not use this material exclusively during a solo but it is fun to hear the sound and use it to try to play music.

The last technique is something called non-harmonic triads. A non-harmonic triad is a triad where one or more of the triad's notes doesn't fit the chord or scale your using for source material. It's kind of tricky because you are actually trying to hear two keys at the same time. A good example of this would be to use a D triad over a Cmaj. chord. This obviously has to be done carefully. I guess the word to think about here is context. You wouldn't want to do this during a wedding ceremony but you might want to try it on a gig where you think the other musicians might respond in kind.

When I try these techniques I've discussed I try to use them over a key area rather than on an individual chord, in other words I might try to play a Dbmaj. triad over a II- V- I in Cmaj. Rather than just on the chord C. It helps me hear the relationship of what I'm playing to the whole structure of the tune and it also helps decide if I like it or not. I try to see how it effects me emotionally in other words do I feel excited by the sound or to I feel like I'm lost in the tune. If I play with confidence I can usually get a good read on how I feel about it and how it sounds.

Here's something you might want to try to tune up you're ears to some of these new sounds. Play simple melodies in one key then jump to a new key while still trying to hear the original harmony. By jumping back and forth into new keys you start to hear lines that might be a third or a sharp 4th away. This also helps you hear in one key but play in another.

These techniques are pretty out there but they do help me attempt to create the sounds I want to hear. Again I have to stress that the important word here is context. Sometimes you want to try and play straight ahead and swing like Zoot and other times you want to try to get out there and see what happens it's always up to you and how you react to the rhythm section and they respond to you as always remember that some days are better than others.



by Alex Dean

Reedman, Alex Dean has been a mainstay of the Canadian music scene for many years. He has played and recorded with: Gil Evans, Kenny Wheeler, Mel Torme, Aretha Franklin, Natalie Cole, Harry Connick Jr., Ray Charles, Pat Labarbera, Phil Nimmons, and the Toronto Symphony. Alex is a member of Rob McConnell's "Tentet," holds the tenor saxophone chair with McConnell's "Grammy award winning" BOSS Brass, and has recorded their last 10 albums with Concord Records. He is also a member of the group D.E.W. East, who have released several recordings. He has appeared on numerous Juno and Grammy award-winning albums with the BOSS Brass. Alex is the Canadian Artist Representative for Boosey & Hawkes, promoting Kielwerth Saxophones and Rico Reeds. Alex is a widely respected clinician/adjudicator in Canada and the United States. He is a faculty member of the University of Toronto and Humber College Music Departments in Toronto, Canada, teaching saxophone and advanced jazz improvisation. And last but not least, he can be reached online at www.alexdean.com.

brass

More Is Less

A student once came to a lesson. We put on a play-along CD and I was witness to a relentless torrent of notes. High notes, low notes, fast notes, slow notes (well, not many of those). Were they all great notes? No. Was it musical? No. Did he know it? Yes. After the tune his comment was:

"Man, that sucked."

"I won't disagree," I replied, "but you played a lot of notes. Perhaps if you only played half as many, it would only be half as bad. That would make your solo twice as good!"

Is playing half as bad the same as playing twice as good?

by Chase Sanborn

They Are Doing Fine Without You

Listen to a play-along recording, where the rhythm section is just comping or playing chords, no one is soloing. Don't play, just listen. Does it sound bad? It probably sounds pretty nice. It's relaxed and everybody is settled into a groove. It's good. Now, when you start to play, do you make that good thing better, or do you make it worse? Since the rhythm section sound pretty good all by themselves, you don't have to add a lot to it. Try playing less and listening more.

More Is Less

A lot of what we play in our solos is filler, notes we play while trying to come up with a really great idea. What if we weed out the extraneous notes, and are left with just the really great ideas? That's my definition of a fantastic solo. Give me a transcription of any student's solo and an eraser, and I'll turn it into, if not a work of art, something unique and interesting.

How do you carve a statue of a horse? Simple – just cut away everything that doesn't look like a horse. Take away everything from your solo that is unnecessary, and you are left with, well ... a horse. Making your statement concisely is a mark of maturity.

How To Play Less

If half as many notes is twice as good, perhaps the perfect solo contains no notes at all! Okay, maybe that's a little too Zen or John Cage, but you get my drift. How can you learn to play less notes?

- As Miles said to Coltrane: "Try taking your horn out of your mouth!" Literally pull your lips or fingers off of the instrument, stopping your lines at places where you wouldn't naturally stop. This breaks up your lines and can lead to some very surprising and wonderful results.
- Inject rest into your lines. When practicing with a play-along recording, only play every other bar, or phrase. During the bars you lay out, continue to sing the line to yourself. When you play again, try to connect what you played before the rest to what you play after the rest.
- With no accompaniment, trade phrases with yourself, leaving a bar or two of silence between phrases. Keep the time and the changes going in your head while you rest. Discover the power of silence.
- If you are not sure what to play on a chord change, lay out and listen, instead of trying to cover up your lack of knowledge with a flurry of meaningless notes. Expand your ears. Learn something. Improve!
- When playing a solo with a band, put the horn to your face but don't play anything for the first four to eight bars. The rhythm section will quickly come down in volume and the groove will tighten as they get a moment to hear themselves. This also provides time for the applause to quiet down and allows the audience to focus on you as you get ready to play. When you do start to play, ease into it gently, get in the groove, and allow some room to build.

Tell Us A Story

Your solo tells a story. It should have a beginning, middle and end. It should express something that you feel inside. You are the author and the protagonist, but all the other characters have important parts as well. Involve them in the story, and look to them for ideas. Remember that even when one player is soloing, everybody is improvising, and you must all listen and react to each other if music is to occur. At that point, the band moves to a higher plane. It is not about scales, or chords, or patterns or licks. It is about communication and expression. Tell us a story, and we'll listen.

Chase Sanborn is a jazz trumpet player based in Toronto. He is a member of the jazz faculty at U of T and is a Yamaha performing artist/ clinician. Jazz Tactics *is the third book by Chase Sanborn, from which this article is excerpted. A wide range of products and information can be found on his Web site www.chasesanborn.com.*

Technology Kickin' Our Asses!

How many times have you, as a musician or a recording engineer, had to stop the creative process in order to attend to something technical in the studio or at home. Whether it be to reboot the computer, figure out why the new box you have doesn't do something simple, or more times than not, have to refer to the manufacturer's Web site only to find out that you need to download an update to the patch of the updated patch that you just installed over the patched update has made your printer stop working! I cannot tell you how many times I have had to deal with this being an engineer/producer in the studio over the past 13 years, otherwise this would be a very boring, 75-part article that would only make me angry in the end.

I shouldn't complain. I am used to technology letting us down on a daily basis. Sometimes my cell phone cuts out in the middle of a call while I can see a cell tower 100 feet away from me. I was used to anything going wrong at the drop of hat with analog tape machines. How many heated overdub sessions can you remember when they have had to stop in order to swap the set of cards from one track to another? Even my car had three simultaneous breakdowns that had to do with the on-board computer. While there are many obvious benefits, technology has consistently been a burden to the creative process as well. I find it funny though, because at the same time it has enough of an allure to make people WANT to noodle with it even though it may not need to be noodled with.

This is something that we should all keep in mind. It is constantly programmed into our heads that we should want the latest software, the newest hardware or the fastest processing speed. If you are a musician that owns and or operates his own recording gear I am proposing today you should reassess what your recording NEEDS are. Instead of automatically thinking that the buzz words that you have heard tossed around the retail store or in circles of recording buffs should be taken as gospel, step back and listen to yourself. Ask this: What do I need this device to do for me? Once you can truthfully answer that for yourself just set it up to do that and nothing else.

Five years ago I figured out how to make my Pro Tools rig run smoothly without crashing. I finally found the intricate balance between hardware, software, operating system, extensions, control panels, preferences and plug-ins that attended to my needs as an engineer and I stuck with it. The end result has been amazing. Not only did I have happy, less worried clients that did not have to endure the horrible process of waiting for something to be repaired during their creative time but it gave me more time and opportunity to add to the creative process from the engineer's chair. Once I got this breath of fresh air from being able to rely on my tools it turned my focus back to the job at hand, which is making the music.

Another funny thing has happened. Once everything worked fairly well, the artists and musicians stopped asking technical questions about the gear during recording. The regular questions that popped up, while there was time during a break down were: "What bit rate are we recording at?", "What sampling frequency is the machine running at?" or "What version of Pro Tools are you using?" The answers to questions like these seem to make a real difference to the attitude of some musicians about the recording job that I am doing for them. I am confident that I could play the average consumer a project recorded on various mediums at various sample rates and bit levels and no one would be able to point out the difference of those parameters alone.

Don't get me wrong. The goal *should* be to make your recordings sound the very best that they can and what helps is having good gear. There is a reason why I went to the extent of getting the best schooling possible to help educate me in this field (Thanks Mom and Dad!), I have pored over text and great magazines like *Professional Sound* and I have stayed up all night in the studio more times than I like to keep track of. It's all because of having the passion to want to create something in the end.

The passion to want to have the best toys and to choose to run that race is a completely different objective. If we build studios to be able to capture the music so that it can be distributed to people to listen to over and over again then the true task at hand in the studio should be to accomplish that – not to chase our tails in order to keep up with the next person's equipment list or, worse yet, to be told by a manufacturer that we should throw out what we have right now and purchase their next big thing.

I realize that without the R&D of manufacturers we would not have any ground breaking moments like non-linear recording devices or modelled effects processors but what I am trying to point out here is that if the time spent in the studio is focused on the performance and the musicality of the moment as opposed to the technological aspect of the studio, one can only think that the end result would be a superior product – no?

Brad "Merlin" Nelson is a freelance album producer and the chief engineer at Tattoo Music Studios. He can be reached online at www.merlinmusic.net.

Roy Timm

by Brad Nelson

Vocal Engineering

by Diana Yampolsky

A lot of aspiring singers have no idea of what the recording of their voice entails. It is a completely different experience from anything you have ever done – with respect to your voice and the vocal production in general. Now you are wearing headphones and hearing the music through them – it is like having two speakers connected to your head. Also, you are not singing the whole song all at once. First you are taking it a verse at a time and then, most likely, dissecting it line-by-line – sometimes even word-by-word or even syllable-by-syllable. You need a lot of patience as it takes a long time. Nowadays, a lot of engineers use Pro Tools, which allows them to cut and paste not only different words but also different syllables flown from track to track. Quite a fascinating experience – however, it is not always useful. This type of recording promotes not always adequate live performance. I was completely shocked when I heard Marc Anthony singing a Christmas carol during a televised Christmas concert being held at the White House. The impression was that it was the very first day of his singing career. Prior to that event I was completely in love with his recorded version of "My Baby You". It possessed a perfect vocal and excellent production. His live performance did not resemble any of it. Therefore, in my opinion, it is good to use advanced technology to enhance an already great performance, but not to use it instead of the actual natural performance. Thus, I make sure that all my recording artists will be able to replicate their recordings at least 90-95% live, which is a pretty good ratio.

An important role in any recording project is played by a good, experienced engineer. If they have the proper technology and they know how to use it, they can save a lot of time and aggravation during the recording venture. As an In-Studio Vocal Consultant, I know what I want to hear on a vocal track and a good, experienced engineer will translate it back to me through the means of his technical skills. It is indeed frustrating when the engineer does not know his craft well enough to encourage faster and better production. For example, my recording artist got stuck on one word in a song. She kept dropping that word out of the context and respectively the pitch was suffering. The creative engineer found the solution. For some very mysterious reason the artist was able to sing the word a cappella (also called "On Air" in studio terminology) then the engineer added the instrumental track around that word. This was an extreme measure but in this case it was a needed last resort.

Sound Construction and Reconstruction

Throughout over 20 years experience being in studios, I discovered a magic button – the fader. Once the plain track has been recorded, it can be greatly enhanced by operating the fader properly and accordingly to the phrasing, style and volume. If my client is not of the calibre of Celine Dion or Brian McKnight, they definitely need an enhancement on their tracks. Partly, as they don't sing the whole song all at once, they sometimes lose the emotion throughout the recording experience, which is totally understandable. That's where I come in with my "magic button." Playing with the volume I can give a song a certain lift or certain fade – whatever is required. I can make it lighter or heavier and nevertheless louder or softer. I even could give it a certain "bite", especially at the beginning of the phrases if needed. I like doing it as a last touch during the blend between the instrumental and vocal tracks. It is especially important during the production of a demo CD, as the actual mix is usually not taking place in this instance – especially if a pre-recorded instrumental track was used. It's important to note that there are two ways of using the fader. The first is via volume automation done through a computer program which is not involving a manual touch. I prefer the second option, which is the manual vocal riding; which is recorded from the console to the computer. In my opinion, I am able to give it a more personal touch and add more soul to the performance via this method.

In conclusion, if you are a vocalist (experienced or not so experienced), I would definitely advise you to get a vocal expert to go with you into the recording studio, as the engineer and/or producer may not be able to give you "sound" vocal advice. They definitely know what they want to hear, but they do not know how to interpret it to a vocalist in the language that would achieve a desirable outcome. After all, there is nothing wrong when the cardiac patient has different medical personnel working on him at the same time in the operating room. In many cases, when a person has a heart attack they are not treated solely by a cardiologist. For example, in cases of a stroke, a neurologist and brain surgeon are required to work in conjunction with the heart specialist. Given all of that, why has the concept of having a vocal specialist in the studio not become a standard operating procedure?

Diana Yampolsky is a vocal instructor based in Toronto at the Royans School for the Musical Performing Arts, located online at www.vocalscience.com.

by Karen Bliss

NICKELBACK

Recording 'The Long Road'

It's early July and multi-platinum rock band Nickelback is already doing press for the follow-up to 2001's *Silver Side Up*, which sold more than 8.5 million copies worldwide. Due out September 23, the first single, "Someday" is slated to go to radio on July 30. This may all seem usual, the typical set up by a band and label for a forthcoming release, but the thing is the album, titled *The Long Road*, wasn't finished.

Nickelback, which is co-producing the album with engineer Joey Moi, will actually be leaving Greenhouse Studios in Burnaby, BC, where they've recorded the bulk of the album. They'll be relocating to the pastoral farmland of frontman Chad Kroeger's new home in Abbotsford, BC. There, workers are busy constructing a studio – which he's calling Mountain View – in the renovated barn on his property. It's a barn big enough to be a starter house or a nice one-bedroom apartment with a deck.

"I bought the (SSL) board from Greenhouse that used to be at Little Mountain in the dynasty, if you will, with Bob Rock and Bruce Fairbairn," says Kroeger. "Two of the largest selling albums of all time were recorded on this board – Bon Jovi's *Slippery When Wet* and Metallica's *Black* album."

He also name-checks The Cult, AC/DC, Motley Crue, and the Scorpions; his own band, Nickelback, plus protégés Default and Theory of A Dead Man. "Hero", the track he and Saliva's Josey Scott recorded for the *Spider-Man* soundtrack, was also done on that board.

"I think we still have three more songs for the record to record in their entirety," says Moi, without a hint of panic or stress. "It's not like they have names. Once the song gets recorded, it evolves so much, especially working with these guys because they'll record a part and listen to it for a few hours and then say, 'No, we gotta change it.'

"All the songs are [written]," Moi confirms. "We usually start recording [a song] and there may be a section that's undetermined or we might have to work out a few bars. We usually go song-to-song, but in this case, we did like five songs and got Randy [Staub] to mix those. We got those to the label to get all excited, and get the big machine rolling."

Chad Kroeger; his older brother, bassist Mike Kroeger; guitarist Ryan Peake and drummer Ryan Vikedal have delivered a handful of songs – including "Someday", "Feeling Way Too Damn Good", "Do This Anymore", "Throw Yourself Away" and "See You At The Show" – to Roadrunner, the band's US label. As is commonplace these days, with the likelihood of tracks ending up on the Internet prior to release, copies hadn't left the New York office, so Kroeger was speaking to journalists who haven't yet heard any music.

For Nickelback, one would think talking about an unfinished album would be difficult, but Chad Kroeger, the one on the phone line from Greenhouse, has a remarkable perspective on the work he and his band mates produce. "We focused on the songs that we thought would probably appeal to the largest audience and had the highest potential of being chosen as a single by the record company. So we did those ones first," Kroeger says.

People may have heard about the singer's knowledge of the industry, talking numbers and strategies befitting a label rep. He even formed his own record company, 604 Records, with his lawyer Jonathan Simkin and signed Theory Of A Dead Man and Big Wreck's Ian Thornley, among others. However, most artists would not be so frank about writing singles-oriented material, thinking it might be perceived as calculated or selling out, but Nickelback recognizes the skill involved in writing a hit.

As the interview progresses, one understands that Kroeger – the songwriter in the band – approaches the task like a running back seeking a touchdown. He studies plays; he studies opponents; he studies the game.

"If you study songwriting, you can learn so much," he says. "That's why there are so many one-hit wonders because they don't know how to write. They stumble onto it by accident once. But there's people, like Diane Warren, who do nothing but write songs for people. They know how to write hooks. They know how to write the parts of songs that really stick in your head."

In 2002, Nickelback was also the #1 most played rock artist across all radio formats in North America, based on three singles from *Silver Side Up*, "How You Remind Me", "Too Bad", and "Never Again", all songs, Kroeger says, were written a couple of weeks before the band went into the studio with co-producer Rick Parashar to lay down the album. "How You Remind Me" became the most played song of the year.

"I watched 'How You Remind Me' do what it did, all over the world, on every single radio station – and I am so proud of that song – that was the little train that could," says Kroeger. "I sort of refer to it as a little boxer. There was no other song at that point in time that could get in the ring with 'How You Remind Me' and stand a chance, because that song would just get on a radio chart and climb to the top. It was overtaking everybody."

Is there an explanation for it?

"Yes there is," he answers categorically and without hesitation. "There are three hooks in the song – and the subject matter of the song is about relationships, which can universally be identified with. Now you have a topic that everybody can relate to, and you have three different parts of the song that are very memorable.

"The phrase '*This is how you remind me of what I really am*' is very to the bone, right to the point. There's no bullshit in that line. So that line, first off, is very memorable. And then you've got the '*been wrong/been down,*' the stops in the chorus, and then you've got your post-chorus piece – the yeah-ehs yeah-ehs. So there are your three hooks in the song that are very memorable and it's about a topic that everybody on the planet can relate to, relationships gone bad. So I sort of studied and I watched it happen and I watched other bands and I really started to pay attention," he says.

"I study everything. I started studying every piece, everything sonically, everything lyrically, everything musically, chord structure. I would dissect every single song that I would hear on the radio or every song that I had ever done well on a chart and I would say, 'Why did this do well?' And I would sit there and I would listen to it and I would just wait and analyze.

