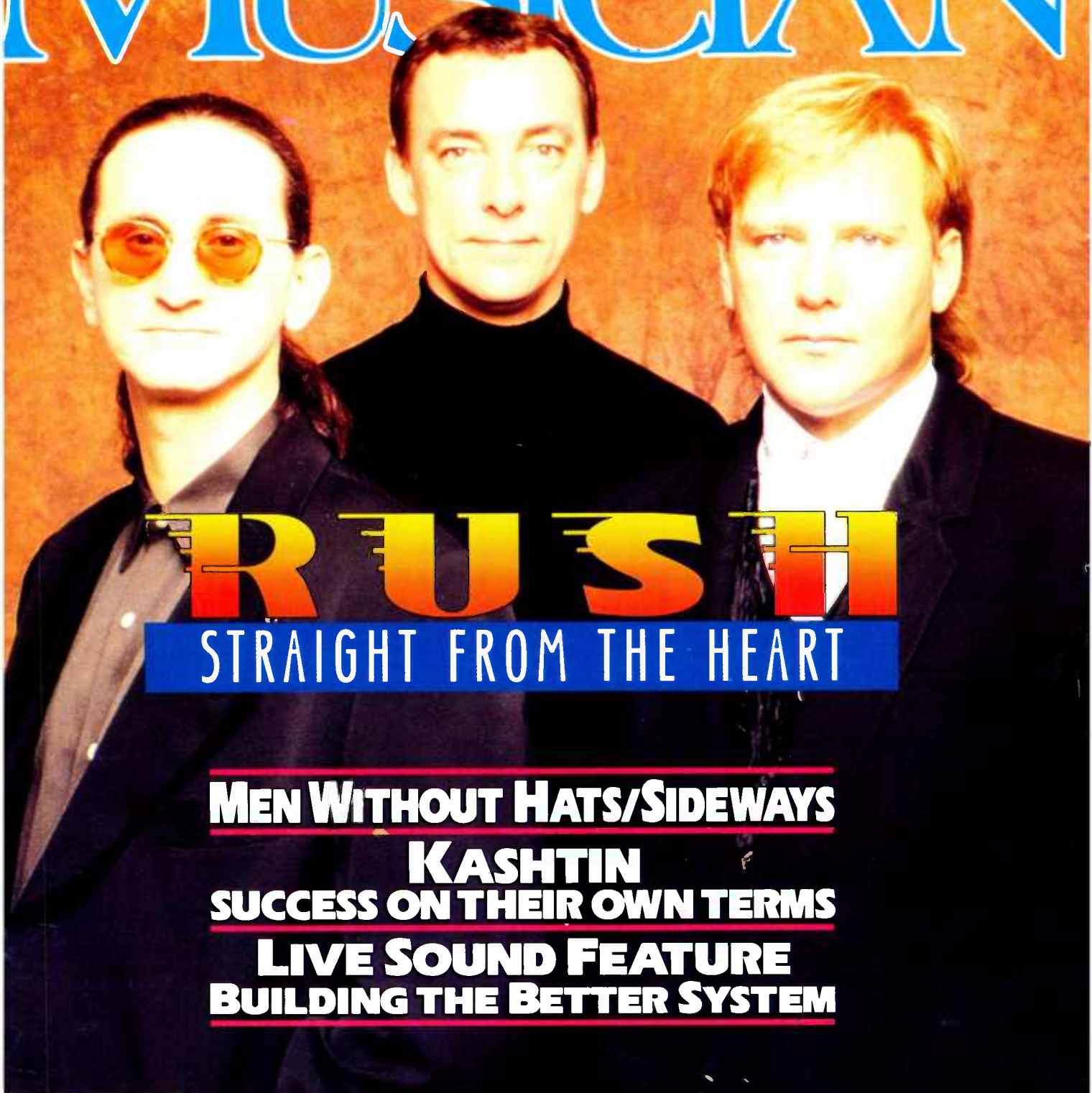


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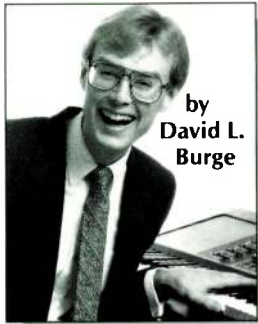


The true story behind Burge's best-selling Perfect Pitch method.

# How I discovered the secret to Perfect Pitch

I started in ninth grade as a sort of teenage rivalry.

I was practicing the piano about five hours daily. Linda practiced far less. But somehow Linda always seemed to have an edge which made her the star performer of our school. It was frustrating.



by David L. Burge

What does she have that I don't? I'd wonder.

Then one day I ran into Linda's close friend, Sheryl. She bragged on about Linda, adding fuel to my fire. "You could never be like Linda," she taunted. "Linda's got Perfect Pitch."

"What's Perfect Pitch?" I asked.

Sheryl told me all about Linda's *uncanny* abilities: how she could name tones and chords—just by ear; how she could sing pitches—from sheer memory; and how she could play songs after merely hearing them on the radio!

My heart sank. Her fantastic ear is the key to her success I thought. How could I ever hope to compete with her?

Then I doubted it all. How could she possibly know F# or Bb just by listening? An ear like that could unleash powerful new talents.

It bothered me. Did she really have Perfect Pitch? I finally asked her if the rumors were true.

"Yes," she nodded aloofly.

Perfect Pitch was too good to believe. I rudely pressed, "Can I test you sometime?"

"OK," she replied cheerfully.

## Now I was going to make her eat her words...

My plan was ingeniously simple: I awaited a time when Linda least suspected. Then I boldly challenged her to name tones for me—by ear.

I made her stand so she could not see the piano keyboard. I made sure other classmates could not help her. I made sure everything was set just right so I could expose her claims as a ridiculous joke.

Nervously, I plotted my testing strategy. Linda appeared serene. With silent apprehension I played a tone: F#. (She'll never guess F#!)

I had barely touched the tone. "F#," she said. I was astonished.

I quickly played another tone. She didn't even stop to think. Instantly she announced the correct pitch. I played more and more tones here and there on the keyboard, and each time she knew the pitch—without effort. She was SO amazing—she could identify tones as easily as colors!

"Sing an Eb," I demanded, determined to mess her up. Quickly she sang the proper pitch. I made her sing more tones (trying hard to make them increasingly difficult), but still she sang every one perfectly on pitch.

I was totally boggled. "How in the world do you do it?" I blurted.

"I don't know," she sighed. And to my dismay that was as much as I could get out of her!

The reality of Perfect Pitch hit me hard. My head was dizzy with disbelief, yet I now knew that Perfect Pitch was real.

## I couldn't figure it out...

"How does she do it?" I kept asking myself. On the other hand, why can't everyone identify tones by ear?

It dawned on me that most musicians can't tell the sound of C from C#, or the key of A major from G major—like artists who paint picture after

picture without knowing green from turquoise. It seemed odd and contradictory.

I found myself even more mystified than before. Humiliated and puzzled, I went home to work on this problem. At age 14, this was a hard nut to crack.

You can be sure I tried it myself. I would sweet-talk my brothers and sisters into playing tones for me, then I'd try to determine each pitch by ear. Almost every attempt failed miserably.

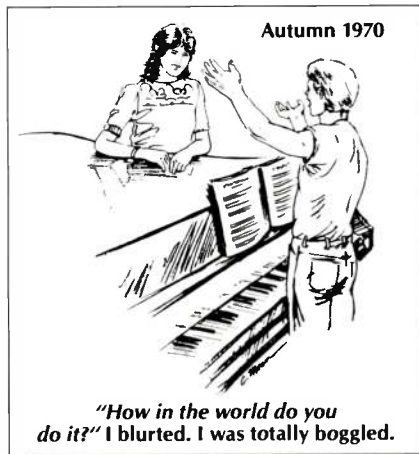
I tried day after day to learn the tones. I tried playing them over and over in order to memorize them. I tried to visualize the location of each pitch. But nothing worked. I simply could not recognize the tones by ear. It was hopeless.

After many weeks in vain, I finally gave up. Linda's gift was extraordinary. But for me, it was out of reach.

## Then came the realization...

It was like a miracle. Once I had stopped straining my ear, I started to listen NATURALLY. Then the incredible secret to Perfect Pitch jumped right into my lap.

I began to notice faint "colors" within the tones. Not visual colors—but colors of pitch. They had always been there. But this was the first



"How in the world do you do it?" I blurted. I was totally boggled.

time I had ever really "let go" enough to hear these subtle differences in the sounds.

Now I could name tones by ear! It was simple. I could hear how F# sounds one way—while Bb has a distinctly different quality. It was as easy as seeing red or blue!

The realization struck me: THIS IS PERFECT PITCH! This is how Bach, Beethoven and Mozart could mentally envision music—and identify tones, chords, and keys at will—by listening for these pitch colors.

I became convinced that any musician could gain Perfect Pitch just by learning how to unlock this simple secret of "color hearing."