"It's almost like you're listening to your own heartbeat. It's like, 'At what in point in time am I

Photos by Ashley Maile

NICKELBACK Recording 'The Long Road'

really enjoying this? And then I'd say, 'Oh right here. I really enjoy this part of the song.' And then I would have to analyze what was it? Was it the lyrics? Was it the way they were singing it? Was it the little guitar hook in the back? Was it the chords or was it something rhythmically that they were doing? There are so many things that you can do to make a song stick in someone's head."

With the brand new single, "Someday", there are two hooks Kroeger says. Unlike "How You Remind Me", it's just a verse-chorus structure. "I didn't do the post-chorus hook," he says. "The song has these dark minor verses and then they have these positive major choruses." Selected, of course, because "It would appeal to the largest audience," Kroeger calls it "a very 'How You Remind Me'-esque song."

Lyrics include: *"Now the story's played out like this/Just like a paperback novel/Let's rewrite an ending that fits/Instead of a Hollywood horror."*

And the catchy chorus, for which Nickelback is known:

"Someday/Somehow/I'm gonna make it all right/But not right now/I know you're wondering when/You're the only one that knows that."

"On this record I've been allowing the other boys to have a lot more input, lyrically," Kroeger says. "And so on 'Someday', I allowed contributions from other people, which I don't really like doing with lyrics because I'm the one who likes to sing them and I'm the one that has to believe in the words. It's always weird if somebody else were to say, 'Here, here's some words that don't mean anything to you, but by all means, scream them with conviction.' But they came up with some really tasty stuff."

Back in Hanna, Alberta, the original incarnation of the band played covers and featured a different singer and drummer. When it dissolved, Kroeger, who had never fronted a band before, started composing originals in 1995. To record them, he went to Vancouver with his best friend, Peake, and cousin, drummer Brandon Kroeger (replaced by Vikedal prior to making 1999's *The State*), where older brother Mike was playing in a metal outfit.

The four recorded the CD EP, *Hesher*, which attracted management. The company helped get the song "Fly" spun on Vancouver rock station CFOX and bypass the crappy club circuit because it was getting radio support. Nickelback's first gig was at the Town Pump, opening for a band called Rust. By the end of '96, Nickelback recorded its full-length debut, *Curb*, in 16 days with Larry Anschell, and toured for the next two years.

In the middle of recording of the next album, *The State*, in late '98 – which was co-produced by Dale Penner (Holly McNarland, Matthew Good Band, Econoline Crush) and Nickelback, over 21 days, and mixed by GGGarth Richardson (Rage Against The Machine, Red Hot Chili Peppers) – Nickelback fired its management and took on all the business duties.

With advice from Rob Robson, then at CFOX, Kroeger himself a former telemarketer and ad salesman, worked the single "Leader Of Men" to Canadian radio to the point where top spins earned it a place on the national rock chart. But it wasn't until Ralph James from Toronto-based The Agency Group started booking Nickelback that everything started changing. James put the band on bills with his biggest clients at the time, like Big Sugar, Headstones, 54-40, and Wide Mouth Mason, until Nickelback itself became a headliner.

Within a couple of months, Nickelback sold 10,000 copies of *The State* and the band had difficulty keeping up with the demand. That's when the labels stepped in. After laying the groundwork in Canada, Nickelback structured a domestic deal with EMI Music Canada and signed with Roadrunner for the world, both companies licensing *The State* and putting their muscle behind it.

For the rest of 1999, the band continuing to tour Canada, where the album was immediately re-released with new artwork. At the beginning of 2000, *The State* came out in the US and the band found itself starting from scratch. By then, Nickelback had signed on with Union Entertainment's Bryan Coleman ("One of the most trustworthy people on the planet.") for management, and Steve Kaul at The Agency Group (US).

Again, the band's strategy was to tour, leaving the labels this time to handle radio, although Kroeger's personable nature and gift of gab may certainly have helped on promo visits. After another 14 months on the road, the band took a breather, and Kroeger produced fellow BC rockers Default, which was picked up by TVT. Then, Nickelback went into the studio with Parashar (Pearl Jam, Alice In Chains) to co-produce *Silver Side Up*, the band's first album paid for by a label.

Considering it was released the week of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the album made an impressive debut at #2 on Billboard's Top 200 Albums chart, and the band ended up touring behind it for 18 months. Along the way, Nickelback received nominations for four Grammys and two American Music Awards, won four Billboard Awards and a Juno for "Songwriter Of The Year," for "How You Remind Me" and "Too Bad". *Silver Side Up* also garnered gold and/or platinum status in over 10 countries, including the UK (3x platinum), America (5x platinum) and Canada (7x platinum).

Somehow, on his rare down-time, Kroeger, joined by Moi as the engineer, managed to produce (and co-write for) other Canadian acts, such as Theory Of A Deadman, Ian Thornley, Vancouver's WDC and Union One, and Camrose, AB's Rake. Working together with Moi, he knew he wanted Nickelback to produce their fourth album alone. "Too many producers are glorified engineers," Kroeger believes.

"They think that just because they know what every button on the console does that they can bring in a band and produce them. Well, they can't. I don't know what every button on the console does; however, I can produce bands because a producer doesn't need to know how to use the board. A producer should be able to play every instrument.

"For me, the ultimate producer can play the guitar better than I can; can play the drums better than I can, and I'm a better drummer than I am a guitar player; sing better than I can – which isn't that tough to do – and arrange songs better than I can, and come up with hooks better than I can. That's the only way I'm going to have respect for somebody's opinion, if they can do all these things better than I can.

"If somebody simply knows which compressor sounds best on a guitar; which compressor sounds best on a bass, well that's not going to help you have a song stick in someone's head; that's not going to help your song get played on the radio at all. Every single song that Nazareth ever recorded sounds like absolute dog shit, but they're great songs (laughs) and nobody cares."

Moi, who had taken a three-year program at Burnaby's The Centre for Digital Imaging and Sound (CDIS), when he met Nickelback in the mid-'90s,

Nickelback hangs out at Vancouver's Greenhouse Studios.

engineered *Silver Side Up* and Default's *The Fallout* and self-titled *Theory Of A Dead Man*. "We've been learning everything together as we go along," says Kroeger. "And now we've kind of got a lot of things figured out. We know how to make drums sound really big and we know how to make guitars sound really big."

The other change is the way they've been recording. For Nickelback's previous albums, the band laid down the drums first, then all the bass, then guitars, vocals and harmonies, "just built it like a house," as Kroeger puts it. "You built the whole record at the same time.

"Now, the things that aren't cool about doing that is the fact that all your drums sounds exactly the same because you did them all at the same time, and all your bass sounds the same, and all your guitars sound the same; so there's your first thing. Second off, you lose perspective on the song because you're not adding to the song. You're just building it like a house.

"The positive side is you make records very quickly and that's why it gets done that way, because you can't afford to just take it a song at a time. When you're doing a song at a time, there's no end. You don't stop until the song's done."

Nickelback can now afford to work this way. Kroeger says he laid down some stuff on his Pro Tools rig, his Mbox plugged into his G4 computer, but for the most part didn't demo for *The Long Road*. "We're sort of like Prince or The Artist Formerly and The Artist once again known as Prince. We always have a vault that's filled with songs, and whenever we need songs we just go to the vault and open them up and walk around with that vault all the time (laughs)."

While Kroeger obviously can step outside the band and have a perspective on his own material, Moi – likely the closest non-member of Nickelback – echoes the frontman's comments.

Nickelback Instrument List

Chad Kroeger

Paul Reed Smith Guitars
Mesa Boogie Triple Rectifier Guitar Heads
Mesa Boogie 4 x 12 Guitar Cabs
Marshall 4 x 12 Guitar Cabs
Fender Clean Guitar Head
Vox Clean Guitar Head

Ryan Peake

Gibson Custom Guitars
Mesa Boogie Triple Rectifier Guitar Heads
Mesa Boogie 4 x 12 Guitar Cabs
Marshall 4 x 12 Guitar Cabs
Fender Clean Guitar Head

Mike Kroeger

Spector 5-string basses US and Euro models
Peavey Pro 500 Heads
Peavey GPS 2600 Power Amps
Peavey Kosmos Subharmonic Generator
Peavey Triple X Guitar Heads
Peavey 8 x 10 Cabs (1 sealed and 1 ported)
Peavey 1 x 15 Cabs
Peavey Triple X 4 x 12 Cabs
Sans Amp PSA 1
Sans Amp RBI

Ryan Vikedal

Ayotte Drums
Tama Hardware
Zildjian Cymbals

Greenhouse Studios Gear

Studio 1

Dimensions: control room, 25 x 21; live room, 41 x 28
Console: SSL 4048 E/G TR BG 3.5"
Monitors:
Tannoy FSM (2 x 15 plus horn)
Genelec 1031A
Yamaha NS-10 with sub system
Auratone Cube
Instruments:
Baldwin 9' grand piano
Hammond organ with Leslie speakers
Digital Outboard:
Apogee AD-500
AMS RMS
Lexicon PCM 70
Lexicon PCM 42
Lexicon Prime Time
Lexicon H-3000
Lexicon Flanger
Yamaha SPX-90 (x3)
Loft 440 DDL, 450 DDL
Korg DRV 3000
Analog Outboard:
Neve 1084 preamp/EQs (x10)
UREI 1176
UREI LA3A (x2)
Summit TLA-100
dbx 160X, 160 XT
Tubetech P-EQ 1
GML 8200 EQ
Trident EQ
John Hardy M1 stereo preamp
Drawmer DS 201 (x2)
BBE 862 Sonic Maximizer
EMT 240 Plate Reverb
RCA BA6A Tube Limiter

"The main evolution is definitely in the songwriting," says Moi. "Knowing what works at radio or what works in radio for the last record, everything they write is aimed for pleasing the masses.

"When you're working with younger bands, they have a tendency to play what they think is cool and they don't take into consideration that you need to conform to certain rules to make an A&R guy like what you're doing. You have to do something that is obvious sounding. There are little rules that you have to do and (Nickelback) is more aware of those rules and they come in with those songs and they play their parts already honed down. It all aims towards corporate-sounding rock." CM

Toronto-based music journalist Karen Bliss is the Canadian news correspondent for Pollstar, www.rollingstone.com, and "Lowdown" on canoe.ca/jam.

DELERIUM'S BILL LEEB AND RHYS FULBER ARE NO STRANGERS TO THE SHIFTING TRENDS OF THE MUSIC BUSINESS. IN AN INDUSTRY WHERE THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT AN ARTIST'S CAREER WILL LAST MORE THAN A FEW RECORDS, REGARDLESS OF THEIR LEVEL OF SUCCESS, THEY'VE WEATHERED THE STORM VERY COMFORTABLY.

From early on, music had always been an important part of Bill Leeb's life. He began studying violin at the age of six and performing in choirs in Vienna, Austria before immigrating to Canada at the age of 12. "The next thing you know," he says, "I was in a local rock band and it just escalated from there." The local rock band in question was Skinny Puppy, one of the most influential alt. industrial bands of the 1980s. It was during his time with Skinny Puppy that Leeb met Rhys Fulber spawning a collaboration that's lasted over 15 years.

Fulber also had the benefit of an early start. He was hanging around recording studios and older punk rockers by age 11. Seeing the potential of electronic music and being given a synthesizer and drum machine by his musician father at 14, however, started him on the path that ultimately led he and Leeb to each other, as well as to success and longevity greater than either could have foreseen.

In the late '80s they formed Frontline Assembly. The band brought the pair greater prominence than either expected, but it was Delirium's *Karma*, the duo's second record with Vancouver's Nettwerk Records that put them over the top: Selling more than a quarter of a million copies and reaching number two in the United Kingdom.

Though the two split briefly after *Karma* (Bill to continue Delerium and release 2000's *Poem* on his own – Rhys to pursue his production career and make *Conjure One*, his first solo effort) they've come together again to make *Chimera*. The new album, their fourth with Nettwerk Records, relies more heavily on acoustic instruments than their previous records but still offers an eclectic ambient mix programmed and sampled elements as well as styles and genres. A genuinely unique blend of world beat, dance, classical, electronic and rock elements underlying compelling performances by a number of vocalist/co-writers; including Julee Cruise, Leigh Nash of "Sixpence None the Richer", long time collaborator, Kristy Thirsk and others.

When I caught up with Bill Leeb earlier this summer *Chimera* was just about to be released and he was contemplating putting Delerium on the road for the first time ever, but that's not all that's keeping he and Fulber busy…

Bill Leeb: Believe it or not, as *Chimera* is starting, we're deep into the works of a Frontline album. I was doing vocals yesterday. We had the time and had the demos for a long time. We hope to be finished it by the end of July.

***Canadian Musician*: You and Rhys have worked together for a long time.**

BL: Yeah, I actually met Rhys while I was in Skinny Puppy. He was a fan of the band and just turned 16 when we started working together. I literally ran into him in a record store while I had a drum machine under my arm and we just started talking and, God, like 15 years later…

***CM*: You're still working together.**

BL: Yeah. Then Frontline Assembly appeared and we put a lot of time and effort into that.

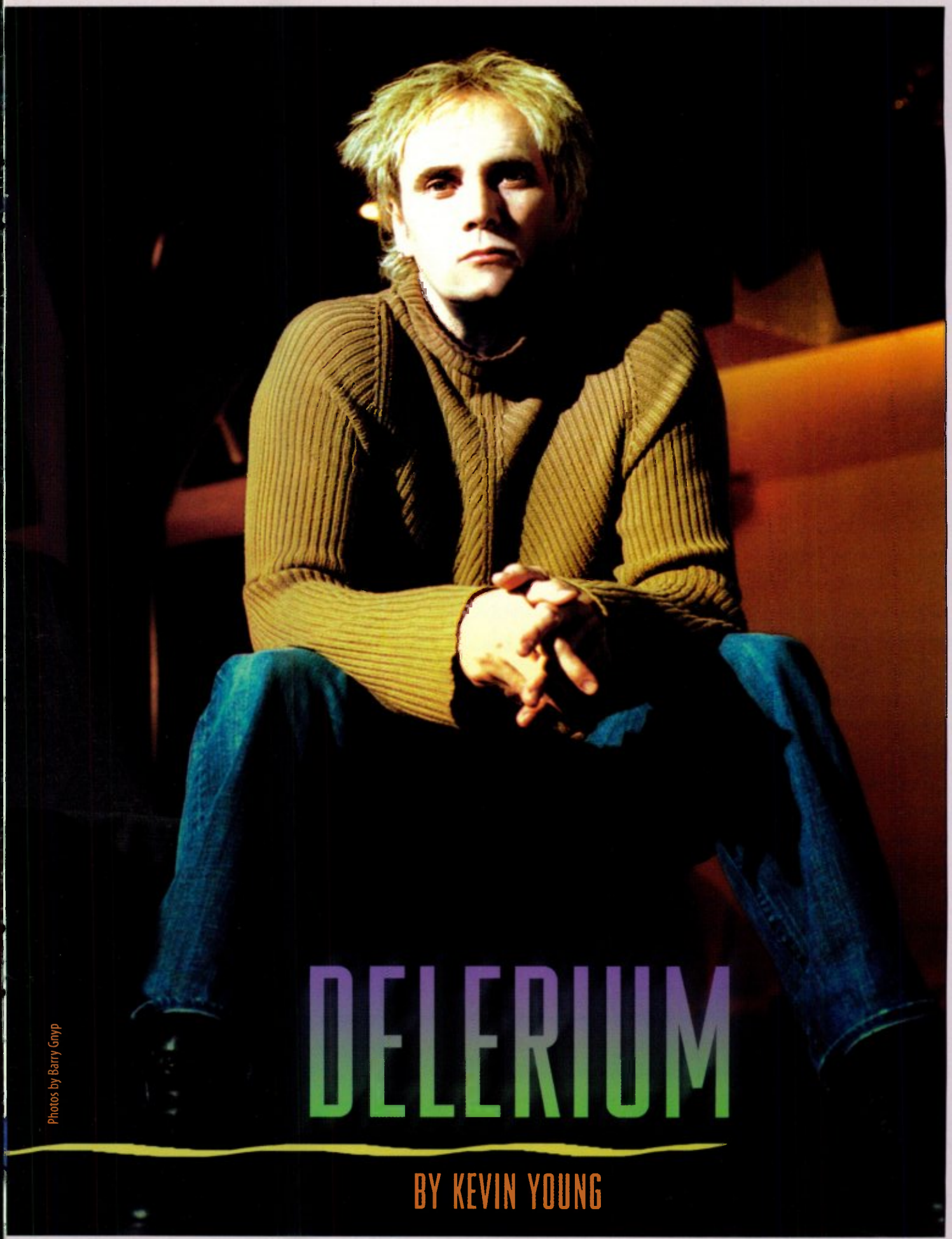
***CM*: And Delerium grew out of that?**

BL: Delerium was literally something I started in my bedroom. Frontline was really upbeat, heavy music. I was always a fan of the Michael Jarret and Tangerine Dream. So I had all this extra gear in my bedroom and I just started tweaking. I like ambient music as well and it gave me a nice release to do this. Over the years we released some really low key, ambient, electronic albums, never really thinking much about it. It just kind of built its own little following.

With *Semantic Spaces* (their first Nettwerk record) we were just filling in time between Frontline tours. We wrote these songs and just happened to be in the same building as Nettwerk. They had quite a few singers and bands and basically when Kristy Thirsk showed up and sang "Flowers", people were like, "Hey, this is going to be a hit," and it was our first bona fide hit.

***CM*: And then, from the *Karma* album, there was "Silence" with Sarah McLachlan.**

BL: That's a whole other story; you could write a book on what transpired over those two, three years. The God's honest truth … "Silence" was going to be an instrumental song. I'd sent Sarah a few other demo tracks from *Karma* and they didn't do anything for her. It was the last track we sent to her and we were in the studio mixing it as an



DELERIUM

BY KEVIN YOUNG

Photos by Barry Gnyp

DELERIUM

instrumental when the phone rang. It was Sarah and she thought she had an idea for the song. So she showed up, sang it once and we literally all had goose bumps; we didn't want to say anything or jinx it. We just let it happen. That's the way that track happened, in the last minute of the last hour.

Once you have a song like that you feel like you've kind of done it, you know? It was number two in the UK and if you have a top 10 hit in the UK once in your lifetime you're considered lucky. We got asked to be on *Top Of The Pops*; that's sort of, once you get asked to be on that in England, that's it. We were slated to be on with Robbie Williams and U2, but Sarah was going to India and *TOTP* wouldn't reschedule it for the following week.

***CM*: I read a bit in your press kit where you said; "Maybe now I'll forever be chasing the elusive dream of looking for the next 'Silence' hit." It sounded like a joke, but has it affected the way you work at all?**

BL: It was definitely fun to ride that wave, but in a way it's kind of scary when you have a monster track like that. Anything else you do is going to get compared to that and some bands get a big track and then they're gone. It's kind of ironic that when we did *Karma* – Rhys and I had been working together for so long – he was feeling he wanted to start doing more production work and get out of Vancouver and start more of a life of his own. When *Karma* first came out it was well received, but it wasn't massive or anything. So then we went away and we went apart and we said "Well, maybe we won't do any more Delerium records." Then "Silence" happened and the whole thing took on a form of its own.

***CM*: How does your process work with Rhys?**

BL: I usually bring in ideas and structures and we'd put them down. I'm really good with rhythms and grooves and bass lines. Rhys is really musical as well, but he excels on the technical side and he enjoys it. It's become kind of a happy marriage; we try not to be running the same gear and that's how we get along in the studio. If it were any other way it wouldn't work. It would be like two guys trying to play the same guitar all the time.

***CM*: And when you're in different cities?**

BL: It doesn't matter where you live now, you can do anything, anywhere and be literally on the phone and he can be changing the sound and you can listen to it. In that way technology's amazing.

***CM*: With all the technology available you have the ability to tweak forever. Is there a place where you two know you have the song where you want it?**

BL: We have stacks of gear: I actually have two storage rooms full of keyboards and gear. In the early days we would use all that. We'd fire up the Mini Moog and the Arp and the Oberheim, but first we had to get them in tune. Some days they work and some days they don't.

Obviously Logic and Pro Tools are the standard and with Logic and all these virtual synths … now we basically pull it up, start tweaking and bang, off we go. I have the AKAI S 6000 and the 950 and the S 1000 and the EMU E4, all fully loaded, but they don't really get a lot of use, whereas before we'd live on them.

Now, it's almost too simple in a strange sort of way. It's finding a balance; when you have all this gear and information it can be very overwhelming. You can just sit there and tweak all day. I still think, at the end of the day, that a good song and a good hook beats all the tweaking, you know? I'll try to find good chords and then work around that, but not get too overwhelmed by all the products out there.

We have a reputation from our earlier music: We'll go into an SSL room and there'll be 96 tracks and we'll use them all. But when you have that many layers, one sound buries another. So as time goes on we've tried to do more with less. With *Chimera* and the new Frontline album, it's much more like that. We're trying make the main ideas come through with less sounds to get in the way of each other.

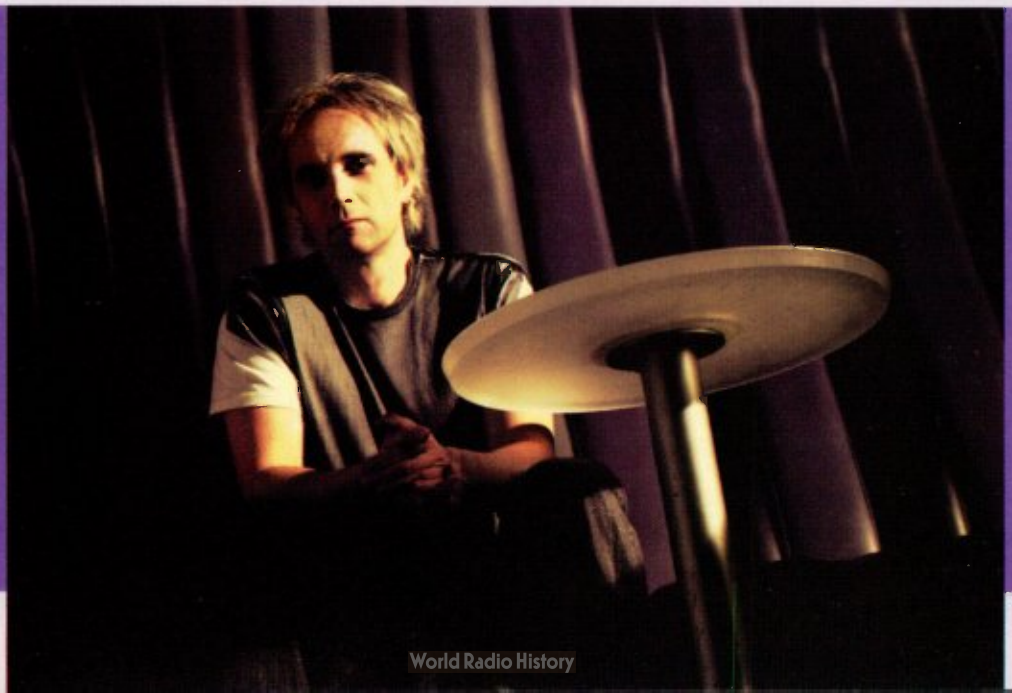
It's a chemistry thing. I've worked with other people on stuff and if you don't have the chemistry it's just not going to happen – and of course the vocalist is such a huge part of it as well.

***CM*: How did that part of your writing and recording process evolve?**

BL: It was kind of an accident. When Kristy Thirsk sang "Flowers" she seemed like the third member of the band; the way the lyrics came out, the sensibility of them. I don't know what it is, but all the female vocalists end up on the same wavelength as us. I guess it's the music, because when we send the tracks we don't say a word. We don't tell anybody that we're looking for this or to take a cue from a specific song. It's a collaboration of the truest kind. It seems to work and not just on one record; this is the fourth one.

After being in the business for a while I feel like this is the perfect project for me: Delerium isn't at all trend driven or fashion driven and people seem to be very accepting of the fact that every song can have a different vocalist. There are so many singers out there and there'll always be an inspiration to do a new song and use a different singer so I don't think there'll be any reason for Delerium to end, unless we want it to.

I think a lot of bands have a high point and a low point in their career. You use the



same singer on four albums and it can get limiting at the end. Whereas here I still think there are things we haven't tried. I want to do something down the road that's jazzier or just really different all together. I couldn't have planned it better. We have such an open canvas and can use so many different colours and paint a different picture every time and it can still all fall under the Delerium heading.

***CM*: The samples you choose are a large part of your sound as well...**

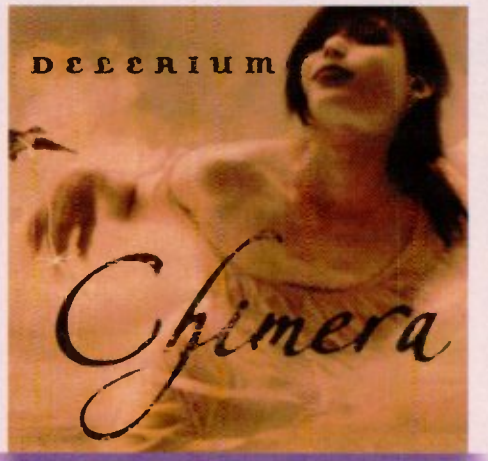
BL: With *Karma* I went to the Renaissance era of music; the monks, the choirs, they all come from that period. Initially we had all the samples, but when we tried to clear them it became so expensive to do it, we just hired a choir in Vancouver and went to a big church, got them to redo all the parts and recorded them in the church. We've done that on a couple of records.

***CM*: Was that an issue with *Chimera* as well?**

BL: Actually on *Chimera* we're hardly using any samples at all. There are only three or four small ones. We're going more for the 19th century composers and that changed the whole feel. Sometimes I just use samples as a sketch point and then later replay them or change them. That way it's a little more original and it's a lot easier that way. Sometimes you'll use a four-second sample and people will want 50 per cent of the publishing of the song. Some people have become outrageous about it. So unless you really need to have a particular sample, it's best to just not use them. That would be my advice.

***CM*: There does seem to be far more acoustic instruments on *Chimera*...**

BL: We were such a hardcore electronic band from day one and if we're going to grow we need to evolve and I really like acoustic instruments and artists. So I thought; why can't we do both. I think it sounds great when you use real strings and acoustic guitar with programmed drums and a programmed bass line. The contour is really nice. I also love Middle Eastern instruments – it adds so much ambience and vibe. We want to use every possible instrument if we can.



***CM*: You've worked with a number of fairly high profile artists. Obviously Sarah McLachlan and Leigh Nash, and now Julee Cruise, but also the Mediaeval Babes, Matthew Sweet: Track 7 on *Chimera* features Rachel Fuller. I'm not familiar with her, but I notice it lists Pete Townshend on guitar. How did that come about?**

BL: Rachel Fuller is Pete's girlfriend; they've been living together for a long time. Basically she had a demo out and we took the track in and reprogrammed it and added all the strings and Pete played guitar on it. I was a big the Who fan. How bizarre is that? I used to play cover songs of the Who and Pete's playing guitar on a Delerium record. I couldn't have ever planned that. It was great. It's our touch with fame. Our 15 seconds of fame. I don't know if we would always do that, but it just happened. It felt good and we did it and it's got a story and maybe as close as I get to a brush with greatness.

***CM*: I know you toured a fair bit with Frontline, but not with Delerium?**

BL: We felt really good about this record so we said let's do one tour as a novelty and see how that works. Even if we just do it one time, then great, we feel like we've done it. If it's something we can elaborate on and create our own little scene as well then so be it. We've got 30 shows lined up across America and Canada in September.

It's a new adventure for us. The Nettwerk art department is putting together visuals to go with the whole show and there's going to be quite a bit of thought put into it. I'll be curious myself to see how it all does. I'm excited about it and I think if we go out and do this we might inspire other people who do this kind of music. Maybe they'll see this and it'll get them out there as well.

CM

Kevin Young is a Toronto-based keyboard player, best known for his work with David Usher and Moist.

Equipment List

Mac G4s
Digidesign – Pro Tools
Emagic – Logic 5-6, ESX24, ES1, ES2
Nord – Lead, Lead 3, Modular, Micromodular
Studio Electronics – SE1
Oberheim – Matrix12, Xpander
Doepfer – A100
Emu – E4, Audity 2000
Access Virus
Kurzweil – K2000, Micropiano
Roland – MKS80, JD990, JV1080
Waldorf – Microwave XT
Various VST & TDM plug-ins

Delerium On The Road

Sept. 3 Vancouver, BC, Commodore Ballroom
Sept. 4 Seattle, WA, The Showbox
Sept. 5 Portland, OR, Crystal Ballroom
Sept. 6 San Francisco, CA Bimbo's 365 Club
Sept. 8 Los Angeles, CA, El Rey Theatre
Sept. 9 San Diego, CA, 4th & B
Sept. 10 Tucson, AZ, City Limits
Sept. 12 Boulder, CO, Fox Theatre
Sept. 14 Minneapolis, MN, The Quest
Sept. 15 Chicago, IL, The Metro
Sept. 16 Detroit, MI, St. Andrew's Hall
Sept. 18 Toronto, ON, The Guvernment
Sept. 19 Montreal, PQ, Le Spectrum De Montreal
Sept. 21 Boston, MA, Axis
Sept. 22 New York, NY, Irving Plaza
Sept. 23 Philadelphia, PA, The Trocadero
Sept. 24 Washington, DC, 9:30 Club
Sept. 26 Atlanta, GA, Cotton Club

Delerium Online

For more information on Delerium, Frontline Assembly and other Leeb/Fulber collaborations check out...

www.delerium.com
www.nettwerk.com

HOMEGRO

How To Get The Home Stu

by Ryan McLaughlin

I checked my calendar and, yup, it really has been a year since I last delved into the salutary topic of home recording. Like anything worth doing, to do it well it takes a great deal of learning and a healthy amount of trial and error to discover what works best for you. Home recording is no different, and as such, there are volumes and volumes of books written on the subject. This article is by no means a be all and end all to the endless topic, but contained in the paragraphs below is a collection of information that will provide you with a few tweaks and tricks to get the most of your homegrown tone, while also giving you a starting point for finding the specific information you require to make your home studio exactly what you want it to be.

A/D: Same Eggs Different Baskets

Whether you are an analog purist or a digital tech-head, at the end of the day it matters not what got the final product, but only if the final product was worth getting in the first place. Akin to the Mac/PC war, the digital vs. analog conflict is one that is about 10 per cent based on various facts of merit and 90 per cent centred in personal preference and allegiance to one technology or another. However, as much as analog gear is still widely in use, it is hard to deny that the past few years has seen digital technology take the home recording world by the, ahem, soft bits, and shaken it up some, largely for the good of the starving musician. Digital technology has allowed artists, who because of prohibitive costs previously couldn't dream of recording a CD, to put out discs that can be spun next to greats from yesteryear without a notable quality difference, occasionally even sounding better.

When digital recording was in its infancy, the audio capture abilities were not what they are today, and I think this has gone a long way to strengthening the analog/digital battle, but technology, as it tends to do, has improved by leaps and bounds to the point where 24-bit/96 kHz audio is a reality for many home studios. The resolution at which an analog signal can be converted into the 1s and 0s of computer-speak is virtually identical to the original signal. However, there is an indescribable "something" that vintage analog gear adds to a recording. Unlike digital, which is clinically identical every time, analog gear can give a recording a personality that can never be duplicated. What is chosen for your home studio will be based on your loyalties to one camp or another, and what you intend to do with your studio.

Idealistically, the best solution is to be able to look at your project and decide how both technologies can assist you in obtaining your goals. One option is to create a digital/analog hybrid studio, in which you use the best qualities of both technologies to your advantage. By utilizing the warmth and character of analog gear for tracking and overdubbing and then bringing it into the quick editing environment of digital audio workstations for track adjustments, some signal processing, and whatnot, then further outputting it through the analog board for mixdown, you are taking full advantage of the best of what both worlds have to offer.

It Starts At The Mic

Once you've got where the signal is going to go, the next thing you need to get down is the signal itself. Aside from the performance, the microphone is really where it all begins, and getting the wrong mic, or putting it in the wrong

WN TONE

place can have a detrimental effect on the recording.

Generally speaking you don't need to freak out too much with your mic selection. Microphones are designed to pick up sound and convert it into an electronic signal – no matter what mic you use, that process is universal. That said, different mics have different features that can help you obtain a better representation of the sound you're looking for. Dynamic mics tend to be robust, and are good for close miking louder instruments, such as individual drums, live vocals and guitar amplifiers, whereas condenser mics offer a smoother transition throughfrequencies over a wider range than dynamics. Condensersgenerally give a truer representation of a sound, and are commonly used on vocals and acoustic instruments as well as with less powerful electronic instruments and for ambiance.

Whether you use an omnidirectional, cardioid, hyper-cardioid, bi-directional or any other polar pattern microphone will largely be decided by what you intend to capture. If you wish to only pick up a certain drum, ignoring most everything else, you would choose something

Advantages to Close Miking

(only inches away from the source)

- A fuller, tighter sound.
- Minimal leakage from other instruments.
- No unwanted ambiance on a track. If needed, ambiance can be added to a dry track, but once recorded, ambiance cannot be removed from a track.
- Easier to return to the same sound if ambiance is different, such as when using a different studio.
- More separation when recording in stereo.

Advantages to Distant Miking

(a couple feet or more away from the source)

- A more ambient sound that has a greater influence from the surrounding environment.
- Ambiance can help establish a sense of depth and placement within the aural spectrum.
- Not in the way of players, as they need to be totally comfortable.
- If a second distant microphone is recorded on a separate track, this adds flexibility when mixing.
- Able to pick up larger groups of musicians. (Have you ever tried to pick up a large group of musicians?) When distant miking a large group of players, the tonal balance captured can be better than recording with lots of close microphones. The players can mix themselves better than the engineer.
- Less direct dynamics, often associated with for example, vocals. With close miking, a compressor is almost a necessity, unless the singer is really good, and knows how to control the dynamics of his voice. With a foot or more distance between singer and microphone, the space can work as a natural compressor. The farther away the singer is from the microphone, the more the surrounding environment gets recorded as well. This is when studio design comes into factor.

Excerpted from Recording Tips For Engineers *by Tim Crich.*

dio You Want

HOMEGROWN TONE

A Word On Home Recording With
Jason McCoy

What was the first thing you considered when you decided to put together a recording space at home?
Of course budget is a primary concern, but that can be dictated by what your goals are. Like a lot of people do, I think I started out wanting to have a full blown recording facility in my basement, but you have to refine your goals and plan from there. I recognized that I ultimately wanted to be able to bring home a two-mix from a tracking session, and overdub vocals, guitars, etc., and then lock everything back up in a proper mixing facility.

Has this design changed or did it need to be tweaked in anyway? Why?
Like I said above, I started out wanting to build isolation booths, etc., but being the engineer and the subject to be recorded, that would be futile. I just took a spare room downstairs and padded it up with some good soundproofing. Nothing fancy, just functional. I realized early that I didn't want to be in the studio business, I just wanted a good home recording facility.

What do you feel the benefits of home recording are?
The obvious benefits are being able to take your time, and not having to worry about being on the clock. You have the luxury of waiting for the optimum time to capture a vocal performance or spend an extra day editing. This can help you get back to experimenting with music and focusing on creating without the pressure of time limits.

What are the detriments of home recording? What should musicians be cautious of?
I've found that there are two main concerns in home recording. As a musician, it takes years to become proficient in your field. The same is true for engineering, so odds are, if you've spent most of your life honing your musician talents, then your engineering skills are probably very novice. Just focus on getting a good sound, and don't try to over-engineer anything. If I'm overdubbing parts to be used later on a master, I compress very little, and keep everything as dry as possible. I let the mix engineer do his stuff, that's his specialty.

What item/piece of gear should no home studio be without?
A coffee machine and a stress relief ball – everything else is secondary.

If a musician is on a tight budget, which one area would you recommend not under spending on?
Again, this depends on what your goals are, but I maintain that you need to start with a good sound to end up with a good sound. Capturing a great vocal sound for me is of utmost importance, so I would put my money into a great mic and pre. I'm currently using the Focusrite Producer Pack, which has all you need in one rack and it's very user-friendly. Rather than spending money on owning several high-end mics, I own a decent one and rent whatever specialty mic I need.

Are there any tips or tricks you've learned or been shown that have really improved the quality of your home recordings?
Don't waste time messing around with technology – get the performance!

What do you primarily use your home recording space for?
At the moment I'm doing my own songwriting demos. I play a pass of drums, and then overdub everything else myself. It's archaic and rough, but I really like the vibe, and since they're just demos, I get to push my engineering skills, and make some pretty cool mistakes.

What is the setup of your home studio?
I started with a N-87, and a Digimax Presonus 8-channel pre, recording on a Yamaha AW 4416. I've recently added the Pro Tools 002 rack version and I'm using the Focusrite Producer Pack. I bought the 002 rack instead of the fader interface because I'm able to route most of all I do through the AW. The Pro Tools LE comes with some decent plug-ins, but I still find myself utilizing some of the effects and compressors in the AW. It's a very basic, but good quality setup. So far I've been having a lot of fun, and that's what it's supposed to be all about!