When I told my friend Ann that she could have Perfect Pitch, she laughed. "You have to be born with Perfect Pitch," she asserted.

"You don't understand what Perfect Pitch is," I explained. "It's easy!"

I showed her how to listen. Timidly, she confessed that she could hear the colors, too. Soon she also had Perfect Pitch. We became instant celebrities; everyone was amazed.

As I continued my piano studies, my Perfect Pitch allowed me to progress faster than I ever thought possible. (I would later skip over required college courses.) Perfect Pitch made everything easier—performing, composing, arranging, transposing, improvising—and it skyrocketed my enjoyment as well. Music is definitely a hearing art.

Oh yes, and as for Linda—well, time found us at the end of our senior year of high school, with my final chance to outdo her.

Our local university sponsored a music festival each spring. That year, I scored an A+ in the most advanced performance category. Linda scored only an A.

Sweet victory was mine at last!

## How you can have Perfect Pitch, too:

By now, independent research and thousands of musicians have already proven that my Color Hearing method really works. Now I'd like to show YOU how to develop your own ear!

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Research reference: An experimental investigation of the effectiveness of training on absolute pitch in adult musicians. M. A. Rush. The Ohio State University.

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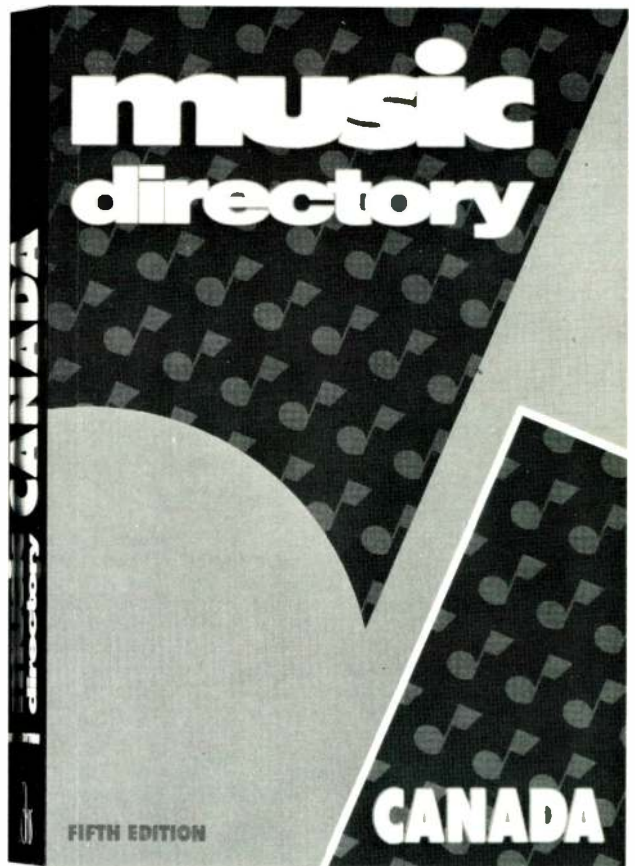
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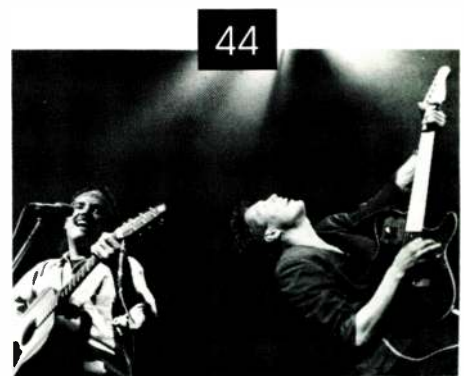
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Rush



Men Without Hats



Kashtin

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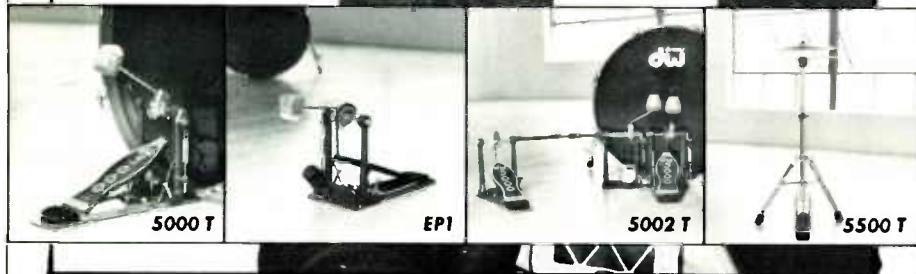
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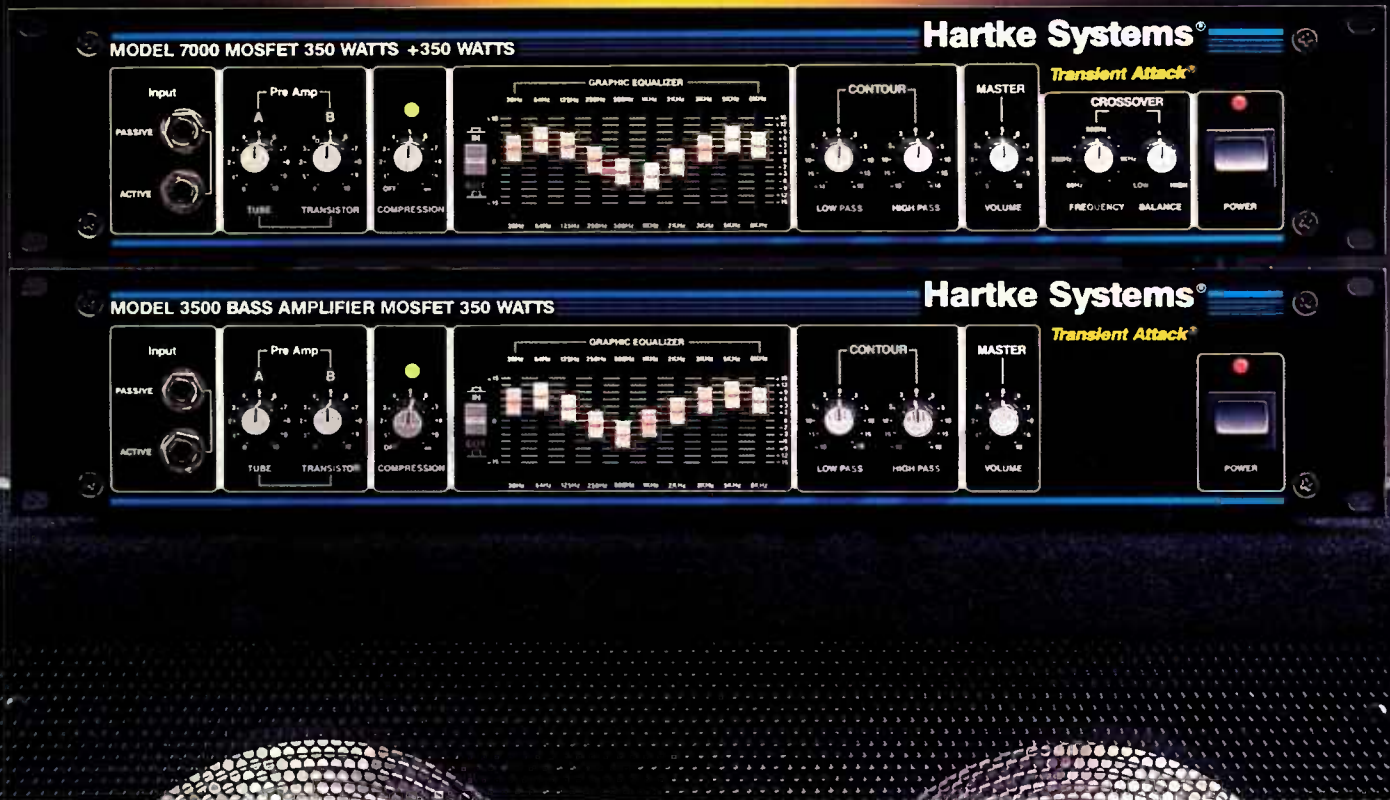
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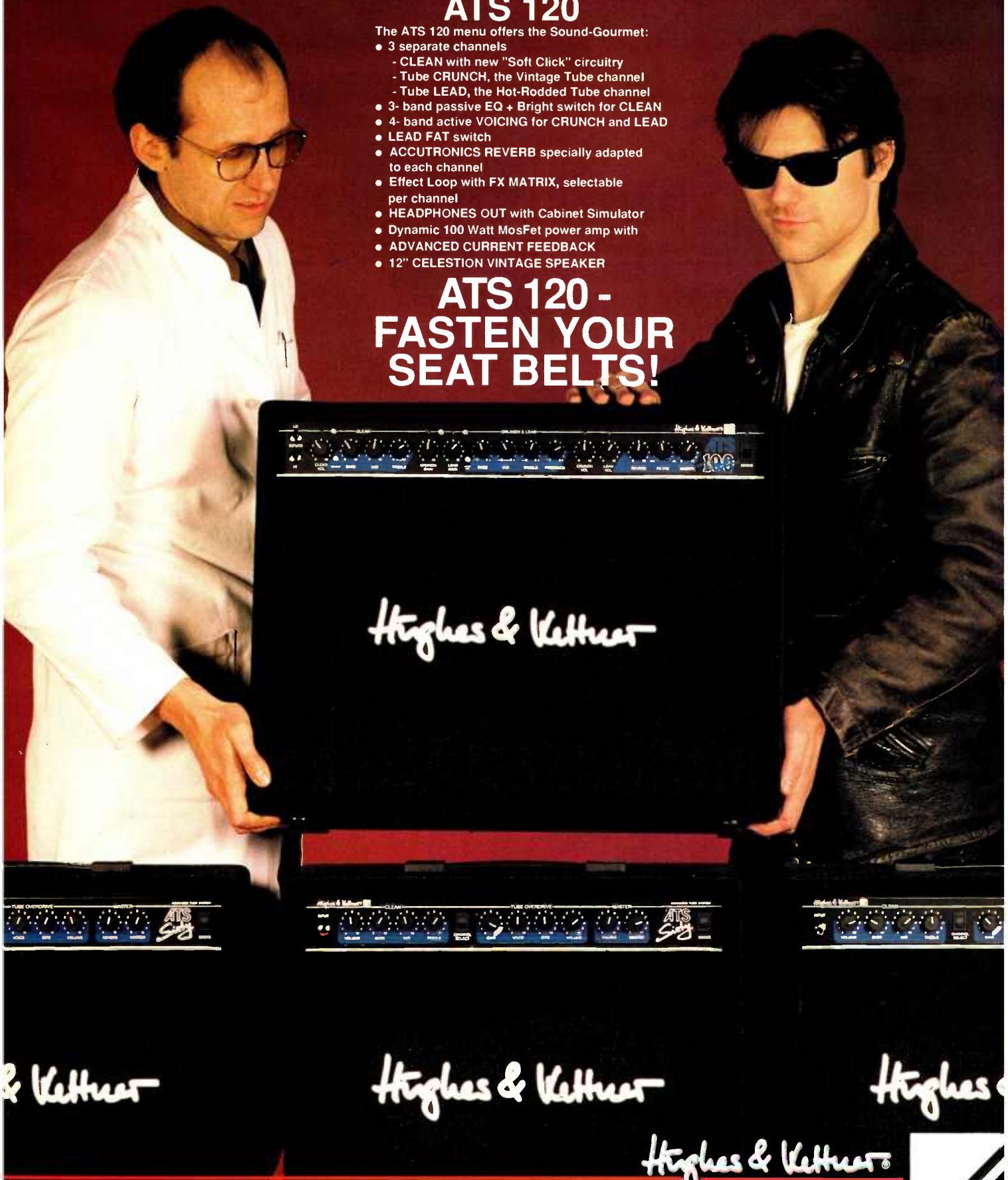
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# RUSH