Jason McCoy is a CCMA Songwriter of the Year award winner (for No. 1 song/video "Born Again In Dixieland") whose last release was the certified gold release from Universal Music, Playin' For Keeps. *Having recently released his newest album,* Honky Tonk Sonatas, *McCoy has been nominated for Best Male Vocalist of the Year and SOCAN Song of the Year at the 2003 edition of Canada's Country Music Awards.*

with a cardioid pattern, which essentially ignores all sound but what is 'on axis', a fancy term for what is in front of it. Vice versa, an omnidirectional pattern could be used to gather a number of sounds into one signal, such as for recording a room, or overall performance. For novice recordists, your best bet is to experiment with everything until you begin to visualize what each mic can offer.

Isolating Inspiration

Someone once uttered that the amount of acoustical treatments a home recordist uses is directly proportional to how much of a control freak they are. This is not to say that it is not an important part of the studio, as controlling where the sound goes and limiting the amount of extraneous noise can mean the difference between mint and mud in your recordings.

When analyzing your recording space acoustically, remember to consider external influences. Sometimes the best solution isn't putting up more soundproofing to prevent noise from leaking in, but rather preventing noise from being created in the first place. If your home studio is in a basement and people are constantly walking above, be sure to put extra carpeting down in those traffic areas to cut down of footfall noise. Machinery such as air conditioners and refrigerators can shake the structure of the home, and should be mounted on top of shock

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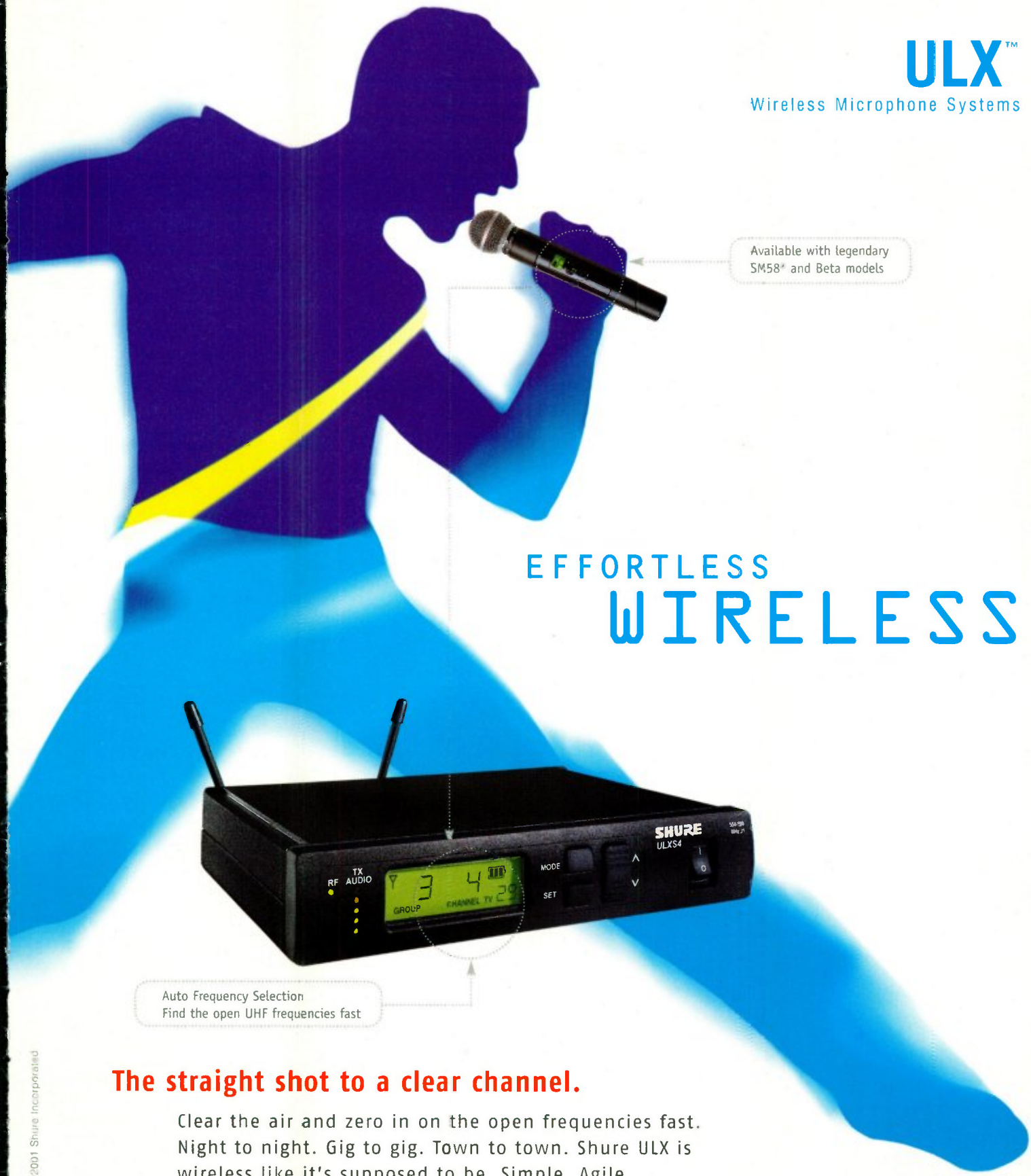

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absorbers (or thick rubber pads). Water pipes are another big carrier of sound in a house. If you have the ability, make sure no pipes run around, through, over, or under your studio. If you don't have control over this at least make sure they are as isolated as possible.

Once outside interference has been handled, take a good look around your room and begin to assess small places that can be improved. Assuming you have walls filled with insulation (if not, do this first!), take a look for other areas that can be treated. Construct baffles for air vents, put weatherproofing around doors to create a better seal, cover windows with drapery, etc. The next step after soundproofing is to make sure that the acoustics of the room are optimal. You want to make sure that the sound reaching your ear from your monitors is as clean of outside influence as possible, otherwise your mix will sound very different when played in other environments due to compensation for the mix room. There are a number of ways to cut down on surface reflection, such as adding diffusers to break up the reflections or absorbers to, well absorb the sound. For an excellent document on soundproofing and acoustically treating your studio, check out arts.ucsc.edu.ems/music/tech_background/TE-14/teces_14.html.

Internet Resources

Knowledge

www.homerecording.com
www.homerecording.about.com
www.harmony-central.com
www.homerecordingconnection.com
www.prorec.com
www.bownie.com/guide
www.digitalmusicworld.com/html/hardware/home.asp
home.earthlink.net/~rongonz/home_rec/home.html
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www.guitar9.com/glossary.html
www.recordingwebsite.com
www.humbuckermusic.com/jul5th20buil.html

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www.audioshopper.com
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rec.music.makers.bass
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rec.music.makers.synth
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Virtually Impressive

Next to the advent of increased power in home computers, no other area has made home studios such a viable option for producing professional products like the introduction of virtual instruments and instrument modelling. Whereas five years ago you either had to go to a million-dollar studio or have an abnormal gear collection, now you can get all the vintage and variety your heart desires with a few choice products. With only the turn of a dial or push of a button products from Line 6, Boss, Roland, Roger Linn Design, Behringer, Zoom and many more, offer you a wide selection of amp tones closely resembling the original. Couple this with Line 6's Variax, which models the sound of Fender, Gretsch, Rickenbacker, Epiphone, Martin, Guild and Danelectro guitars as well as a banjo, sitar and dobro, and you literally have hundreds, if not thousands, of sound combinations to pull from. Modelling is one thing, but when combined with a computer loaded with the latest Virtual Studio Technology (VST) plug-ins, 'endless' is not a big enough word to describe the amount of possibilities musicians have for musical generation, at a fraction of the cost and space that was once required.

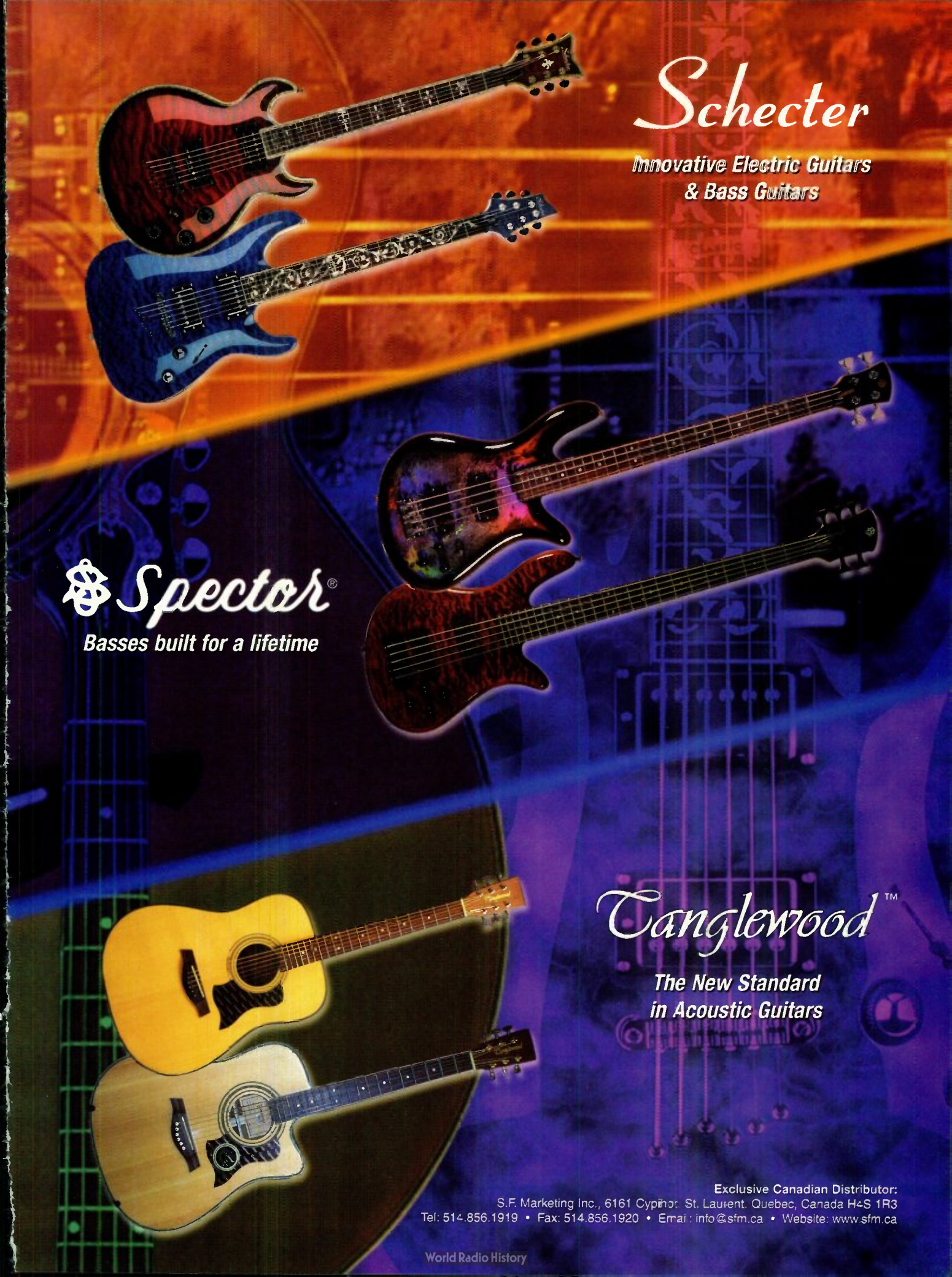
There's Just One More Thing, Okay Maybe Four

Whether it is for hobby or for producing a professional product to shop your band to major labels, a home studio is an entertaining, exiting and often enigmatic project to undertake. Hopefully this article and the resources it contains has given you some direction and education on what a good home studio should have. To end, I'd like to share a couple common, but no-less-important tips.

1) Your (signal) chain is only as strong as its weakest link – BUY GOOD CABLES!
2) No acoustical testing equipment is better at telling you what sounds good than your own two ears.
3) If it jams, force it. If it breaks, it needed replacing anyway.
4) Crap recorded well, is just well recorded crap. Just because you CAN do something doesn't mean you SHOULD do it. Sometimes seeking the help of a professional is a humbling and rewarding experience.

CM

Ryan McLaughlin is Assistant Editor for Canadian Musician.



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WOODWINDS And Their Foibles

by Alex Dean

The great part about doing an article like this is having a reason to talk to so many great artists. On the one hand I talked to Virginia Markson who has just retired from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra after 14 years and then compare her information and experiences with P.J. Perry, who is known as one of the great jazz saxophone players in the world. And then compare their answers to Max Christie – a very busy freelance clarinet player and teacher and then see how this relates to freelance oboe players like Clare Scholtz or Lidia Khaner. It's also interesting to talk to Rob Carli who is a great concert saxophonist and composer and to compare his answers to Les Allt who I feel is probably first call for freelance flute work in Toronto. The similarities and importance of diaphragm support for every musician was about what I expected and the similarities in practice schedules wasn't a surprise. However the differences on the technique of voicing the note as a syllable or I guess I like to think of it as an inner embouchure was worthy of note. The answers about embouchure were helpful. In a way it was like taking a lesson with each person and getting great information. There was also some really great information on etudes. I think as well the personality of the artists became evident as well.

I'd like to thank all of the artists for being so generous with their time in doing this. Some were working and some were on vacation (Rob Carli was three hours north of Saskatoon in a cabin) yet they all were happy to help out and responded with really informative answers and ideas that I can't wait to get to work on.

Clare Scholtz

Les Allt

Virginia Markson

P.J. Perry

Rob Carli

Lidia Khaner

Describe your background as a wind player, including your education.

P.J. Perry: I'm from a musical family. My father's dance band, while still in my teens, was an invaluable opportunity to play good tunes seven nights a week with good musicians. A lot of the guys in the various bands were into jazz music and they were generous with their support and help. There were lots of sessions and those were formative years. With the reading and phrasing abilities I learned on the stand, I was able to join the good club bands in Vancouver playing shows. I also played in numerous rock and rhythm and blues bands and was forced to play in guitar keys – all very good experiences.

Virginia Markson: My background as a woodwind player started way back when I was three years old, listening to a piccolo player who was rehearsing with my mother, who was a professional pianist. I was stunned, electrified by its bright and shiny tone and its high energy that so matched my own! It took a few years before I was allowed to take up the flute (more practical than a piccolo for starters). I was given excellent private teachers (principals of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra), and a French model Haynes sterling silver flute. From age 12 to 18 I went to music camps and festivals during the summer (Interlochen Music Camp, Michigan and Aspen Music Festival, Colorado). I went to a high school that was renowned for its music program (Cass Technical H.S., Detroit), and upon graduating left for Paris, France, where I studied with Jean Pierre Rampal for a year. From there it was studying with Julliard teachers in NYC, in particular Sam Baron. His depth, generosity of musicianship and respectful support of my efforts to master the instrument were key to my choice for making music performance my career. I came to Toronto by way of marriage and found the U of T faculty of music greeting me with open arms. I wasn't even a legitimate student! I was auditing classes but they were in need of flute players (strange phenomenon) and my career as a solo recitalist, chamber player and orchestra musician took off. CBC recitals lead to my first professional job with the National Ballet of Canada in 1965 as piccolo and second flute position of the COC and still later left these jobs to play with the TSO in 1984. I have just retired from the TSO after 14 years of playing second flute and piccolo.

Max Christie: I'm from the classical school, which is to say every lesson I've had, all the study I've done at school and on my own, has been oriented around learning the 'serious' or 'art' music tradition. I took a Bachelor's degree at University of Western Ontario and a Master's in Performance from Yale. In between there were summer festivals (Banff, Colorado Philharmonic and best of all National Youth Orchestra). The focus in university was in covering the solo and chamber repertoire, until I finally got wise to the likelihood that I'd need orchestral chops in order to make a living. So I also did a year at the Royal Conservatory in their Orchestral Training Program.

Rob Carli: Like a lot of sax players, I started out on clarinet, but switched to sax after a short while. I studied at the University of Toronto, mostly with David Tanner. I also studied with Pat LaBarbera and Don Englert. Then after university I spent a lot of time with Abe Galper, who was tireless in his pursuit of finding new ways to do things and to think about things. Up until the end of my university days I split my time between jazz and classical. But then I became interested in contemporary music and started getting work with classical ensembles, which I guess is where I still do most of my playing.

Lidia Khaner: I was born in Poland in a non-musical family. I started my music education in a music school playing accordion age 10. After five years I switched to oboe. While studying at Academy of Music in Warsaw I joined the Polish Chamber Orchestra and Sinfonia Varsovia. I travelled with them all over the world. I also studied in Germany at the Hochschule in Stuttgart with Ingo Goritzki.

Clare Scholtz: I started on the oboe at the end of Grade 4 in the school band program. Both my undergrad and grad degrees are in performance, from the University of Minnesota and the University of Toronto, respectively.

Les Allt: I started with recorder when I was five years old, moved to E-flat clarinet when I could reach the keys and to flute from there. In junior high, when boredom set in, I picked up the tenor sax. Playing in the Atlantic Symphony as an extra and in a couple of local bands got me through university. Dalhousie U. had a great arrangement for importing teachers while I was there. I got to study with Robert Aitken and Jeanne Baxtresser and not leave Halifax. I came to Toronto to brush up my sax and improvisation chops at Humber College. After a year of jobbing gigs, I auditioned for the COC touring orchestra on a lark and got the job. Since then, not many wedding receptions, but I've played many shows, sessions and orchestral concerts.

Were there any music teachers that made a big impact on you? Who were they? What did they offer that other teachers didn't?

P.J.: Not all my teachers were saxophonists. I learned a great deal from friends and fellow musicians like the drummer Jerry Fuller and bassist Bob Miller. They kind of took me under their wings and turned me on to the good players. There was a good alto player in Edmonton named Dale Hillary that also pointed me in the right direction. There is no way that I could list all the cats that helped me. The nicest people in the world are musicians and I've never been turned away when I showed interest in something to do with music or jazz. Sitting next to great sax players like Fraser McPherson, Wally Snider, my father Paul Perry, my uncle Jim Guioien, Moe Koffman, Rick Wilkins, Jerry Toth, Gene Amarro, etc. was a university education in the saxophone that I'll always be grateful for. There are scads of younger players on the scene today that I draw inspiration from daily and they know who they are.

Max: I could name several, but foremost, because he helped me so much early on, was Robert Riseling. He taught me intermittently while I was still in high school, and I went to Western to continue to learn from him. Before that I'd had a salad of influences, too many really, and I was sort of wandering around with

good ability but little clue how to use it or develop it. Bob really gave me a focused approach to technique and phrasing, and had such a wonderful attitude to new repertoire. He had played for Stravinski, which gave him a sort of authority when he made suggestions as to how to perform the "Three Pieces". After studying for three years with Dr. Riseling, I met and played for Joaquin Valdepenas, who accepted me as a student at the perfect time in my development. He played in a way no one I had ever heard before did, and he woke my ears up at a point when I really needed that. He insisted on my trying all the time to play in a way that would delight and touch the listener. We never really dealt too much with technical issues – it was about music and sound. I studied at Yale with Keith Wilson, as Joaquin had done some time before. Wilson is a wonderful musician and a wonderful man. He gently persuaded me towards refining my musical decisions and put me in touch with a style of playing very distinct from the mainstream North American school.

Les: My two main flute teachers of course, had a huge impact. Their approach to playing is so very different and they both achieve amazing results. Studying with them allowed me to see that there isn't 'one way or the highway' as a method to follow towards really good playing. Aside from them, I played in a conducting class for Pierre Boulez about 12 years ago. It was really mind-blowing to watch his brilliance up-close and personal.

Virginia: The two music teachers that made the largest impact on me were J.P. Rampal with his singing energetic sound, his spontaneity in phrasing and his sensual delight in creating a beautiful line and Sam Baron for his phenomenal depth of musical knowledge and respect for style, individual expression and musical integrity. They were both very caring and supportive teachers. What makes them different from other teachers I've had was that each lesson had an element of inspiration in it for me.

Rob: I was fortunate to study with a number of really great teachers over the years. I was really fond of my time with David Tanner at the U of T. He is an incredibly intelligent guy, and he seemed to have great depths of knowledge about things that would go way beyond the scope of playing the saxophone. Another great teacher was Vic Degutis, who was really my first sax teacher. He was a trumpet player, which I think worked out well for me. Brass players tend to be more concerned with air stream and pitch and overtones, and these things can't really hurt a young sax player. He also pushed me into doing a lot of transcriptions ... from jazz lifts to Dixie combo transcriptions, to wind ensemble arranging. This also can't hurt, I figure.

Lidia: I would say Ingo Goritzki was the one. He taught me how to practice and explained vibrato. My first semester in Stuttgart I spent playing long tones, without and with vibrato. Then next came studies from simple to the really difficult ones. It organized my way of practicing a lot.

Clare: My father was the band director when I was in elementary school and I guess he made an impact on me since I can still remember the odd instruction ("never louder than lovely"), and the fact that he put me on the oboe to begin with to increase the chances that I could actually make a living in music. My teacher at the University of Minnesota, Rhadames Angelucci, also made a big impact on me, but it was a little more complicated. He had great things to say about phrasing and support and he was hard to please. I left his studio feeling like I had to prove to him that I could actually play, despite all the evidence to the contrary. Finally, I studied with Richard Killmer in St. Paul and at the Aspen School. I think he would be the person I most try to emulate in my approach to the oboe. He was extremely positive, musical and has a really constructive attitude toward reed making.

How important is sound to you and what do you listen for in your sound?

P.J.: When I try to create sound, I hear Bird, Cannonball, and Kenny Dorham in my head. I strive for a purity and soulfulness in my sound. It has taken many years for me to find what I wanted. I basically have evolved into a set-up that offers me flexibility and enough back pressure that allows me to explore the dynamic range of my horn.

Virginia: Sound is soul for me. It tells one about the feeling in the music and also about the humanity of the performer. Sound has always had it over technique in my case. I put a great emphasis on expression; searching for a variety of colours, textures and vibrato speeds that can best express how the music feels for me.

Max: I remember as a kid imagining giving a lesson where I tried to convey to the poor

student that sound is all there is. It's like Artie Shaw, time is all you got … well, okay, but the question is, when we're talking about making music, what are we using to communicate? And so the answer to "how important?" is like Vince Lombardi's quote about winning: It's not everything, it's the ONLY thing. As for what I listen for, that's an interesting point. I tend to trust that when I can do what I want with my sound, when I'm able to call the shots, that means my sound is where I want it. The sound I hear when I play is distinct from the sound heard by the person out there, since my ears are full of head resonance and my mind is busy with the next thing. It bothers me when someone gets too wrapped up in their sound, because I believe their dissatisfaction, if that's what it is, revolves more around things like pitch and control of legato and so on. A good sound, like I say, is the sound I make when I feel the instrument is responding the way I expect and the musical and technical choices I make aren't governed by the difficulties of sound control. Oh, I guess I like a rich dark sound with lots of bright overtones possible, but I don't know.

Rob: Intonation and tone quality are really the two things that most people respond to almost immediately, regardless of their own personal musical ability or experience. So I guess I'd say they're really important. For me, I generally try, or hope that I'm playing in tune. I also try to let the sound be supported by the musical line, so that the tone seems connected and you get a good sense of arch. Oboe players do this brilliantly, it seems.

Les: It was drilled into me from the start that the difference between someone like Rampal or Baker and the rest of the flute-playing world was their sound. As a student, I felt the need to develop a sound that made you sit up and take notice. I still strive, except in some contemporary works where something else is desirable, to always make the most pure, wind-free tone that I can.

Lidia: For me the most important thing is fullness in harmonics. I need to feel the sound carries. It should be warm. It should blend with other instruments in orchestra.

Clare: Sound is extremely important to me, and therefore being a good reed maker is important to me, because it's really hard to be happy on a crappy reed! I listen for a depth of tone and a centre to the sound and a warmth and vibrancy and it has to sing.

I've found a lot of instrumentalists went through a period where they really got serious about practicing for a couple of years … did this happen for you and when?

Les: This did happen to me in my second year of university. I felt an irresistible urge to get up at dawn, ride my bike for an hour or so, and then practice for six or seven hours. This went on daily for a couple of years. I'm afraid I skipped a lot of classes during that time.

Virginia: Generally I've not been one to practice for long hours, leaning more to a natural, more spontaneous approach to playing. The emphasis is on uninhibited expression, rather than on technical brilliance. Consistency of practice time is more important than length of practice. The only time I did spend more than four to six hours of practicing I think was during the two months leading up to the audition for the TSO.

P.J.: I, also, find it interesting that the practicing bug would hit later in life but it has. It could be the fact that it takes longer to get back in shape when you're older, or that one has more time, or that in my case, I'm enjoying playing the saxophone more now than I ever did. I still respond to pressure, so when I've got a gig to look forward to I find myself practicing at least an hour a day, maybe two. Lately I've come to understand that there are other factors involved with playing that are just as important and I've been giving these ideas some time as well. Things like allowing myself to be human, not always trying to set the world on fire, having more fun … all difficult areas for me and very, very, important. I think an important practicing tip that I suggest to students is to leave the horn out where you pass it by as the day goes on. When you see the horn sitting on its stand, it's telling you to pick it up and play for a while.

Max: In my undergrad years, especially in the years I went to NYO. I had so many annoying difficulties that I couldn't really figure out with a teacher and so I put in hours and hours. At NYO I got hooked and spent many hours trying to imagine myself in a big orchestra playing the solos in "Brahms' First", so many hours, in fact, that some wit posted a brilliant caricature of Johannes sitting on the can with the caption reading "Brahms' First Movement." Summers generally are like a regeneration period, without the pressures of learning this or that new piece by next week. I still love to work out the basics every summer. Being at summer festivals was always inspiring, and I think I made my biggest strides at NYO, Banff, Colorado Phil, and at Yale's Norfolk festival.

Rob: I think the first time this happened was at the end of high school and going into university. In my high school there was an old auditorium that was generally closed off from use because it was falling down, but I was able to play there before and after classes. At that time I seem to remember that I was trying to memorize a lot of music … classical repertoire, but also jazz lifts and stuff. It was fun to walk around and play in a great sounding room.

Clare: I know that I put in lots of time for each of the recitals I had to do for my degrees, but it wasn't until I married Cam and discovered how much brass players practice on a regular basis that I began to appreciate how much I could have been practicing!

Being a professional musician is a pretty hectic lifestyle – when do you practice and could you break down your practice routine? Has this evolved as you've become more experienced?

P.J.: Because of my wife and children wanting to sleep at night, I have to practice during the daylight hours. This has been a bone of contention in the past but I'm cool with it now. My practice schedule varies with what I'm trying to accomplish, so if I'm playing a concerto with an orchestra some of the time is spent memorizing and repetition. If it's a jazz gig I'll sit at the piano and play chords and play over them. I try to play tunes in different keys to improve my ear too. I also spend a fair amount of time looking for and selecting reeds, so this helps keep my chops up.

Max: Is there something wrong with my career? Who said hectic? Actually, yes, it gets nuts – especially with kids in the picture. I think it's embarrassing how little practicing I do when I'm too busy. I always make sure I do at least 10 minutes of warm-up, just to wake the face up. I use a study, or a pass through scales and arpeggios if I feel in need of a technical tune-up. Most of the time I feel too pressed and just want to get to the nuts and bolts of whatever it is I have to learn. I try to get a lot done in a short time, a gigger's attitude, but a very useful one. Endurance isn't an issue so much, and time management is. If I can't figure out a difficult passage in 20 minutes, I'm not paying attention to what I'm doing.

Virginia: My life as a musician has been more than hectic. Between bringing up three, all of whom are professional musicians, having an active studio career, teaching at the faculty of U of T and maintaining careers with the National Ballet, COC, and the TSO I've had to organize my time very well. I call it survival and have tried to maintain a practice schedule, which serves to hold me at a standard which is acceptable to my conscience and professionalism.

Les: I now practice when I can. I have a routine which takes about half an hour that I do daily. Other than that, I practice the standard flute etudes (T&G, Moyse, Anderson, etc.) to keep technique up, and spend the rest learning music for upcoming performances. I try to have a day off every week.

Rob: Well … evolved, I'm not so sure. Certainly diminished. I do think it's good to get into a routine when you practice because it provides some sort of structure. I tend to be a list guy, so I make a lot of lists. If I'm practicing a particular piece, then I'll often break it down so that I can somehow represent it using a list … sort of like a bunch of little things I can then check off. If I'm practicing for the sake of practicing, then I might make up a list of things to do (or at least that's the ideal scenario in a perfect world). Lately, though, I seem to prefer to improvise, which leads to composition (or springs from composition – I'm not sure which), which is how I fill most of my days.

Lidia: With my two small kids … whenever I can find a moment. I find I don't need to practice as much anymore. I don't need to practice my orchestra parts as much as I used to do. I like to warm up really well in order to get good results. I play a lot of long tones, without and with controlled vibrato. Then I practice scales, as many as time allows and eventually some studies and difficult passages in orchestra parts (slow and fast ones). I have to add here that I keep reading what other oboe players have to say about methods of practicing and I try them out and if something works for me I incorporate it in my routine.

Clare: I try to make time first thing in the day, because that is when my brain is most functional and I find it really hard to start a warm up late in the day. I start with five-note scales, from the bottom of the horn, quarter at 72, playing half notes. Then I do some scale studies that go from the bottom to the top of the instrument. Then a melodic study, then a technical study and then whatever music I've got to learn. Usually I've got a piece of cane soaking and try to tie on a reed in the middle somewhere. I did notice that once my kids were born that I became far more efficient with my practice time. There was so little time that focus was crucial.

Do you use a metronome when you practice?

P.J.: I have and should more often.

Max: I make my living playing a lot of new music. I'd starve if I didn't use my metronome. I check myself on conventional stuff as well. One doesn't want to be doing stupid stuff with rhythm.

Virginia: I only use a metronome when I have difficult contemporary music, which I cannot naturally interpret, or even play without its steady, mathematical help. Generally I prefer to stay away from metronomes – it's more about flow.

Les: Yes, I use one sometimes, mostly to guard against rushing technical passages. I think everyone should take it out of the drawer and make sure it works once in a while…

Lidia: Yes I do, sometimes, when I warm up or practice fast passages.

Rob: Sure.

Clare: Always.

Could you talk a little about breathing and support? Where does your sound start – in the horn or in you?

Rob: This sounds like a bit of trick question. I would think most would say it starts in the player, which is why two guys can sound different playing the same horn. And I wouldn't be one to differ with that. In fact, to be more specific, it really starts in one's head. When you improvise a line, you tend to think about where you are going. The same goes with the sound. It helps to try to hear it first. Abe Galper used to always say that if you hesitate slightly before you sound a note, you allow the air to work, and you allow your ears to work.

P.J.: Playing saxophone is a physical endeavour. I think it's important to get the reed vibrating and singing. If one can automatically have a well-supported constant flow of air entering the horn, it frees the mind up to think of what to play. Opening the mouth and grabbing a large gulp of air is extremely important in the woodwind world. I have built up the muscles in my lower tummy and push my stomach out when exhaling through the horn. It helps pitch, tone, and dynamics having lots of supported air flowing.

Max: After recent repairs to a hernia, I can confidently say I know just how low in the abdomen I derive support for my sound. It seems to me we're a bit out of whack about air support. The ab muscles support our guts and we need the guts way out of the way so we can use our air in this most unnatural manner. Chest wall muscles are the enemy, and must be kept eased as much as possible. If we use them when we play (and they *are* the natural air expellers) we tend to over-blow and seize up, needing then to valve off the excessive force with the throat and vocal apparatus. For me, breathing in gets a whole lot easier when I don't work too hard to breathe out and I think as I began to learn this I began to find it was a whole lot easier to sustain, to control dynamics, and survive Tchaikowski ballets. I think sound is inside the player, and to the extent we allow it in we increase our resonance and the individual colour we all make. Sound starts at the reed. That's the place we meet the horn.

Clare: This is the most important aspect of oboe playing. I have to make sure a student is filling his lungs, and then causing the air to move as fast as possible. Sometimes I think the sound starts in my head before I play. I have to hear it first to know where I'm headed. Certainly the concept of my sound is in my head. I guess the next place the sound starts would be in my

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oral cavity and how it is resonating.

Lidia: In me of course – I try to breathe to the deepest ends of my lungs. I try to open myself. If I do it correctly it feels very nice and it is actually relaxing. I find the right breathing helps to create a better sound. The most important thing I always think about is the speed of the air I blow in the instrument. I try to blow as fast as I can and it always can be faster. It helps to make beautiful sound and helps the intonation.

Les: Sound starts at your core being. Your mind knows what kind of sound it wants to make and you need to teach your body to produce that sound through the instrument. Setting your body as if it were going to sing each note and supporting from the diaphragm right up through the upper chest are keys to a full, rich, projecting tone.

Virginia: Sound starts in the body. Breathing and support have been huge in my career, because I've had an incredible drive to express myself through an instrument but didn't know how to use my physical equipment to make this happen. According to speech pathologist Dr. David Lowe I've been playing these last 40 years at 20% of lung capacity! This has caused tremendous strain on my throat and weakened the diaphragm and oblique muscles needed to give true support to the sound. I've been compensating like crazy. It's only in the last year and a half that I've "learned how to breathe." What a difference this has made to my sound (projection), phrasing (length between breaths) and overall confidence in being able to truly focus on the music being played (rather then being preoccupied with 'survival'). As a teacher I emphasize breath control and sound projection above all other techniques.

Could you talk a little bit about your embouchure techniques?

Max: It's tough to teach embouchure, because what works for me won't work for everyone. I try to get my students to do what works for me in a general sense: snug hold on the mouthpiece without biting, minimal lip mobility, pressure on the reed into the heart of the reed, imagine the embouchure to be the shape inside the mouth, drawstring muscles around the mouthpiece, blah blah blah. Look at Joaquin's facial set-up. It's so unlike mine, and yet if I use my imagination, I can sort of imitate it. I tell my students that their embouchure is akin to the bridge of a string instrument. I don't know if it works, but it makes sense to me. More recently I have learned that the shape inside the mouth is a vital part of the embouchure. I try to think of it as an air-funnel.

P.J.: I built up my embouchure in the early days by playing #5 reeds and an open piece. I didn't care much for subtlety or flexibility then. I place my front teeth on the top of the mouthpiece of course, and I tighten the muscles in my cheeks, push my lips slightly forward and blow. For beginning players, your lips and cheeks will tire, so take a short break and then get back to it and build up the chops.

Virginia: My embouchure techniques come mostly from my lessons with J.P. Rampal, whose emphasis was on a relaxed embouchure. The Moyse exercises he gave to me (Tonal Development, Scales and Arpeggios, etc.) allowed me to learn different ways to best carry and maintain my sound through embouchure flexibility. Sound and projection were linked to the 'feel' of how my mouth was set. Once it felt good my ear would guide my sound for pitch and tone quality. Ear and mouth always work together. What felt good sounded good.

Rob: Like any physical activity, it helps to be relaxed. This is not always as easy as it sounds, because one has to first develop a certain amount of strength in the face muscles to really be able to have complete control and keep it relaxed. I do think that long tones and overtones can really help achieve that kind of strength. Dave Liebman wrote a book called *Developing a Personal Saxophone Sound* (Dorn Publications), which to me really spells out some great ideas about embouchure. In it he talks about airflow, conceptualizing sound, tongue position – all of these play a role in the sound production.

Lidia: I still keep looking for the best one, but generally I try not to squeeze my reed too much. It makes it easer to produce a beautiful tone.

Clare: I aim to control the reed, not only from top and bottom but also from all the way around; control and flexibility. I keep my jaw down and most of the strength comes from the corners of my mouth.

Les: Doubling can really mess with your mouth! Even going from flute to piccolo can be problematic for some people. (Some people say piccolo IS the problem). Going to flute from a reed instrument successfully requires a really loose but focused embouchure. In other words, you need to find a way to make a small round hole to blow through while keeping the corners of your mouth relaxed. I've seen too many reed players pick up a flute and play with death grin tightness. That just won't work if you want a nice sound and ease of playing in the upper registers. In a show, where a lot of switching back and forth is the norm, I will play on a slightly softer reed than usual to keep flexibility in my face.

Could you talk about the instruments you play, the make and model and talk a little about why you like it? Mouthpiece? Reeds?

Les: Currently – Brannen flute (with Broegger-mechanism). I've had this for 12 years. I finally figured out how to play it about three years ago. It's a good solid flute with a fairly effortless full range and dark tone. I like dark more than brilliant, though one can certainly get brilliant with this flute if you want. Haynes Alto flute – previous owner Moe Koffman. A beautiful horn, great intonation and big rich sound. Schreiber piccolo – I just got this from a German maker known mostly for their bassoons. Germans really take piccolos seriously. I've been told all German flute students learn piccolo. Yamaha Soprano – I've found Yamaha's to be really consistent in quality (very good intonation and ergonomics). I've had mine for 25 years now. I still love it. I play it with the stock mouthpiece that came with it. It just works. Selmer Super-balanced action Alto – a great funky old horn that feels great under the fingers. I use a metal No. 6 Guy Hawkins mouthpiece that Keith Jollimore gave to me many years ago. It is flexible enough to go from rock 'n' roll to sweet ballads without sweating over either. Yes, I own a clarinet.

Virginia: I play an old Powell sterling silver B foot-joint flute. I bought it from Jeanie Baxstresser and have been playing on it for 25 years. I love Powell flutes. They have a deep resonance, project well and seem to match my expressive temperament. My piccolo is also an old wooden Powell, splendid indeed!