## Never Sleeps

**I** was very pleased to score interviews with Rush co-founder Geddy Lee and drummer/lyricist Neil Peart for this issue's cover story. In preparation, I went to the SRO Anthem offices for a preview listening of the new album, *Roll The Bones*, and dusted off several well-worn Rush records that contributed so much to my days as a care-free youth. Having done the necessary research, I returned to Anthem several days later...

Soft-spoken and thoughtful, Lee talks about recording the new album, his influences and the progression of Rush's work over the last decade. One got the sense from speaking with him that the band is in the midst of a second wind — that they have a lot more to give and are in the proper frame of mind to get it done. Peart also exuded the same enthusiasm for what the band has done and will do in the future.

Although major figures in the world of rock 'n' roll, both Lee and Peart seem to remain unassuming individuals. Indeed, Lee ended our one-and-a-quarter-hour talk by commenting that he doesn't have "a great message to get out there". Perhaps not, but for countless Rush fans, this band is no sleeper.

*Canadian Musician* is proud to be the first magazine to interview Lee and Peart since Rush finished its new album. Perhaps a small achievement to some, but significant, as their comments will ring fresher than they would after the countless interviews they'll invariably go through. Needless to say, Rush will be most sought-after interview material as soon as the tour gets under way in late October.

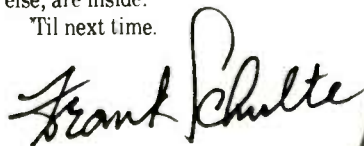
Elsewhere in this issue, Chris Gudgeon interviews Men Without Hats founder Ivan Doroschuck. Now a 10-year industry veteran, Doroschuck waxes philosophic about his place in the music business and the winding path he followed to get there.

"World Beat" artists Kashtin are featured in an interview with Florent Vollant, a partner in the native Canadian duo. This band has done extraordinarily well both in album sales and with video/media exposure since it broke about a year ago. Their follow-up release is expected very soon.

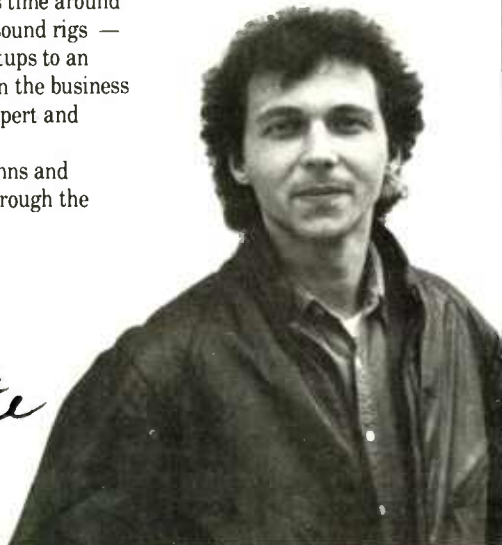
Richard Chycki contributes this time around with an informative piece on live sound rigs — from the smallest-of-small-club setups to an overview of what makes the best in the business rock. An item of interest for the expert and novice alike.

All this plus *CM*'s regular columns and information to keep you gliding through the autumn. Don't forget to enter our "Ultimate Rush Contest". Details, as with everything else, are inside.

Til next time.



Frank Schulte  
Editor



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## Exception Noted

We have been subscribers of your magazine for several years and have appreciated its resource information. We take exception, however, to the June 1991 article, "Bootsauce". It's one thing to verbalize the much-overused "F" word, but quoting it does nothing for the article or the performers.

If we wish to project any intelligence in the music field at all I suggest we don't allow ourselves to get in the trap of foul language to express a point. This magazine is circulated in many school libraries for aspiring young artists and we feel they will gain nothing from reading articles such as this. It also aggravates those from the "old school" who are still active in their music career and are having a tough enough time with the music industry image.

Please take our comments into consideration when writing future articles.

*J. Currie*  
Paynton, SK

## Emmett-less

Canadian musicians are the *best*, and the mag goes right along with it. I've only got one *big* problem. A year has gone by now and still there's been no Rik Emmett interview or cover story. Pretty well every other magazine has done something on him but *Canadian Musician*. Someday it will be great to see Rik Emmett with *Canadian Musician* written across the cover!

*Stefanie Blackmore*  
North Bay, ON

## It's Good, but...

This is to advise you to discontinue my subscription to your fine magazine.

Your magazine is a very professional, high-quality publication, featuring technical information for musical instruments, and sound equipment, but as a reader more interested in entertainment news, personality profiles, new country folk and musical show tunes and lyrics, I find little to read of personal enjoyment.

I will recommend the publication to anyone involved or interested in modern sound techniques, contacting good sources, or the latest on topics that interest and benefit musicians.

*W.N. Lewis*  
Seton Portage, BC

## Alias Alive & Well

This is in response to the group of people who chose to put Alias down in the June 1991 issue of your magazine.

At 30 years of age, I find it insulting to be referred to as a "teenie bopper"! I've been called a lot of things in my life, but none as ridiculous as "teenie bopper" because of whatever band I choose to listen to. I suppose since I also listen to Bon Jovi, Nelson, Sheriff (that other cursed band) and Slaughter that I will always be a "teenie bopper". Well, life just isn't fair, is it?

"As for the singer, he should stop trying to prove that he can hit a high note on every song"... What's wrong with using the talent God gave you? Freddy Curci has one of the most amazing voices in music today, and for you to say that he "shows no class or singing maturity" is to prove that you have very little class or maturity. Asking Freddy to stop hitting high notes is like asking Jimmy Page not to play a brilliant solo every time he goes onstage! *Please!*

Obviously, if a band has some sort of chart success they can't be on your list of favourite bands. That's really sad, because you're missing out on a lot of great music.

Thanks for listening! Keep up the great work, and I'm looking forward to seeing Alias on the cover of *Canadian Musician* again very soon! They belong there, whether your "former readers" think so or not!

*Nancy Foss*  
Hobart, IN  
USA



## Fishin' For Pikes

I'm writing to your wonderful magazine to request that you do an article (or anything) on The Northern Pikes. I'm not the only one who requests this — many of my friends would like to see this talented band recognized also. I enjoy your magazine very much; keep up the good work! Please satisfy me, my friends, and many other fans by recognizing The Northern Pikes, like many of us already have. Thank you very much.

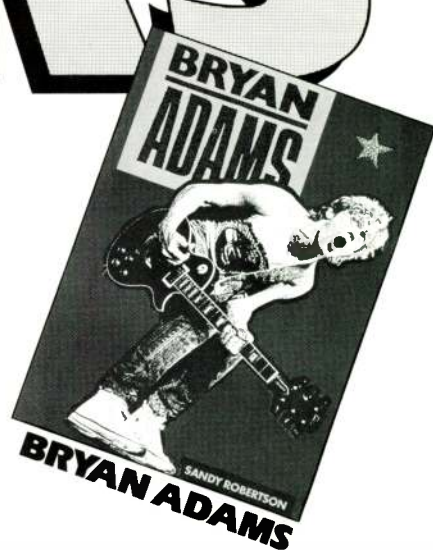
*Jackie Binkema*  
Calgary, AB

Check out the October 1990 issue for an article on The Northern Pikes.



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World Radio History

## IMMIGRATION POLICY PROTEST

# New U.S. Visa Laws Restrict Canadian Musicians

The United States Congress has passed tough new immigration legislation that will restrict the number and quality of foreign entertainers entering the U.S.

The new immigration act, which will go into effect in the Spring of 1992, changes the visa requirements for all musicians, actors, dancers, performers, technicians and athletes. The "H" and "J-class" visas currently issued to musicians, performing groups and athletes will be replaced by the "P-class" visa under the new law.

The most damaging points of the new immigration act include:

- a ceiling of 25,000 P-class visa applicants worldwide will be allowed into the U.S. per year (last year, close to 75,000 H-class visas were issued by U.S. immigration worldwide).

- visa applicants must have *international recognition* as a prerequisite to applying for a P-class visa; that recognition must also be "outstanding".

- applicants wishing to obtain a P-class visa must demonstrate a "sustained and substantial relationship" with the group for a period of over one year — so if you've just hired a new guitar player, don't count on him or her being allowed to join you on your U.S. gigs.

- whereas a band (or a 120-piece orchestra, for that matter) applied for *one* visa in the past, the new law requires that *every member* of the group and every technician needs to apply for the P-class visa; this reduces the number of available visas even further.

- visa applications can only be made within 90 days before the applicant wishes to enter the U.S., effectively cutting off the ability to book tours more than 90 days in advance.

- U.S. performers' unions and technical unions must give their approval to visa applications.

What the proposed law does, in effect, is restrict the U.S. to performers who are already recognized and established talents on a global scale — Bryan Adams, Anne Murray and Bruce Cockburn may not be personally affected, but their backup musicians and technical support staff certainly will. Fledgling bands have little hope of meeting the stricter criteria for admission.

However, at a press conference held in Toronto on August 12 to protest the new immigration act, most performers and music industry people in attendance agreed that these large acts would never have become as large as they are without liberal access to the U.S. market. The following are what a few high-profile Canadian performers and music industry spokespersons had to say about the new law:

Margo Timmins of the Cowboy Junkies: "I think that if this law had been in place in 1988, we might not have been given visas... and I probably wouldn't be sitting here."

Bryan Potvin of the Northern Pikes: "Sadly, my premonition is there could be a mass exodus of new Canadian artists and probably established Canadian artists out of this country, with lineups at the green card office."

Brian Robertson, president of the

Canadian Recording Industry Association: "It is ironic that just as Canadians are being accused by the U.S. of protecting their cultural industries, the U.S. itself is guilty of dropping a cultural Iron Curtain across its borders."

Tom Stephen of The Jeff Healey Band (released in a statement): "The Jeff Healey Band has attained success in the United States by touring extensively and building a strong foundation of supporters. By seriously restricting access to the United States, Canadian talent will suffer irreparable damage."

To add to the problems facing musicians, there have been political rumblings in Ottawa by External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall that the U.S. can expect retaliatory measures should it go through with its new immigration legislation. Should that occur, U.S. artists will have to meet stricter entrance requirements to get into Canada.

If all this comes to pass, most Canadian musicians will be denied access to the U.S. commercial market — they won't be able to tour the U.S., and that leaves few bargaining chips when pursuing a U.S. recording deal. In addition, Canadians will be denied access to much of the music coming from the U.S.

There is some pressure within the U.S. Congress to soften the new visa rules. Let's give those opponents some support. A large chunk of the Canadian music industry is at stake.

### ACTION PLAN:

Canadian musicians must react *immediately* to this crisis — unless changes in the act are made by October 1, it is unlikely that any changes will be made at all. You can voice your objection to this new legislation by doing several things:

1) telephone or FAX Ray Petch, the American Federation of Musicians' Vice President from Canada, and leave him a message telling him to do something about this situation. After that, write him a letter.

The American Federation of Musicians (A.F. of M.) is the collective voice of *all its members*, including Canadians, since Canada doesn't have its own musician's union. Canadians should lean on their union *heavily* to get this legislation abolished or amended.

The act is a union-inspired piece of protectionist legislation that is primarily intended to be directed at technical professions. An affiliation of U.S. unions, the AFL-CIO (of which the A.F. of M. is a member), played an important role in drafting the act that blatantly restricts Canadian musicians. Al-

though the A.F. of M. appears to have under-reacted to the consequences of the legislation to Canadian musicians when the act was drafted, Canadians need their union to lobby on their behalf *now*.

Petch can be contacted at:

The American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada  
75 The Donway West, Suite 1010,  
Don Mills, ON  
M3C 2E9  
(416) 391-5161, FAX (416) 391-5165

2) write Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and tell him that you don't agree with the new U.S. law and what it will mean to the future of Canadian musicians; tell him to do something about it. Write the Prime Minister (no postage required) at:

The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0A6

3) contact your local Member of Parliament, ask

him or her if s/he is aware of the situation, and then tell them to work on a solution to solve the problem.

4) let all your friends and contacts in the United States know about the situation and tell them to lobby their respective Congressmen and Senators to amend or abolish the legislation *before* the October 1 deadline.

You may suggest several changes that should be made to the immigration legislation, including:

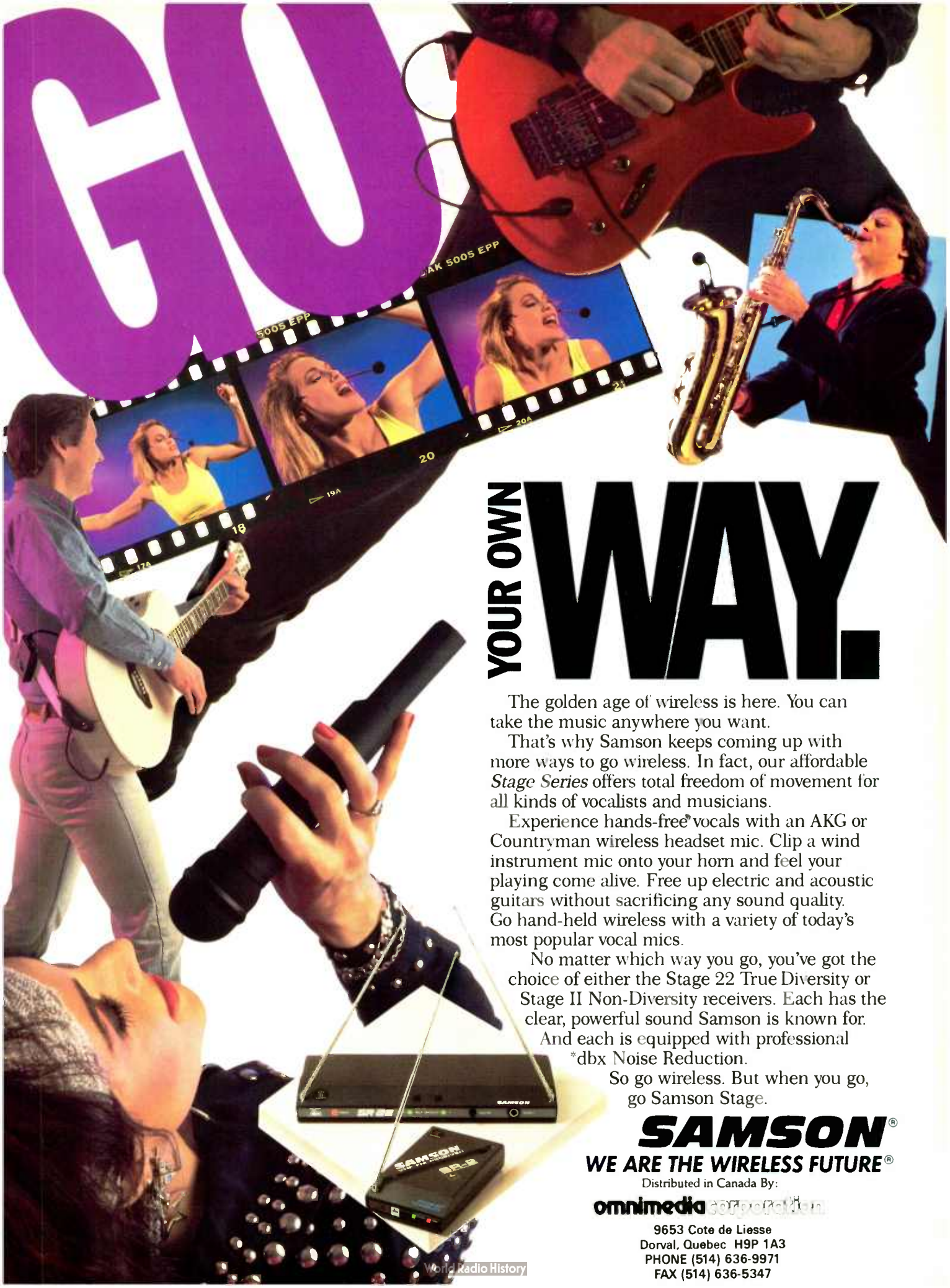
1) remove or raise the 25,000 ceiling as the number of individual visas that will be granted each year.