Rob: I've always been fond of the Selmer Soloist mouthpieces, but unfortunately they don't make them anymore. They tend to have a fairly smooth response throughout the horn, yet they still permit you to change the colour to some degree. I have a C* Soloist on Alto, and a D Soloist for tenor that was opened and refaced by Ralph Morgan. But, I do tend to play them mostly in classical settings; they don't always cut it in other situations. So I'll use an Otto link 7* on tenor often and a Rouseau JDX7 on my alto. I play a Selmer G (square chamber) on soprano, and an Otto link 6* on baritone. My soprano is a Yamaha 62. My alto is a Selmer SuperAction 80 Series I. I have a Series I Tenor, and an old Conn M series tenor (1945). And I have a VanHall Baritone. It's kind of a rough horn, but it really barks. Reeds? Gee, this gets complicated. I'll just say I use reeds made of cane.

P.J.: I play a Custom Z Yamaha alto with a Meyer #6 med chamber mouthpiece and Superiale DC #3 ½ reeds, a 1956 Selmer Mk VI tenor with a 7* hard rubber Link and Vandoren V 16 reeds. I have a Selmer Series II soprano with a Meyer mouthpiece. I love the pitch on my new Yamaha alto. I also like where the palm keys are situated on the horn. It's easy blowing and has the tonal quality that I demand in an alto – a certain timbre. In my Selmer tenor, I have one of the best horns ever made and there is nothing that I don't like about it.

Max: Absolutely the least interesting of the questions, Alex. I'm not an equipment guy. Buffet prestige horns. I'm between mouthpieces. A reed is good if it works, which it does if I ignore it for a while. They all suck but some work. Vandoren V-12s, strength 4 and 4.5. I do like that optimum

ligature, though it can be tightened a bit too much for the poor cane. Plus it's a one-hander if I need to switch reeds quickly in a show.

Lidia: Just now I play Howarth's XL. I have played it for less than a year and I love it. It is very stable and it allows me to expand my sound. It seems not to have any limitations. I can always get more sound, even if I play very loud. It is very even throughout the scale. I haven't found any weak sides of this instrument yet and it makes me really happy. Just recently I recorded a CD with string quartet (all Mozart) and I have had a lot of very good comments about how the instrument sounds.

Clare: All my horns are Loree instruments. I like them because I can deal with the scale, they sing and I haven't cared enough to explore what else is out there. You really don't want me to talk about making oboe reeds, do you?

What kind of music inspires you as a wind player?

P.J.: I am married to a symphonic musician and therefore have been lucky enough to be exposed to the symphony orchestra and its many facets. I often leave a concert inspired and eager to play my horn. In jazz I appreciate melody, swing, articulation, technique, emotion and honesty. All these things inspire me.

Clare: Bach is still the most amazing for me, but I can be inspired by any moment involving most types of music if the force is with me.

Virginia: Any kind of music that reveals the soul of the player – jazz, classical, pop and folk. It's all music and I love being a part of it – either as listener or performer.

Les: I like both kinds of music. Country and western! Actually, any kind of music can be inspiring to me, but I find it's more in the playing of it. A truly great player can make a single line a gorgeous, inspiring thing to hear and try to emulate.

Rob: This is a tough question because of the way I respond to music often depends on what kind of mood I'm in at the time. But in very general terms I respond to a great sound. I think it's human nature to respond to tone colour (and rhythm, for that matter) in a visceral way, whereas melody and harmony kindle an more intellectual response. So as a composer I might be more intrigued by a particular melody, but the wind player in me might be more captivated by the sound I hear. That is because as wind players we have the capacity to create at that level – to be able to really make our own sound. I guess that's why when you hear a real master play with a fantastic, personal sound, it doesn't really matter what note they play. It still manages to get you somehow.

Max: Too many possible words. Hmmm ... anything that's raw and straight from the gut. Monk. The gypsy bands that do that thang. Lhasa. Schnitke. Chopin. Charlie Parker. Yo Yo Ma. It isn't 'as a wind player' that I am inspired, but as someone who wants to make music with the same kind of intensity. (I like the word inspire in this context, though). Tom Waits. Nina Simone, rest her soul. Nathan Milstein. Glenn Gould. Bartok Bach, who seems to have had a direct line to God. Mozart, who may have been God. Not too fond of ABBA.

Lidia: Mainly classical. My favourite composers: J.S. Bach, W.A. Mozart, I. Stravinski.

Reedman, Alex Dean has been a mainstay of the Canadian music scene for many years. He has played and recorded with: Gil Evans, Kenny Wheeler, Mel Torme, Aretha Franklin, Natalie Cole, Harry Connick Jr., Ray Charles, Pat Labarbera, Phil Nimmons, and the Toronto Symphony. Alex is a member of Rob McConnell's "Tentet," holds the tenor saxophone chair with McConnell's Grammy award-winning BOSS Brass, and has recorded their last 10 albums with Concord Records. He is also a member of the group D.E.W. East, who has released several recordings. He has appeared on numerous Juno and Grammy award-winning albums with the BOSS Brass. Alex is the Canadian Artist Representative for Boosey & Hawkes, promoting Kielwerth Saxophones and Rico Reeds. Alex is a widely respected clinician/adjudicator in Canada and the United States. He is a faculty member of the University of Toronto and Humber College Music Departments in Toronto, Canada, teaching saxophone and advanced jazz improvisation. And last but not least, he can be reached online at www.alexdean.com.

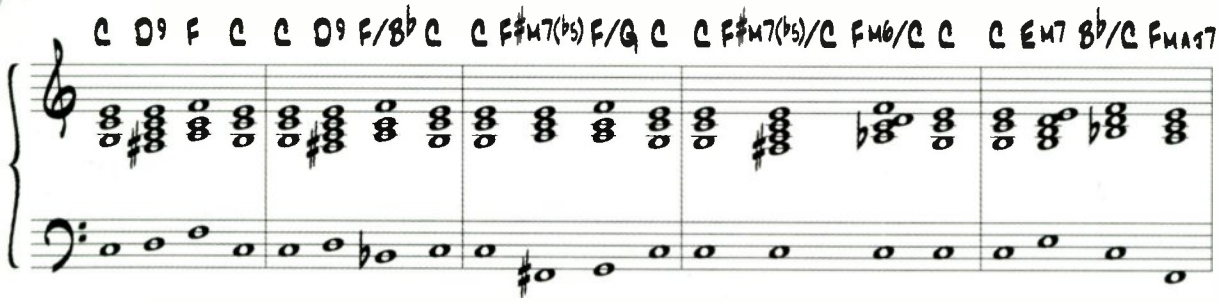
PLAY DEAN MARKLEY
OR GET THE HELL OUT

THEM'S PRETTY STRONG WORDS, BUT WE'RE NOT SURPRISED. FOLKS HAVE DIFFERENT WAYS OF SAYIN' IT BUT WE DO INSPIRE A CERTAIN FANATICAL LOYALTY. IT COULD BE OUR SUPERIOR TONE, OUR LONG LIFE OR THE FACT THAT WE JUST PLUM ENJOY A LITTLE FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. AND FRANKLY, WE AGREE WITH THE GUYS FROM SUM 41. (ALTHOUGH WE MIGHT HAVE SAID IT JUST A LITTLE BIT NICER).

Dean Markley
Strings

writing

Your Harmonic Fingerprints



Of the three elements of music (rhythm, melody and harmony) it's harmony that most often gets short-changed by contemporary songwriters. Maybe that's natural: rhythm is primal, and melody is as old as your first performance of "Twinkle Twinkle", but harmony is trickier. It involves at least two notes sounding simultaneously, with all the accompanying mathematics.

For our purposes, harmony means the chord progression, the changes that pull the melody along. Yes, pull. The first step in harnessing the power of harmony is to stop thinking of chords as a static background waiting to be decorated with melody notes. Instead, think of harmony as an equal partner, a separate stream that gives momentum to your tune.

by Don Breithaupt

What made The Beatles great? Many things, of course, but one that's often overlooked is Lennon and McCartney's instinctive command of harmony. Listen to the way they mix chords from parallel major and minor keys in classics like "Penny Lane", "Fixing A Hole" and "The Fool On The Hill". Where would Todd Rundgren be without his signature ♭VIImaj7 chords? Or Joni Mitchell without the progressions that evolved from her open tunings? And isn't Stevie Wonder's improbable E♭-A-Fm7 sequence a big reason *Songs In The Key Of Life* gets off to such an unforgettable start?

What's the common element in the music I've cited? It's pretty old. Does that mean songwriting's current generation has abandoned pursuit of the perfect chord change? Not entirely. Radiohead's acclaimed *OK Computer*, for example, is one of the most harmonically rich rock albums of this or any era. But let's face it. The low-fi, do-it-yourself ethos that has crept into pop via punk over the years has made cool chords seem kitschy. Why else is Burt Bacharach in the Austin Powers movies? Ninths are for nerds, or so the less-is-less brigade would have us believe. Still, your listeners are affected by harmony whether they know it or not. You owe it to them to put it to good use. Think beyond your first idea. Expand your chordal vocabulary. Put your harmonic fingerprints on a song and it will be unmistakably yours.

In the example above, Bar 1 decodes as I-II7-IV-I, a perfectly good pop/rock progression. Four variations follow. Bar 2 leaves the right hand unchanged, but substitutes an F/B for the F chord. The non-diatonic root freshens the sound considerably. Bar 3 leaves the right hand unchanged once again, but listen to the difference that perfect cadence (V-I) is a big moment. Bar 4 uses a tonic pedal point to anchor the proceedings, allowing us to go a little farther a field and use a IVm sound on the penultimate chord. And Bar 5, well, if you're old enough to remember the Small Faces' "Itchycoo Park", it should sound familiar.

Play through the examples then mess with a different set of material. Take a homemade melody and see how many ways you can re-harmonize it. A simple tune is fine, but make the rest interesting – Antonio Carlos Jobim never wrote a One Chord Samba. Be tough on yourself. Do your variations have forward momentum? Do they work both with and without the melody?

When I interviewed Gino Vannelli's keyboard-playing brother Joe for this magazine about 10 years ago, he bemoaned pop's apparent lack of harmonic ambition. What seemed slightly curmudgeonly then, now seems prescient. Pop needs to rediscover its vertical axis. There is about as much good in stacking notes on top of each other as in putting them next to each other. Be part of the solution. Write the world some juicy changes.

Monkey House keyboardist/frontman Don Breithaupt has written three Juno-nominated songs. A Berklee College of Music alumnus and busy session player, he is also the co-author of two acclaimed books for St. Martin's Press (New York): Precious and Few: Pop Music in the Early '70s *and* Night Moves: Pop Music in the Late '70s.

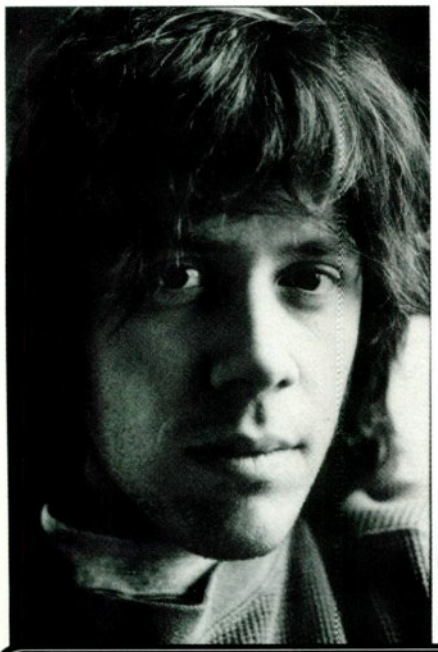
Embracing Technology

by Craig Northey

The great thing about technology is that it can be used to make things better. The problem with technology is that before you can say, "I forgot the music," it can also pave a direct route right around you and lead you quickly up a tunnel and into your own back entrance.

Technological advances in recording over the last 10 or 15 years have turned almost every musician on the planet into some form of recording engineer. I, for one, have waited for these salad days my whole musical career. Anyone who hears something in their head and cannot figure out a way to get someone else to capture it for them has suffered agonizing pain. Man plays guitar in studio. Guitar sounds like angels whispering of endless sexual gratification. Man experiences performance of a lifetime. Man ventures into control room. Guitar sounds like dolphins farting through a whiffle ball. Engineer says, "Man this tone is sweeeet." Man is deflated and goes to bathroom to escape. Man stares balefully into toilet at his own distorted reflection and ponders the truth of Dad's old "Goodbye Cruel World" bumper sticker.

I've always been evangelical in my belief that all musicians should learn how to record themselves. This doesn't mean they should always do so. It just means they can learn to communicate what they want when they know what they want and defer to someone else when they don't know what they want. The multitrack cassette machine opened up my world like a New York bus pass. I felt like the first kid on my block to split an atom. That crazy thing taught me about bussing, mixing, overdubbing, preamp levels, and mic techniques ... all kinds of things. Most rock musicians learn to play by ear (trial and error). These modern wonders made it affordable to learn to record by trial and error in that same bedroom. One was limited enough by the four or eight available tracks that a lot of decisions had to be made along the way. You had to throw away and combine things to get to an end result. You had no choice but to comp your 16 guitar ideas down to one or two. Sometimes you just had to learn how to play all 16 at once – hence the popularization of two-handed finger tapping in the '80s. Learning to make those decisions ended up being the most valuable thing I took away from each demo or experiment. Knowing how to make certain decisions can turn you into a ... God help me 'cause I'm going to use the word ... producer.



Dana Tynan

Personal multitracking entered its "stocking stuffer" era when it became available in the form of a little box and some affordable software. For the price it costs to spend one day in a top-drawer recording studio mom and dad can buy junior a full recording studio. With a little elbow grease they can fit it in his or her stocking. Junior's guitar and amp now cost more than the friggin' studio. Now people collect mics and recording peripherals like they collect stompboxes, turntables or string winders. It's a beautiful thing. I'm not saying that all these devices sound as good as the vintage standalone stuff but they certainly can compete – that old audio nerd debate makes me sleepy. I stopped using analog tape back in about 1995 or '96. I started with a couple of those first Roland hard-disk units and never looked back – they're for sale if anyone wants them.

All of a sudden I could collaborate with myself like I collaborated with other musicians. I could fly things around in time and space and copy and paste them like in a word processor. Ideas could be test driven at lightning speed and the happy accidents were glorious. The creative upside for a songwriter remains HUGE. Good ideas and performances don't need much more than the technology that is available to anybody. Demo recordings no longer have to be demo recordings. Your first ideas can now be well recorded so freshness is sealed in and not lost to poor audio quality or the drudgery of repeated performance. Great first takes that have a note or two to fix can be fixed without compromising the original performance. That aspect of "autotuning" or "cutting and pasting" can keep a truly organic performance pure and alive. It can keep spirits up when you are, in fact, "producing." No studio clock ticking. No "red light syndrome." You have all the time in the world and no pressure to get it right the first time. Anyone can seize the day. We have touched the underside of heaven! Uh oh...here comes the rub. The next step was trading up to the "magic music television" of the computer-based recording platform. These little flight simulators can actually fly! With this step it was possible to accidentally fall into the virtual world and NOT seize the ACTUAL day. With all the video game effects and visual aids it might be getting tougher to learn how to make decisions about what constitutes a great performance and what "mistakes" are necessary. Yes, I said, "Mistakes are necessary."

See next issue for the stunning conclusion to Craig's advice on working with technology to improve your recordings.

Craig Northey is a hardened musical criminal. He has recently released his first solo CD Giddy Up *(Page/Koch) after years with platinum post-punk power poppers Odds. His recent exploits have included being a writer and/or producer and/or player and/or singer for Colin James, Rosanne Cash, Wide Mouth Mason and the Kids in the Hall. Visit him online at www.craignorthey.com.*

Monitor Mixing Technology

Technological innovation and economic reality have recently come together to create opportunities for touring musicians wanting better control over their stage sound. While all musicians would prefer an onstage monitor engineer to serve up the perfect mix, fewer and fewer venues can afford it. Here's a brief overview of new monitor mixing technology that puts the power into the performer's hands at a real-world price.

In Ear Monitors

Wireless In Ear Monitors (IEMs) have gotten so affordable, professional musicians can now outfit their entire group without taking out a mortgage. Combined with an inexpensive rack-mount mixer at stage-side, IEMs can give each performer a custom mix while lowering stage volume, helping the FOH engineer at the same time. In North America, Shure Bros. is the leading provider of IEM systems, offering a range of choices and price points. A variety of appropriate rack-mount mixers are available from Allen & Heath, Yamaha, Mackie, Soundcraft and Crest. You'll want a mixer that can provide at least four discrete mixes, but go for six discrete mixes if you've got that many players and can afford it. Also, remember, you can save lots of cash by providing wired IEM systems for stationary players such as percussionists and keyboard players.

Stage Monitors

A percentage of players will always prefer monitor speakers rather than IEMs; they, too, can go the self-mixing route but will need more training in system equalization to avoid ear-bending feedback. The equipment package will be more complex, requiring outboard equalization, amplification, and a speaker system for each open-air mix. Affordable powered and un-powered stage monitors are available from EAW, JBL, Electro-Voice, Yamaha and many others.

A Step Up

For those of you already owning a system like those described, there's a new refinement of which you may not be aware. Aviom, Inc. has created a digital audio interface (Aviom A-16T) that allows personal mixing stations to be located close to each performer. The control surface (Aviom A-16) is available in a rack-mount or mic stand-mount version and provides 16 discrete channels, more than enough for most mid-level groups. The user has control of level for each channel and master bass and treble; recallable presets allow the user to tailor mixes for individual songs . The master unit simply interfaces to your mixing console via the individual channel insert points; audio is distributed digitally to each mixing station with fast and cheap CAT-5 Ethernet cable in daisy-chain fashion.

Getting The Mix You Want

Whichever setup you choose, you need to understand a few audio basics to ensure good results. I'll start with techniques for mixing floor monitors and then move on to mixing IEM systems.

The single most important determinant in achieving a good mix for yourself is proper gain-staging. By "gain-staging" I mean simply introducing signal of an appropriate level into your system and then maintaining that quality of signal throughout the entire amplification chain, from input to output to power amplifier. With this foundation of good signal quality, we can move on to the mixing.