2) remove the new restrictions that will require each member of a group to have a sustained and substantial relationship with that group for over one year.

3) eliminate the provision that prevents the filing of applications more than 90 days in advance.

4) eliminate the provision that applicants must have internationally recognized status to be eligible to enter the U.S. on a P-class visa.





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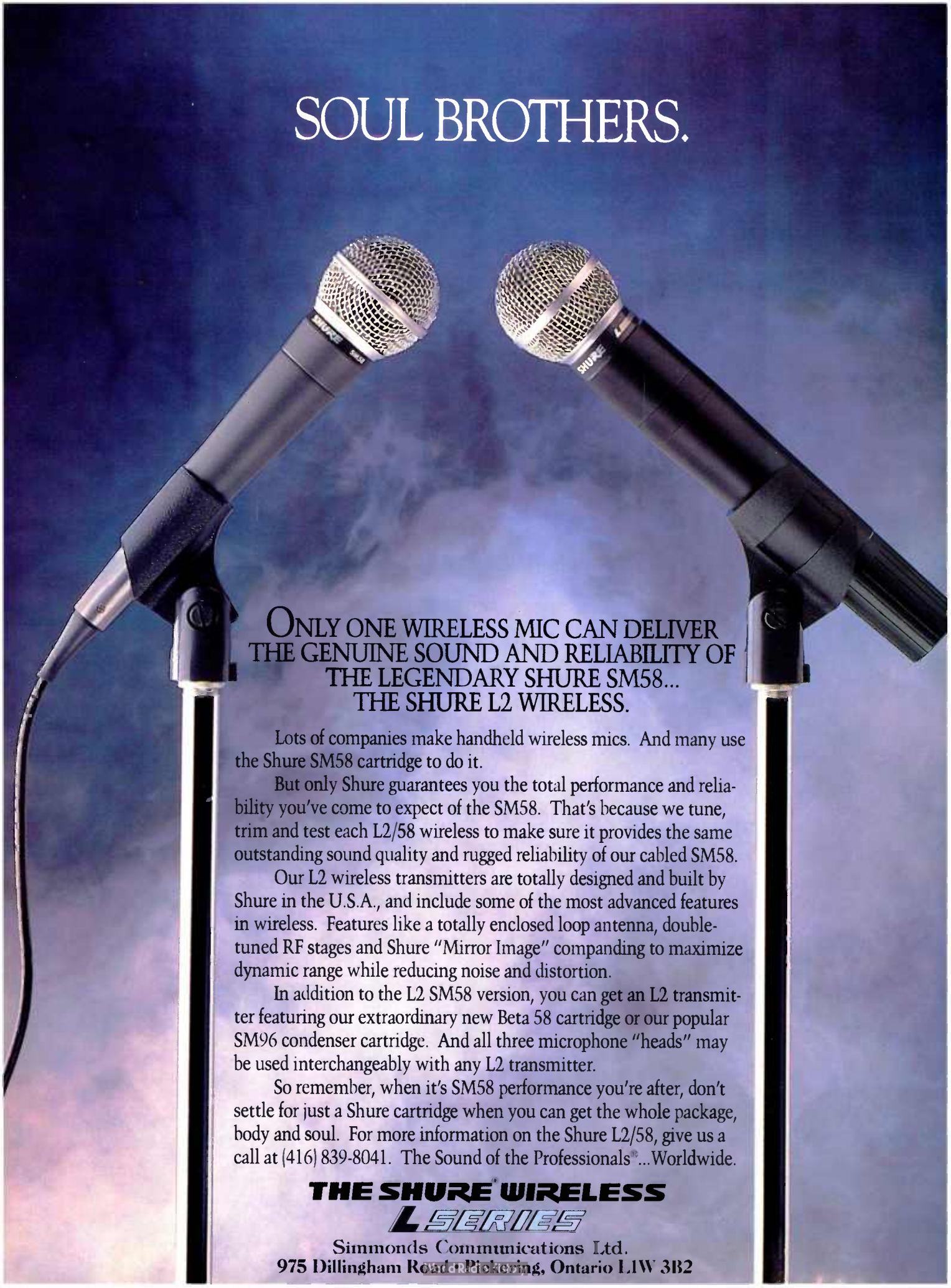
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# Songwriting Seminar '91

*Canadian Musician* is presenting Songwriting Seminar '91. Sunday, October 27, 1991 from 9 am to 5 pm at the Royal York Hotel, Toronto.

Participation and education are the key elements of the seminar, with sessions conducted by some of the industry's top experts who will talk about home recording, collaboration, publishing, performing rights and demos. Confirmed seminar participants at press time are: John Redmond, Polygram Publishing; Geoff Kulawick, Warner/Chappell Publishing; Stan Meissner, songwriter, Warner/Chappell Music; Colin Linden, songwriter/producer; Wain Routledge &

Anthony Vanderburgh, songwriters, Warner/Chappell Music; Fred Mollin, film composer.

Eight sessions will be offered in two rooms, allowing participants to choose topics relevant to their specific needs.

The fee for the seminar is \$85.00 (GST included) and includes a reception at the end of the day where participants can meet their panelists and fellow songwriters, and establish contacts.

For more information and registration, contact: *Canadian Musician*, 3284 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4N 3M7 (416) 485-8284, FAX (416) 485-8924.

# Musician Video Audition Service

World Musicians United, a new service established in Brockville, ON, has introduced a worldwide communications network for musicians.

Through the use of video auditions, musicians seeking to join or form a group, or gain exposure, can distribute and receive all pertinent information about past accomplishments and future endeavours. The service offers: better communications between musicians and the industry; access to exposure and promotions; and employment & recruiting opportunities around the globe, according to the firm.

A musician who wants to become a member makes a video demo of his/her talent and sends it to World Musicians United. The company will then store it for one year in a central library, from which anyone can access it through the direct rental of tapes.

For more information, contact: World Musicians United, 13 Bartholomew St., Brockville, ON K6V 2R2 (613) 345-6912.

# Independent Releases

Rockpress has released a new book, *Releasing An Independent Record*.

Written by Gary Hustwit for the U.S. market, many of the ideas and suggestions presented in this volume can nevertheless be easily applied to Canada. The book uses a "checklist" type, step-by-step approach to releasing independent product and includes pages upon pages of contacts and addresses. Of particular interest to independents is the

comprehensive U.S. college radio mailing list.

Topics include recording, production, advertising, press, distribution, sales touring and more. The book is applicable to any style of music, according to Rockpress.

For more information, contact: Rockpress Publishing & Distribution, 427 E. 17th St., Ste. 195, Costa Mesa, CA 92627 (714) 631-1159.

# Record Conference & Junos

The Record Conference will be held on March 25-28, 1992 at the Westin (Harbour Castle) Hotel in Toronto, ON. The Conference period of the week of March 22 will also feature the Canadian Music Festival to be held at a bevy of Toronto nightclubs. And the week will culminate with the 21st Annual Juno Awards presentation, to be held at Toronto's O'Keefe Centre, March 29.

For more information regarding the Record Conference and the Canadian Music Festival, contact: (416) 533-9417. For more information about the Juno Awards, contact: The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, 124 Merton St., 3rd Floor, Toronto, ON M4S 2Z2 (416) 485-3135, FAX (416) 485-4978.

# Mix Bookshelf

Mix Bookshelf has released its Fall/Winter catalogue of textbooks reference manuals and instructional videos on professional recordings and music-related topics.

The 44-page catalogue features over 550 titles on topics such as studio design, acoustics, sound reinforcement, digital audio,

MIDI, synthesis, sampling and the music business.