Begin with your own instrument or voice; bring the level up until you have a strong but not overbearing volume. Next, check your tone; for vocalists and instrumentalists alike, it's important to try a range of pitches and dynamic levels so that you can check for obnoxious frequencies. If you like the sound so far, you can move on to "ringing out" the monitor; this is a technique that minimizes the possibility of acoustic feedback from vocal microphones during performance. While a little disconcerting at first, the process is quite simple and becomes straightforward with practice: With earplugs in place, slowly raise the gain of your microphone until you hear the onset of the first feedback tone; reduce your level slightly until the tone recedes. Now use your equalizer (a 1/3 octave graphic equalizer is best) to find that tone by raising the EQ faders one by one until the tone re-occurs; then, bring that fader down to the -3dB mark and repeat the process. In some cases, the same frequency will come up, in others, you will hear a new frequency; in either case, the process is the same. Carry on until you have isolated three or four problem frequencies and don't drop any single fader level beyond -6dB, otherwise your tone will be severely compromised. Remember, you are using the equalizer to minimize feedback while keeping as much tone as possible; too much frequency cutting will affect your ability to hear the monitor and turning up the volume will just bring on more feedback. If you are fighting a losing battle for volume, you probably have a deficiency in your equipment package; have it checked out by a live sound professional.

IEM technology eliminates the need for feedback equalization; you simply begin with appropriate gain staging for all of your inputs and then dial-up the mix for each user. Individual channel equalization will usually suffice for any necessary tonal changes. IEMs require more attention on setting input and output gains since the use of RF technology places limitations on available dynamic range, i.e., you can run out of headroom and the mix takes on an annoying, "squashed" quality that's very hard to get around unless you start all over again. You also need to be aware of the potential for ear damage; keep the mix comfortable but not loud in your ear.

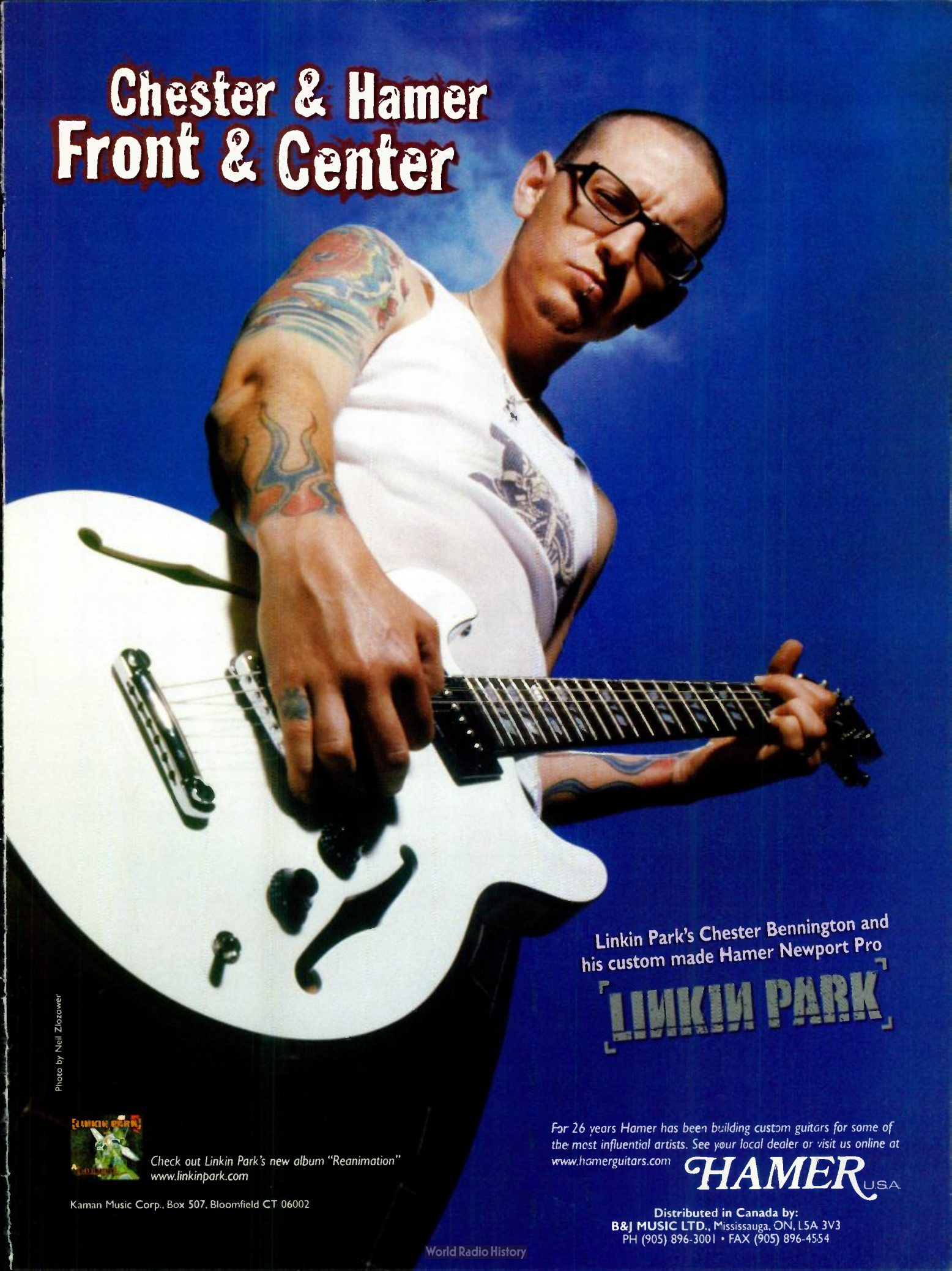
There are other interesting sub-topics around IEM technology that deserve a separate treatment; I'll look at these in a future article.

For more information on any of the products mentioned, just do a Google search on the brand names. Questions and comments on this article can be sent to the e-mail address below.

Fred Michael is President of Rocky Mountain Sound Production Services in Vancouver, BC. June 2003 marks the company's 18th consecutive season as supplier to the Vancouver International Jazz Festival. Fred can be reached at fred@rmsound.com, or via the Rocky Mountain Sound Web page, www.rmsound.com.

by Fred Michael

Chester & Hamer Front & Center



Linkin Park's Chester Bennington and his custom made Hamer Newport Pro

LINKIN PARK

Photo by Neil Zlozower

Check out Linkin Park's new album "Reanimation"
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business

Artist Management: When?

I. Introduction

I am frequently asked by artists: "When should I have a manager?" My Zen-like response is often: "When it is time, the manager will appear." This answer is often insufficient to provide an artist with a sound basis upon which to answer this important question; consequently, I have developed a more Socratic method herein.

II. The Greatest

The greatest managers answer "yes" to the following questions (in no particular order):

1. Do they know the radio programmers in key markets for your type of music? Radio continues to be an important vehicle to propel careers. Managers can call stations personally or at least influence a record company on varying radio strategies.
2. Do they have a complimentary artist roster that can add leverage to your pursuits? The music business is a business of relationships. If your manager manages high profile acts that people want – they can wedge you into opportunities that might not otherwise be available. If one of their big acts is unavailable for something maybe they can slip you into that vacant spot.
3. Do they manage an artist that has sold platinum level status in Canada or the US? This is obviously not a definitive criteria but it is one more indicator that this manager has reached the brass ring in selling records. It is an impressive feat.
4. Do they manage an artist that has been nominated for a Juno and/or Grammy Award? Again, not a definitive criteria but rather another indicator of success.
5. Do they manage an internationally successful touring artist? Touring the international marketplace provides many challenges to the new, inexperienced manager (i.e. foreign withholding taxes; cartage; immigration; etc.).
6. Do they know the program director at MuchMusic, MTV or VH1? Video, especially in this country, is an important vehicle to launch careers. Your manager may not be able to call MuchMusic directly to force them to air your video but they can help your record label be persuasive in this regard.
7. Do they understand your type of music and/or your artistic vision? Your manager will be required to communicate and defend your vision on a daily basis. It is important that they can speak the language of the artist and the music industry executive.
8. Do they have time to focus on your career? You need phone calls returned. Ideally the manager will have a sufficient support staff to supplement their efforts and handle day-to-day details of an artist's career.
9. Do they have a firm grasp of new technologies and their impact on the music business? This point cannot be underestimated. We are moving into a new age in the music business and those who adapt will survive and help their clients survive.
10. Do you like them? The management-artist relationship is like a marriage. You will be speaking to this person on a daily basis.

III. New Blood

Obviously, new managers start somewhere and some of this country's best managers do not answer "yes" to all of these questions yet. Great managers answer yes to all the following questions – these are some of the basics required.

1. Are they organized? Organization is key. Tracking timelines, keeping track of phone numbers, keeping track of money, studio/rehearsal set-up, artwork, flyers, etc. is important.
2. Are they hard working? New managers have to work twice as hard and will likely have to work another "day job" to supplement their management exploits. They must be steadily networking to develop contacts that would be helpful to the artist.
3. Are they intelligent? This is connected to the next point. Almost all successful managers share this quality and unfortunately it is hard to teach or acquire.
4. Are they good communicators? Managers have to communicate artistic and business concepts to you as well as other music industry players (i.e. agent, record label, other managers, publishers). E-mail and the written word is heavily relied upon by managers these days to control the workload.
5. Are they dedicated? Some new managers merely jump on for the ride. Will this manager be there in the good *and* bad times? The climb to success is often filled with stumbling blocks that require dedication to overcome.
6. Are they willing to work on a trial basis? No new manager should expect a signed contract with absolute, long-term binding commitments.
7. Are they able to do a better job than you? Often, new bands hold romantic visions of what a manager will do for them; often, they are disappointed. It isn't glamorous or "fun" to manage yourself but it provides a foundation for your future in the music business and often artists are the best candidates for the job in the early going.
8. Are they able to answer "yes" to the previous questions 7, 8, 9, 10? Some of the points outlined also apply for new managers.

IV. Conclusions

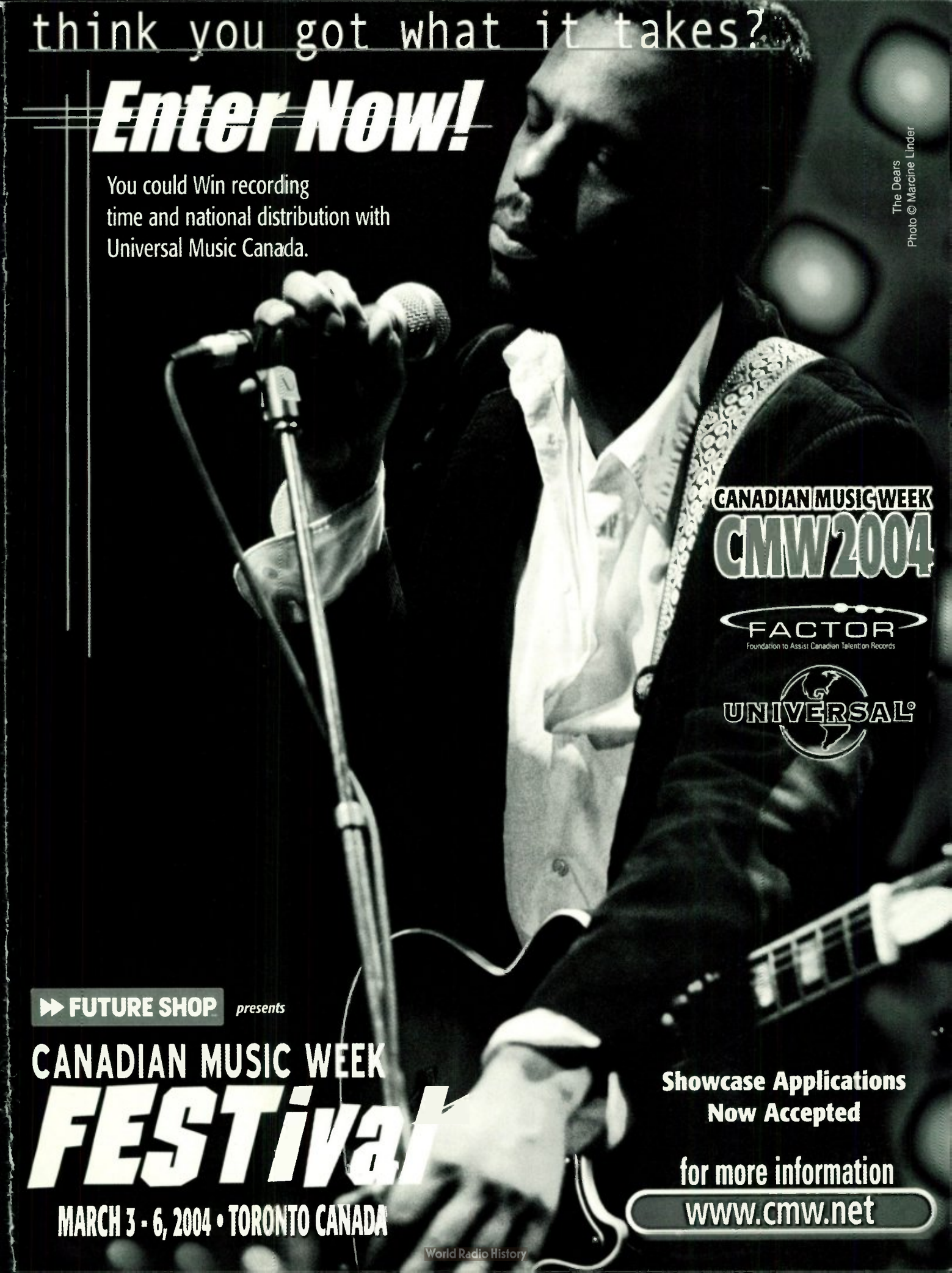
Every manager gets fired at one point or another. This is not an indicator of lack of ability necessarily; however, you may want to track down some of the manager's former clients to gain some insight into why they made a switch.

Great management can accelerate a career *almost* as much as a good song. Bad management can hinder an artist's prospects and, in some extreme cases, end a career. These questions provided herein are not conclusive by any means.

Be careful with your choice grasshopper.

Chris Taylor is a lawyer with the law firm of Sanderson Taylor and works with Avril Lavigne, Nelly Furtado, Sum 41, and Sam Roberts among others. www.sandersontaylor.com.

by Chris Taylor



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hot gear

Yamaha PSR1100/PSR2100

PSR1100

PSR2100

Yamaha has recently released the PSR1100 and PSR2100 portable keyboards, featuring USB connectivity, screens capable of displaying sheet music and systems designed to utilize the benefits of the Internet.

The new models feature graphic representations of functions, including computer-like folders showing song, style and function lists, animated help screens, song lyrics, music notation and more. Chord data from standard MIDI files can be used by the Style section to immediately take a song from one arrangement to another. The units' Music Finder Function allows the user to simply chooses from hundreds of song titles, pushes a button and the entire keyboard automatically adjusts to all appropriate settings for the particular song.

Additional new features include two times the amount of Wave ROM memory (over previous models), Yamaha's Advanced Wave Memory tone generation, XG MIDI compatibility, a bass reflect sounds system with two-way stereo speakers and an enhanced multi-effect DSP.

The PSR2100 also features a microphone input for vocals, which links up with an internal vocal harmonizer – allowing for real-time vocal harmonies. Both instruments feature LY (Lyrics) that will scroll the words across the display in time to the music, in case the user cannot remember the lyrics on their own.

For more information, contact: Yamaha Canada Music Ltd., 135 Milner Ave., Toronto, ON M1S 3R1 (416) 298-1311, FAX (416) 292-0732, www.yamaha.ca.

Parker Fly Bass

Fly Supreme

Fly Deluxe

As part of the company's 10th anniversary celebrations, Parker Guitars has introduced two updated versions of its Fly Classic and Fly Deluxe models – the first such update to the Fly line since its initial production a decade ago.

The improvements came after an analysis of input and suggestions provided by hundreds of Parker Guitar owners, enthusiasts and dealers. Included in the redesign are simplifications of the controls, making them more accessible and easier to use while playing. The Fishman pre-amp has undergone an overhaul resulting in improved performance. The new circuitry can now automatically sense whether the cable is stereo or mono, eliminating the need for a stereo/mono switch. A voltage-doubler has been added to the circuit for twice the headroom with the same 9-volt battery, and battery life has increased to over 200 hours.

All new Fly guitars are equipped with a coil tap and 3-way pickup selector that gives the player even more sound than before, with six magnetic pickup choices ranging from warm, creamy humbucker crunch to single-coil twang to howling blues.

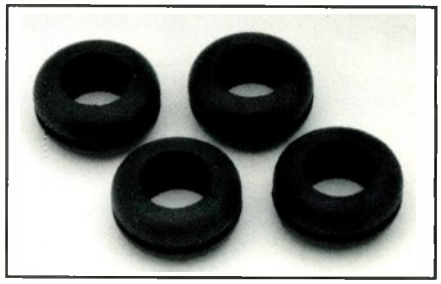
For more information, contact: Parker Guitars, PO Box 388, Wilmington, MA 01887 (978) 988-0102, FAX (978) 988-0104, www.parkerguitars.com.

Camber C-Saver

Camber has introduced a practical, cost-effective means of preventing harmful metal-on-metal wear to cymbals played on stands. The Camber C-Saver is a new concept in cymbal protection that utilizes a grooved rubber grommet that fits snugly into any cymbal's mounting hole.

Created for drummers, percussionists and band directors who find themselves with cymbal stands where the traditional plastic or rubber sleeves are broken, worn or missing in action, the C-Saver is easily pushed into the mounting hole and helps to prevent the harmful 'keyhole' effect of metal-on-metal friction while letting the cymbal vibrate freely. This protective insert is available for the universally popular tilter sizes of 6 mm and 8 mm. C-Saver is perfect for emergencies or as standard equipment on all cymbals, and is available in a four-piece set.

For more information, contact: SABIAN Ltd., 219 Main St., Meductic, NB E6H 2L5 (506) 272-2019, FAX (506) 272-2081, sabian@sabian.com, www.sabian.com.



Tacoma Papoose 12-String

Tacoma Guitars has recently introduced the new 12-string model in their unique Papoose guitar line. The instrument was developed from the current Papoose design, with the addition of its 12-string neck and the complementary bracing under the bridge, which combines to create the chorusing effect of a 12-string guitar with the upper range of a mandolin.

Originally introduced in 1997, the Papoose design has proven itself as a successful studio tool and features a 19.1" string scale length, A-style tuning and a smaller body cavity.

For more information, contact: MOL Marketing Solutions, 1425 Benvenuto Ave., Brentwood, BC V8M 1J5 (800) 992-7845, FAX (800) 992-0015, info@molmarketing.net, www.molmarketing.net.