For more information, contact: Mix Bookshelf, 6400 Hollis St. #12, Emeryville, CA 94608 (415) 653-3307, FAX (415) 653-5142.

# Events Schedule

**The Doors: The '60s and Now with John Densmore**  
Toronto, ON  
**September 29, 1991**  
(416) 964-0011

**Foundations Forum '91**  
Los Angeles, CA  
**October 3-5, 1991**  
(416) 588-8962

**Arizona Music Conference**  
Phoenix, AZ  
**November 7-10, 1991**  
(602) 264-2930

**The Record Conference**  
Toronto, ON  
**March 25-28, 1992**  
(416) 533-9417

**Westex**  
Vancouver, BC  
**April 30-May 2, 1992**  
(604) 684-9338

**New Music Seminar**  
New York, NY  
**June 17-22, 1992 (tentative)**  
(416) 588-8962

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# Welcome To Hammond XB-2

**T**hat's what the backlit LCD says on power up. What this instrument does is recreate the classic B-3 sound while adding a few new wrinkles of its own. Among those wrinkles are MIDI, digital reverb and the aforementioned LCD. But let's get a couple of things straight right off the bat:

- 1) I want one.
- 2) It ain't perfect.

## Sound

How does it sound? Well, I A/B'd the XB-2 with my B-3 (through the same Leslie speaker cabinet) and I would guess that only under those circumstances would you hear any difference. The only complaints I have in the sonic realm are: 1) turning the vibrato/chorus effect on causes "click" if notes are being played; 2) the built-in overdrive (amount controlled by the "mod" wheel) when enabled adds a slight hiss to every note on (regardless of overdrive amount).

Another problem concerns the built-in Leslie simulator. The effect itself is as good as any I've heard, especially on "fast" — "slow" sounds a little too much like a shallow phase shift. But when it is set to "fast" and the vibrato/chorus is turned on, the stereo field — yes, there are left and right outputs as well as a headphone jack — seems to collapse to mono and the apparent volume jumps. It's as if the Leslie and vibrato oscillators are locked together in a phase cancelling fashion. Strange.

Features to expand your horizons include the ability to choose between three types of drawbar voices (subtle), two attack rates (less subtle) and three sustain times (not

subtle). "Drawbar Foldback" is a feature that allows the instrument to emulate the B-3 overtone layout or not.

## Features

At this point a small caveat is called for: I received no manual or documentation with the instrument. As such, I didn't try every possible keystroke combination as I was afraid the LCD would read "SAY GOOD-BYE TO XB-2" as I discovered the secret self-destruct sequence. So I may not have unearthed all of the instrument's capabilities (or limitations, for that matter!).

Case in point: The ad says "128 user programmable patches". The only thing I could program was whether or not the drawbars were active or pre-programmed. Other patch parameters include: percussion, vibrato, organ solo, split and effects (overdrive, Leslie simulator, key click, reverb type (1 of 4)). The first three can be over-ridden from front panel controls while the others must be changed in edit mode.

A separate patch can be assigned to each of the eight presets (selected directly from front panel controls). The "cancel" key calls up the currently selected settings and the drawbars. The presets can respond to incoming MIDI program messages (or not — your choice).

Other MIDI capabilities include: controller information (pitch & mod wheels, footswitch (assignable number), volume pedal, front panel controls); three velocity curves (percussion can respond to velocity as well); "Organ Solo" (MIDI transmission on or off); and two "MIDI Zones". Transmission and reception of various kinds of information can be turned on or off.

I couldn't quite understand the implementation of the MIDI zones. Each zone can be assigned a range, channel and "PROG" (?). There is an overall "Basic Channel" as well. If the three channel numbers are different and the zones overlap, three note on and offs will be transmitted for each note played. If set to the same number, only one message per note will be transmitted. There had to be a more useful way to do this! There is also an internal split function.

I couldn't transmit drawbar movements over MIDI, but there may be a hidden sys-ex function that allows this.

## Odds & Ends

The footswitch function is assignable (sustain on/off, preset change, Leslie slow/fast), the pitch wheel range is adjustable (although above a tone and a half it sounds very digitized), and there is a send/return loop (I couldn't get "return" to work, but "send" is post-reverb and Leslie effect). You can tune and transpose, and the LCD (with adjustable contrast) graphically displays the current drawbar settings (way cool!).

## Summary

Despite my niggling complaints — the reverb type and level isn't programmable per preset, the expression pedal uses an eight-pin DIN plug (I hate DIN plugs!), the 11-pin Leslie connector won't fit my 122 or 147 — I had a lot of fun with the XB-2 in the day and a half that I had it.

If someone told me to bring my Hammond to a gig I wouldn't be embarrassed to show up with an XB-2 and a Leslie.

*Victor D'Arsie plays keyboards with Seventh Son.*

# Carver PM-600

by Rick Boffo

**W**ell, here we go again — another power amp review. But this time it's the Carver PM-600 magnetic field amplifier.

It weighs in at only 23 pounds, and delivers 200W/channel at 8 ohms and 300W/channel at 4 ohms, both channels driven. That's about it for specifications, which are easily obtainable from Carver anyway. I'm here to talk about some of the amplifier's real world attributes.

My first attraction to the PM-600 was its power-to-weight ratio. Anything else in its power and feature class weighs almost twice as much, and that's no secret. Not only can

the PM-600 deliver this much power in a small, lightweight, sturdy package, but it sounds great.

The PM-600 has just about every feature the amateur or pro-user could ever need. Starting with the front panel, there's a power switch and a sequencer switch (for remote power on-off and multiple amplifier power up). Next are left and right channel stepped attenuators marked in decibels, as well as a 7-segment LED output display. The display serves several functions. First, it indicates power-on with a lower green LED, followed by five red LEDs indicating power level, and finally a top yellow LED indicating clipping

or the onset of Carver's unique clipping eliminator — a very useful feature for protecting valuable speaker components from continuous thrashing and high levels of distorted signal, which particularly effect the life span of high frequency drivers.

The rear panel is equipped with very flexible input patching — an XLR-type connector, 1/4" T.R.S. (stereo) phone plugs (which also accept mono 1/4" plugs), and barrier strip termination for permanent installs. This leaves the user with limitless combinations for parallel mono use, and multiple parallel amplifier stacking. One very impor-

*Continued*

# Carver PM600 *Continued*

tant feature is the ability to switch (internally) the pin polarity of the XLR connectors, which is very useful in matching the unit's input polarity to your specific needs.

The rear panel also features a clipping eliminator circuitry on-off, as well as a mono bridging switch. Both are recessed to prevent any accidental change of the switch function. This feature prevents someone other than yourself from bypassing the protection incorporated in the clipping eliminator.

Speaker connections are terminated via conventional 5-way binding posts. They accept banana type plugs, bare wire, or spade connectors. A ground lift strap is provided for stubborn grounding problems, as well as sequencer function access terminals.

The PM-600 also has a host of other special features which include input radio frequency interference (RFI) filtering, power line filtering, D.C. load protection, abnormally low impedance protection, remote manual sequential power on-off, and last (but not least) a very nice treat I call non-obsolence. This is in the form of an ever-increasing optional add-on card

module system to give the PM-600 even more flexibility in the future.

A few examples of these add-on card modules are: two-way electronic crossover, transformer input balancing, dual zone paging, and externally mountable 70.7V transformer.

The PM-600 comes with a helpful, easy-to-understand, well-written, illustrated owners manual, which includes safety and installation instructions, trouble-shooting guide, specifications, a brief introduction and explanation of magnetic field amplifiers, in-depth technical information, and finally something every manufacturer should include (but doesn't), circuit schematics.

As for the magnetic field theory of operation, it's too in-depth to explain in this review. I suggest you read Bob Carver's *White Papers Part I, II, III*. They'll clear up any myths or misconceptions you may have about the unbelievable power-to-weight ratio Carver magnetic field amplifiers exhibit. They certainly opened my eyes and cleared up any questions I had, making me a believer in Carver amplifiers. Finally the

way I evaluated the PM-600 was in the live music field, not on a test bench.

I used two PM-600s to power the mid (200 to 2K) and high frequency (2K-20K) section of a high-power sound system I use daily. The amplifiers are convection cooled, which means there are no fan filters to clog up or clean, and the unit operates quietly. The PM-600s ran so cool that I was able to stack them directly on top of each other without the need for spacer panels, thus truly using their two-rack unit size to the max. The amps sounded great and had more than enough power to spare.

I highly recommend this amplifier for any application, ranging from sound reinforcement, to musicians' onstage amplifiers (especially bass guitar and keyboards), as far as high-end home audio.

In closing, I was so impressed, I purchased two PM-600s. I didn't want to give them back.