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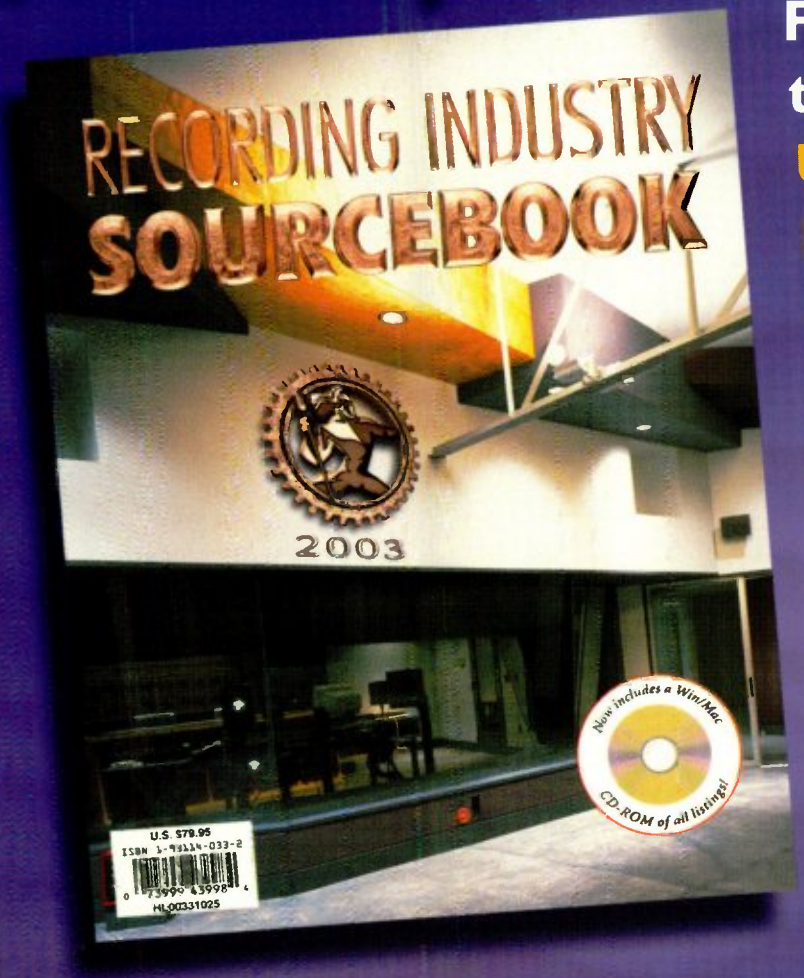

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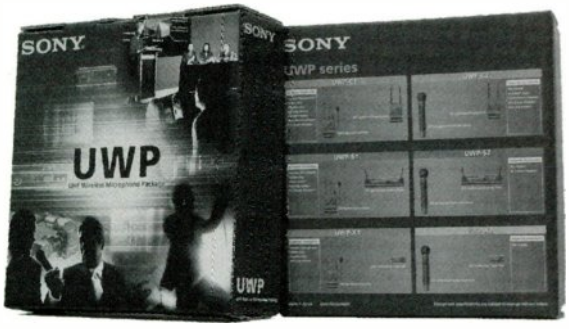
hot gear

Sony UWP Wireless Mics



Sony has recently expanded its UWP pre-packaged UHF wireless microphone systems with the introduction of separate components, allowing users to custom craft their own setup.

Designed with the working musician in mind, the UWP systems feature rugged housings, internal antennas and a battery life that lasts about six hours. Three core technologies supply the units with stable transmission and reception. PLL Synthesized System is a stable carrier signal that helps to prevent interference with other frequency channels, a Space Diversity Reception System achieves a stable reception through dual-antenna inputs/reception circuits that receive signals over two different paths and automatically selects the best RF signal for quality performances, and finally Tone Squelch Circuitry recognizes a 32 kHz pilot-tone signal and outputs the audio signal only when this signal is received, which also helps prevent potential interference from other transmissions of wireless devices.

UWP wireless components include the UTX-B1C Body-Back Transmitter, the UTX-B1S Body-Back Transmitter, the UTX-H1 Handheld Microphone, the URX-P1 Portable Diversity Receiver, the URX-R1 Half Rack Diversity Receiver, the URX-M1 Diversity Tuner Module, the RMM-URXR1S Single Rack Mount and the RMM-URXR1D Dual Rack Mount.

For more information, contact: Sony of Canada, Ltd., 115 Gordon Baker Rd., Toronto, ON M2H 3R6 (416) 499-1414, FAX (416) 499-8290, general_inquiries@sony.ca, www.sony.ca.

VOX ToneLab

VOX has recently unveiled the ToneLab Amp and Effect Modeller, bringing all the modelling power of the company's Valvetronix series to a portable, desktop format suitable for recording and live performance applications.

Employing VOX's patented Valve Reactor circuit (a proprietary design that uses a 12AX7 dual triode as a power amp tube), the ToneLab recreates the sound and feel of a variety of vacuum tube guitar amps. The unit recreates 16 amps ranging from vintage classics to modern "boutique" standards, plus a wide variety of effects, noise reduction, a selection of inputs/outputs and an intuitive user interface. Additionally, the ToneLab incorporates 10 cabinet models that reproduce the acoustic character of a variety of cabinet shapes and speaker types.

The Valve Reactor circuit simulates the reactive load of a real speaker, and reconfigures itself to match the characteristics of the amps it is modelling (switches from class A to class AB, selects negative feedback parameters, etc.).

Available effects include: compressor, overdrive, chorus, tremolo, rotary speaker, acoustic simulator, tape echo and auto wah. In addition to 48 preset programs, a combination of amps, cabinets and effects can be setup as one of 96 user programs.

For connectivity the unit includes a Line/Amp switch that allows the user to send the signal to any device for direct line recording, or to a sound system and/or guitar amp for live performance. Digital output (S/PDIF), headphone out, MIDI In/Out and a built-in Korg digital tuner are all also included.

For more information, contact: Erikson Music, 21000 TransCanada Hwy., Baie D'Urfe, PQ H9X 4B7 (514) 457-2555, FAX (514) 457-0055, info@jamindustries.com, www.eriksonmusic.com.

hot Gear

Mountain Rythym Tuneable Frame Drums & Bodhrans

The Mountain Rythym frame drum and bodhran are made of block laminated butternut wood, forming a solid yet lightweight shell that is more stable than the traditional laminates used.

The simple, effective, and invisible tuning system on both styles of drums allows for quick, accurate tuning. The ease of use of this system also facilitates hastily reducing the tension of the head between playing periods, thus extending the life of the head considerably. The shell depths for both the frame drum and the bodhran have been chosen to provide the very best sound, broadest tuning range and easiest handling possible. The cut out on the frame drum allows for easy two-hand, multiple finger Middle Eastern playing techniques.

Crossbars in the bodhran have been eliminated, allowing for the "holding" hand to execute pitch variations so common in contemporary playing styles. The quality of the heads, all hand-selected to provide the best feel and response, complete the package for these frame drums. The bodhran is available with double heads. Tucking two separate skins onto the drum has become common to allow players to achieve the drier, contemporary sound.

For more information, contact: Mountain Rhythm, PO Box 1356, Lakefield, ON K0L 2H0 (905) 764-6543, FAX (905) 764-6685, drums@mountainrythym.com, www.mountainrythym.com.

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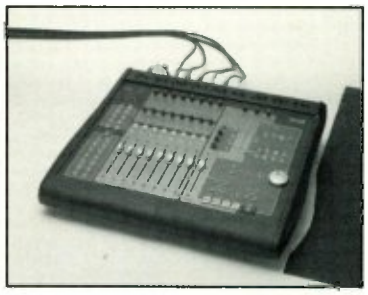
Tascam FW-1884



Tascam and Frontier Design Group have recently teamed to design the new FW-1884 professional DAW control surface and audio/MIDI interface that uses FireWire high-speed data transfer protocol.

Features include an 18-channel audio I/O (eight analog, eight ADAT digital and two S/PDIF coaxial or optical); comprehensive mixing, automation, editing and navigation controls for almost any DAW application; nine 100 mm motorized touch-sensitive faders; dedicated controls for pan, solo, mute and select per channel, tactile control over bands of EQ; and eight balanced XLR mic/line inputs with high-quality mic preamps and phantom power.

Additionally, the FW-1884 offers 24-bit/96 kHz recording resolution with surround monitoring control, four MIDI inputs and outputs and an available FE-8 fader expander adds an additional eight control channels and faders, for up to 129-channel control.

For more information, contact: TEAC Canada Ltd., 5939 Wallace St., Mississauga, ON L4Z 1Z8 (905) 890-8008, FAX (905) 890-9888, info@teac-ca.com, www.tascam.com.

Crest CPL-1288

As part of their new Performance line of products designed for musicians, Crest Audio has announced the release of the CPL-1288, a compressor/expander/limiter made for live performance and recording applications.

A single rack space unit, the CPL-1288 can be operated as two independent compressors or as one synched stereo compressor with true RMS summing. The unit includes a side-chain insert in the detector path that allows manipulation or replacement of the detector signal. The insert features an enable switch and two selectable filters, a low cut filter to reduce low frequency modulation from the detector path and a de-esser to remove sibilance (hissing "s" and "z" consonant sounds).

The CP-1288's 12-segment LED array displays the amount of gain reduction, while a 10-segment LED array can be switched to show either the input or output level. The device also has fully balanced inputs and outputs with XLR and ¼" jack connections. A special "one cable" I/O ¼" TRS jack allows the use of a standard ¼" stereo cable to directly connect the CPL-1288 to the insert jack of a mixer.

For more information, contact: White Radio, 940 Gateway Dr., Burlington, ON L7L 5K7 (905) 632-6894, FAX (905) 632-6981, sales@whiteradio.com, www.whiteradio.com.

hot gear

Roland MV-8000

Roland has recently released the MV-8000 Production Studio, a complete hardware studio with 16 velocity- and aftertouch-sensitive pads, professional sampling, sequencing, effects processing and CD burning.

The unit supports all major audio formats via the onboard CD-RW drive, floppy drive and USB port. All audio is stored on the unit's internal 40 GB hard drive. The MV-8000 comes with 128 MB of RAM, which can be expanded to 512 MB for up to 101 minutes of sampling when recording in mono. Users can sample their own sounds or import sounds from a number of sources, including: Akai MPC2000/4000 libraries, Roland S-700 samples, ACID and WAV/AIFF files.

Connections to the MV-8000 include ¼" stereo mic/line inputs, stereo RCA phono inputs, ¼" stereo master and headphone outputs, plus S/PDIF digital outputs in coaxial and optical formats. Additionally, added connectivity can be found via a USB port, MIDI input, two MIDI outputs and a footswitch jack.

The unit offers programming with its 16 velocity- and aftertouch-sensitive pads, and an advanced sequencing engine with 136 tracks. Eight stereo audio tracks (16 mono) and 128 MIDI tracks (with 32-channel operation using external MIDI gear) can be used as a linear recorder. The unit also includes Roland's V-Link technology, which allows users to trigger and manipulate video clips when using the MV-8000 in conjunction with Edirol video gear (sold separately).

For more information, contact: Roland Canada Music Ltd., 5480 Parkwood Way, Richmond, BC V6V 2M4 (604) 270-6626, FAX (604) 270-6552, info@roland.ca, www.roland.ca.

hot gear

Moog PianoBar

Moog Music has recently introduced the PianoBar, a three-piece accessory that enables a musician to play a wide variety of musical sounds from any acoustic piano keyboard.

The PianoBar can be used to turn a piano into a MIDI controller, with capability for sound enhancement and music composition; as a teaching aid, providing instant evaluation of a player's skill; or simply to add new depth and excitement to an instrument that may be gathering dust in the living room. The user selects sounds from the unit's self-contained library of more than 300 high-quality instruments and effects.

The PianoBar is made up of the Scanner Bar, the Pedal Sensor and the Control Module. The Scanner Bar, a slim device that sits over the keys immediately in front of the piano fallboard, uses patented infrared sensor technology to register the keys' motions without touching or affecting their feel. It can be set in place in a few minutes, without tools and without affecting the piano in anyway. The Pedal Sensor is placed on the floor under the piano's pedals and registers their motions. The Control Module, a small box placed at a convenient spot on the piano, ties the Scanner Bar and Pedal Sensor to a MIDI output/input, and includes the library of sounds.

For more information, contact: SF Marketing Inc., St. Laurent, PQ H4S 1R3 (514) 856-1919, FAX (514) 856-1920, info@sfm.ca, www.sfm.ca.

Blues Blaster Harmonica Mic

Hohner, Inc. has recently re-launched its well-known Blues Blaster harmonica microphone. The microphone was briefly discontinued last year because of the supplier difficulties, and Hohner has worked hard to bring it back to market.

The reintroduced Blues Blaster features a volume control, dark blue metallic finish with bright chrome faceplate and traditional bullet shape. As a re-introductory special, each microphone will be packaged with a free cord.

For more information, contact: Hohner Inc., 1000 Technology Park Dr., Glen Allen, VA 23059 (804) 515-1900, FAX (804) 515-0840, info@hohnerusa.com, www.hohnerusa.com.

Fender 400 Pro Combo Bass Amp

Fender has recently released the latest combo bass amplifier, the newly redesigned 400 Pro. A professional level 350 W, 2 x 10 combo (based on the Bassman 400C), the 400 Pro now features Ozite carpet covering, stacking corners, heavy duty cast frame Eminence speakers with vented pole pieces and spring loaded handles.

The amp includes a Korg DTR-1000 on board rackmount tuner, a room balance control for compensating for extreme acoustics, an enhance switch for emphasizing highs and lows, variable compressor, balanced XLR line out with Pre/Post EQ switch, ground lift and level control for line out, mute switch, effects loop and a one-button footswitch for EQ In/Out (footswitch included). The unit weighs in at 88 lbs. and measures 24.75" (H) x 23" (W) x 17" (D).

For more information, contact: Fender Musical Instruments Corp., 8860 E. Chaparral Rd., #100, Scottsdale, AZ 85250 (480) 596-9690, www.fender.com.

Ernie Ball Compact Volume Pedals

Ernie Ball has recently introduced two new volume pedals, called the Volume Pedal Juniors, that come equipped with a 250 K or 25 K potentiometer and feature a compact design.

The 250 K model works best with instruments that do not feature a pre-amp, and is ideal for passive electronics, while the 25 K unit is made for active electronic output, such as guitars that already have a pre-amp or a keyboard with a higher output. Both pedals feature a new compact design that allows for easier use and also works better with other pedals because of its small size.

For more information, contact: Charlie Argall Music, 3266 Yonge St., #1709, Toronto, ON M4N 3P6 (877) 488-1645, FAX (416) 488-3643, charlieargallmusic@bellnet.ca, www.charlieargallmusic.com.

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TEAC Canada Ltd.: TEAC/TASCAM requires an experienced in-house Service Supervisor. Responsibilities include national customer telephone support as well as some repairs to both consumer and professional products. Some computer knowledge required and bilingual (French) a definite asset. Please submit resumes by mail to: TEAC Canada Ltd., c/o Human Resources, 5939 Wallace St., Mississauga, ON L4Z 1Z8. By FAX (905) 890-9888 or by e-mail: info@teac-ca.com.

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SHOWCASE

by Rod Christie

Bleep

Who: Bleep
Where: Toronto, ON
What: Electronic/Techno Duo
Contact: bleep@bleeptunes.com, www.bleeptunes.com

Possessed of a strange sense of humour, techno duo Bleep peer soberly out of the cover of their debut CD *IMM 0008* dressed in what appears to be Mennonite outfits. Hardly Luddites, Bleep are comprised of British-born singer Robyn Sellman and tech-head Igor Olejar, originally form Yugoslavia. Pushing the electronic envelope at speeds somewhere in between drum 'n' bass and trip-hop, Bleep lay claim to a wider range of influences than most of their peers. "We often quote the Twins as our main influences: the Cocteau Twins and Aphex Twin," says Olejar. "But the range of influence is wide, from dream-pop to techno to bhangra to film soundtracks. Experimentation within the framework of conventional pop songs is what we do." Ethereal melodies and clattering rhythms are a hallmark of their music, pushed by the technical abilities of programming, sampling and recording, as well as a smattering of guitars and keys. Despite the heavy use of technology, the songs transcend mere digital manipulation. "Being intimately familiar with the technology helps you easily translate your ideas into sound," adds Olejar. "We try not to get lost in all the technicalities and stay aware of the big picture – our job is to produce songs, not administer technology."

Jacob Moon

Who: Jacob Moon
Where: Hamilton, ON
What: Spiritual Singer/Songwriter
Contact: jacobmoon@sympatico.ca, www.jacobmoon.com

After three independently recorded discs, Hamilton's Jacob Moon decided to treat himself for the recording of his latest, *Landing*. Selecting Catherine North Recording Studio in Hamilton, a converted church, and filling it with friends and family for three nights in 2002 provided Moon with all the energy and inspiration he needed to capture his sound. A passionate singer and remarkable guitarist, Moon was aided in this adventure by producer Glen Marshall, singer/songwriter Lisa Winn and a miniature gospel choir, as well as a pure, analog recording technique that perfectly reflects the warmth of Moon's songs. As well as an accomplished songwriter, Moon has developed his finger-picked guitar style sufficiently to include a Lexicon Jam Man, creating loops on the fly and deftly convincing the listener that he is in fact two guitarists in one. Shorn of studio trickery, the joy of performance shines on *Landing*, which also includes songs by Paul Simon, Bela Fleck and Pierce Pettis. While Moon's Christian inspiration is evident in several of the songs, his music has a bittersweet joy and energy of its own. Says Moon of his three-night stint at Catherine North, "That weekend was the highlight of my career so far. The fans, the vibe, my collaborators – everything was as good as I could have hoped for."

Jeszcze Raz

Who: Jeszcze Raz
Where: Montreal, PQ
What: Trans-Atlantic Folk
Contact: Heather Kelly, (416) 364-5701, heather@heatherk.ca

Led by Polish pianist and vocalist Paul Kunigis, the sounds and influences of Montreal's Jeszcze Raz (pronounced yes-chay raz, meaning "one more time" in Polish) list off like a Lonely Planet travel guide. On their latest release *Balagane*, lyrics are supplied by Kunigis in Polish, Hebrew, French and Arabic. Add to that instrumentation ranging from accordion and harmonium (Caroline Meunier), violin (Carmen Piculeata), clarinet (JD Levassuer), trombone (Marc Tremblay), as well as the more traditional guitar (Yves Desrosiers), percussion (Rémi Leclerc and Francois Lalonde) and bass (Tommy Babin), and the listener is left with a whirlwind of harmonic styles. Held together by the rich voice and driving force of Kunigis, Balagane is a passionate vessel filled with themes of triumph, sadness, love, history and politics. Born to a Jewish father in Poland and raised as a Catholic by his mother when the family moved to Israel, Kunigis immigrated to Canada when he was 19, initially setting up in Toronto. A self-taught musician, he discovered that the unique heritage of Quebec allowed him to express himself, and soon combined all of his influences, including American blues and gospel styles, gathering around him some top-flight musicians and forming Jeszcze Raz. Listeners will not be disappointed with *Balagane*; a unique trip through many cultures that still sounds wholly original.

Rod Christie is a Toronto-based freelance writer

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