*Rick Boffo is the house engineer at the Horseshoe Tavern in Toronto. He also freelances and owns and operates a rental PA company.*





# String Survival Kit

**S**trings. I've definitely had a love/hate relationship with them ever since I began playing the guitar. Acoustic or electric, guitar or bass, I feel roughly the same about each. I love both the way they sound and feel when they are brand new, but hate them for their inconsistency — even fresh out of the package you will often find a dull string. Of course, what makes getting a bum bass string even more frustrating is the seemingly outrageous price you pay for them. Consequently, you would like to think that due to their cost, bass strings wouldn't die as quickly as guitar strings, but basically they do — you just force yourself to accept the sound of dull strings every second half of the month or week depending on how much you're willing to spend.

A number of years ago I boiled my strings to revitalize their sound quality. However, after a short period of time I noticed that while it did renew their "bite" somewhat, it also threw the strings' intonation out of line.

Now along from Donald Fleming Inc. comes a product with a concept long overdue.

The "String Survival Kit" is designed to clean your guitar strings in order to extend their life and to maintain their new sounding quality longer. The product isn't only geared towards cleaning guitar or bass strings, but towards any steel string instrument.

The kit comes with: one lint-free cloth for wiping the cleaning solution on and off; rubber gloves to keep the solution off your hands; a bowl for placing your strings into; and of course the cleaning solution for pouring into the bowl, over your strings. The procedure is quite simple and takes place in five steps:

- 1) Remove the strings from your instrument.
- 2) Put on the rubber gloves from the kit, dampen the wiping cloth with the cleaning solution and wipe down your strings.
- 3) Roll up your strings into a coil and place into the bowl. You then pour enough cleaning solution into the bowl to cover the

strings, place lid on bowl and leave for about 10 hours to soak.

4) Remove strings from the bowl and replace lid on bowl in order to maintain the cleaning solution until you use it next.

5) Wipe down strings, replace on your instrument and tune her up.

For best results they recommend using two sets of strings with one cleaning and to change the cleaning solution after every 10 uses.

I first tried the kit on a set of bass strings about a week old that had almost entirely lost their snappy top end. I discovered that the bowl provided wasn't quite large enough to hold four coiled up bass strings so I just used a bucket instead. After 10 hours I removed the strings from the bucket and wiped them down. The first good sign that I noticed about them was that they felt brand new again. I then replaced them on my bass and tuned her up — sure enough they sounded brand new.

*Continued*

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# String Survival *Continued*

I then tried it out on a set of guitar strings which, like the bass strings, were about a week old. In order to really have something to compare it to, this time I only removed the E, A and B strings. I also strung a brand new D string for a full range of comparison. As with the bass strings, after replacing them on my guitar I found that they both felt and sounded brand new again. I was also im-

pressed to hear the continuity between the new D string and the revitalized E and A.

Finally, I put the "String Survival Kit" to the "acid" test by trying it out on an old set of bass strings which I had lying around. The result, once again, was impressive. I would not say that these strings now sounded equally as good as the first set which were just a week old, but they were very, very

close. (Remember that these were a rather old and dull sounding set of strings which I now had sounding very "young" and bright.)

So now I think I'll have to add guitar and bass strings to my list of recyclable goods.

*Terry Gowan has been touring and recording with Gowan over the past six years.*

# Vigier Passion III Custom Guitar

by Marc Farrant

**WOW**

That's what I said when I first picked up the Passion III.

This guitar makes a great first impression. Its body is lightweight and well-balanced — built for comfort. It's aesthetically appealing (with the exception of a rather un-

fortunate placement of the Vigier logo), and the finish is beautiful, deep and rich. Yep, this is a fine-looking instrument.

Vigier guitars and basses are handcrafted in France using up-to-the-minute technology and the finest woods available. The Passion III Custom's small, double-cutaway body is made of aged French flamed maple.

Its neck is a carbon-fibre compound seamlessly joined to the body allowing easy access to all 24 frets.

The action is superb and every note rings clean and clear. As a devoted maple-neck player, I'm amazed that the feel can so closely resemble the "real" thing. The most ap-

*Continued*



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### Vigier Custom Guitar

parent advantage of the carbon-fibre neck is the increased stability in extreme temperature change. The Passion III doesn't even have a truss rod.

Patrice Vigier's pioneer work in the field of guitar innovations extends beyond the body and neck: the pickups and tremolo system are also custom made and are superior to most in design, craftsmanship and quality. The bridge is a floating trem system with counter-balanced springs exerting pressure on the bridge assembly, which is fixed to the guitar body with a ball bearing fulcrum. This system seems to be responsible for flawless tuning despite dive bombing sessions of extreme proportions. The tremolo is as smooth and precise on the upswing of the whammy bar as it is on the down.

Fine tuning knobs are located at the headstock, instead of on the bridge assembly, right behind the zero fret. As with many trem systems, the ball-ends of the strings must be cut off for string changes, but the process is very straightforward on the Vigier bridge. Two allen wrenches are all that's needed for routine maintenance of the nut and bridge, and these are conveniently mounted on the rear of the headstock, between the tuning pegs. The pegs are made by Schaller and have a handy flip-up lever for super-quick string winding.

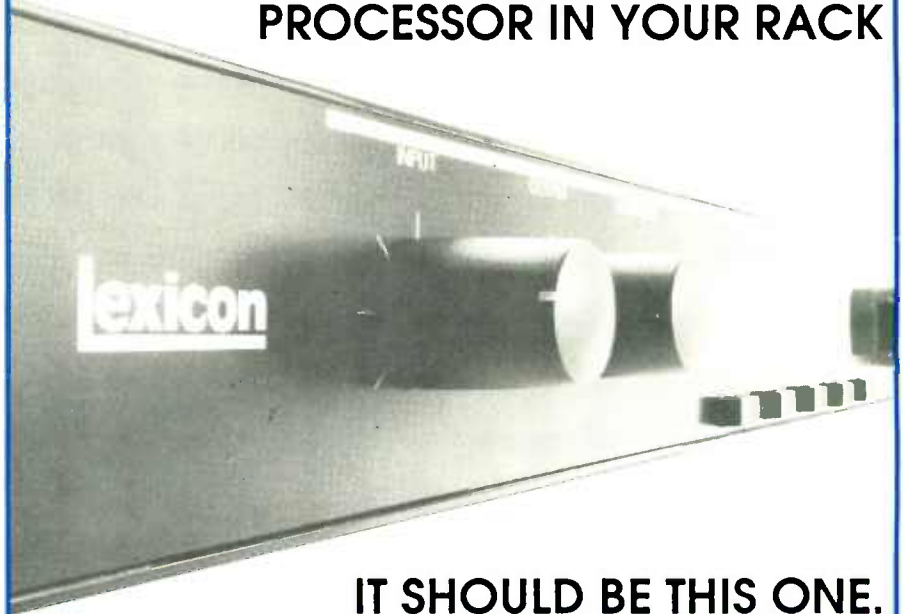
The Passion III has three pickups, a humbucker in the lead position and single-coils in the middle and neck positions. The pole pieces are staggered and non-adjustable, which contributes to a rich, even sound that is distinct and suitable for virtually any style. A unity-gain preamp buffer converts the signal from high- to low-impedance, for a clean, crisp sound regardless of cable length and signal processor chains.

Although there are only two knobs and a toggle switch on this guitar, the tonal variety is surprising. The toggle switch controls the bridge pickup, neck pickup or both, with a push pull switch on the volume control to activate the middle pickup. The tone control is a six-position rotary switch with five presets and a bypass (off) position, offering more flavours than Baskin Robbins. Pick your favourite sounds: fat and mellow, crunchy rhythm, scorching lead, or any flavour in between — but beware, the possibilities may lead to option anxiety in the heat of performance.

The Vigier is becoming the axe of distinction in Europe. At \$3,395 (suggested list) it's likely to remain rare in Canada. Rare in my collection, anyway. And so I sigh, and put the Passion III back in its case and close the lid. I pick up my old Strat and wonder what I'd get for it. Heck, a guy can dream, can't he?

*Marc Farrant is a music teacher/songwriter. He operates an in-house MIDI pre-production studio and plays guitar on the circuit in Toronto.*

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# EXPERIMENTATION

## THE KEY TO SONIC DISCOVERY

I'm happy to say that lately I've been getting a plentitude of calls from mildly frustrated guitarists looking for the "the tone that kills" in the studio. That's really great because it clearly shows that despite the present economic conditions, musos are looking above and beyond and concentrating on some serious studio expression. Several of these calls come from exasperated chaps that have world-class gear up to their eyeballs, accompanied by a slight case of patch-and-knob-aphobia. I'd like to share a few theories, experiences, and tips with you on exactly what makes a guitar cut in the mix and how you can experiment.

Having the proper axe for the job will start your session off on the right foot. Knowing the characteristics of each guitar and its pickups that you plan to use is the first step in determining the final tone. You did set up your guitar and change the strings before the session, didn't you? An unintonated guitar in the studio is an unused guitar in the studio. Check that your pots are absolutely quiet when they are turned. There's nothing like doing a smoking take only to have it spoiled by the snap, crackle and pop of dirty controls. Speaking of noise, for those difficult noise situations where I'm using a distorted Strat sound, an old MXR pedal-size noise gate has been my life preserver on several occasions. Be prepared.

I generally have the best results with tube amps. (Although I've heard some pretty amazing solid-state amps, I've not yet had the opportunity to record with them.) A significant merit of tube amplifiers is the ability to overdrive the power tubes. The "feel" of power tube distortion is notably different from straight preamp distortion. Case in point, listen to a Marshall with the preamp gain on 10 and the master on .5. The tone can resemble a somewhat mosquito-like rizz — unfulfilling. Backing down the preamp to the 6-8 range and boosting the master to the 5-6 area really works the output section. Suddenly, there's chunkiness and body to your sound that, although loud, will usually find itself a little better in a mix. Most Canadian Mar-

### Try Various Combinations... Configurations

shalls use EL34 power tubes: a US Marshall with 6550 tubes will sound completely different under the same conditions — harder-edged, but cleaner. Many classic tones from Keith Richards or Eddie Van Halen contain copious quantities of power tube overdrive.

Obviously, using different tubes in the power amp combined with different blends of preamp and power amp overdrive can provide us with "most any sound we need. My Boogie Mark IV allows me to actually switch power tubes and man, the tone difference is unbelievably radical! I've used 5881 power tubes, which are Russian military grade 6L6GCs, for devastatingly vintage tones. Any overdrive came only from the power tubes (master on 10, preamp on 3-5). Popping in a set of EL34s with the same panel settings sounded pretty Marshall 1987. Note that few amps allow you to change power tubes so don't try this on other

amps unless their manual specifically states so.

Don't be afraid to try various combinations of amp/speaker configurations either, even those that you might not at first think are suitable. Open back cabinets, 4x12 boxes and DIs all have specific characteristics that in various unorthodox combinations, could prove to yield that elusive sound that you've been working so hard for.

One common oversight is making sure the speaker is facing you directly when adjusting your tone controls. If you're adjusting the presence control on your amp with the 4x12 on the floor blasting off your knee caps, the amount of high end would be outrageous if you bent down and had a little direct speaker-ear contact. But alas, that screaming high-end is the sound that you mercilessly subject your microphones to, and will ultimately be the sound that would sit on your tape. A little judicious tone adjustment will go a long way here so take a little time to sound great before the mics go up.

Getting your sound to the board: Microphones and placement play a pertinent role in the quality of your recorded sound. On a recent session, I used a total of seven microphones on two cabinets plus a DI. An open back single 12" EV12LSII was miked up with a Shure SM57 and a U87. My 4x12 with ancient Celestion 25s was miked with a U87, a Sennheiser 421, an EV 308, and a Shure SM57. There was also an ambient condenser microphone to capture the room sound.

This miking technique allowed for a variety of instantly accessible tones by simply mixing the mics together by various amounts. Absolutely no EQ was necessary on any of the strips, a good indicator of perspective. Just a little compression from an LA-2 was applied to the subgroup to even things out.

Most important, a good sound is greatly influenced by a healthy attitude and practice regimen. So in the Schwarzenegger tradition, keep rockin' and "I'll be back".



Richard Chycki is a freelance guitar player based in Toronto.



# Keyboards in the Theatre

By Brian Harris

**I**nterested in getting a job? One that actually pays a living wage? How about looking into musical theatre? Opportunities exist all over the country from small regional productions to *The Phantom of the Opera*. Let's take a look at some of the skills needed to work in this field.

(Incidentally, a previous column some time ago (Dec. 1982) also dealt with playing for the theatre, for those interested in further reading. Just to recap that article, it dealt with sight reading, different styles and following a conductor.) In this issue we'll discuss some of my recent experiences in this area and then turn things over to some others who work more specifically in the field.

The last three productions I've been involved with have all been in Toronto at the O'Keefe Centre. In each show I played a different role, and each one required a distinctive approach.

*Evita* had the more traditional approach of a standard theatre orchestra (in this case, 23 pieces) including an acoustic piano. The most demanding areas:

1. Sight reading — the piano book is fairly thick and with limited rehearsal there is not time to learn the show. One cannot easily get the music ahead of time. The piano arrangements are completely different from the piano-vocal arrangements commercially available. Solution? Sight read well.

2. Varying styles — everything but the kitchen sink.

- classical styles (romantic & modern)
- several rock styles (pop, funk, jazz, country)
- Latin styles including sambas & tangos
- pop
- disco
- Viennese waltz
- jazz (light funky blues in this case)
- marches

3. Unusual time signatures: 7/8, 11/4 and so on. Discourages day-dreaming.

In *Chorus Line*, the show travelled with its own keyboardist and I played the 2nd keyboard part on a DX7. This show was easier than *Evita* technically, but required some skill in following a conductor.

*The King and I* also had its own pianist. My job was to play rehearsal piano — accompanying people in the cast while they worked out dance routines. I was expected to read reasonably well (regular notation, no chord symbols) and to be able to work with a choreographer.

Now let's get some ideas from some top Toronto professionals:



*Brian Harris is a Toronto-based keyboardist, composer, arranger, and teacher. The original keyboard columnist with CM (1979-1985), he has also been the head of the keyboard department at Humber College since the mid '70s. He has been associated with numerous internationally known musical artists.*

**Fen Watkin:** Considered by many the dean of theatre keyboardists in Canada, has played with over 300 different productions starting in 1952 with a summer theatre production of *Melody Fair*. During the summertime he is usually found playing conducting at the Charlottetown Festival. Fen suggests:

1. Develop ability to adapt to many different styles.

2. Be a good sight reader.

3. Be very aware of time — often the keyboardist doubles as conductor & has to know the show perfectly and be prepared for all cues.

**Allan Guttman:** Formerly the music director of the Second City Revue, has performed as a composer, player and director. Has also taught acting & directing at the University of Southern California and The American Academy of Dramatic Arts. He recommends developing:

1. versatility

2. sensitivity to singers — ability to support rather than overpower.

3. ability to get along with others.

4. understanding of the theatre.

5. ability to transpose.

6. subduing ego for the sake of the production.

7. ability to understand and work with vocalists' problems.

8. adaptability to possible changes in a production.

9. sensitivity to style of show.

10. sight reading skills — especially if playing show auditions.

11. ability to arrange occasionally useful.

12. knowledge of synthesis.

**Bruce Harvey:** veteran of numerous theatrical productions, has played about 1,300 performances of *Cats* at Toronto's Elgin Theatre. Now playing *Musicalsense* at the Limelight Theatre, also in Toronto. Bruce recommends:

1. good sight reading.

2. knowledge of different styles.

3. ability to follow a conductor's beat.

4. ability to fit in with a band and complement what the band is doing.

5. during a long run, being able to forget how many times you've played the show and how many more you'll be playing, concentrating only on the page of music in front of you.

**John Roby:** keyboardist & composer, also a veteran of numerous theatrical productions. Has won two Dora Mavor Moore awards for *Theatre of the Film Noir* and *The Girls in the Gang*. In the U.S. he won the Armstrong Award for *The Bass Saxophone*. John suggests developing:

1. good stylistic concept.

2. versatility.

3. knowledge of synthesis.

4. technical competence.

5. if on stage, the player should have some theatrical sense.

Assuming you have some of these skills, how do you get started? Why not find out where theatre people hang out and let them know you're available? In the Toronto area try Actor's Equity, 260 Richmond St. E. or Equity Showcase, 221 Dufferin St., Suite 308A. They both have bulletin boards. Why not put your name up, announcing that you're available for work in the theatre as a keyboardist in a band, or an accompanist, or whatever?

For those of you in other centres you'll have to do some detective work to get to theatre people. First step: check the Yellow Pages under "theatre". Provincial organizations can often be very helpful in supplying lists of theatres and artistic directors. In Ontario, "Theatre Ontario" would be an example of this type of organization.

Interested in writing for the theatre? Contact: The Guild of Canadian Musical Theatre Writers', Adelaide Postal Stn., Box 823, Toronto, ON M5C 2K1. They regularly hold seminars and workshops, and welcome new members.

'Til the next time, keep practising and take care.

**PART  
TWO**

# GETTING A BETTER SOUND

**I**n the previous article I wrote about trying to clean up your sound by effectively “dampening” the strings. To briefly review, “dampening” is a technique that mutes unwanted open string vibration. These string vibrations, if left unattended, will create a considerable amount of dissonance and therefore interfere with your overall sound. If you need to hear proof of this interference, just plug in, turn up to your playing level and start playing some lines up on the G string. If you then remove your left hand from the G you’ll notice a drone resonating from the open A and E strings. That’s the unwanted drone that will interfere with your sound.

The last article only went as far as dampening the open E string. This was achieved by shifting your right hand thumb from the top of the pick-up to anchoring it on top of the E string (*Figure 1*). Dampening the A string is achieved by lightly placing your right-hand fourth finger on top of it (*Figure 2*). You’ll find this difficult at first — it requires some rather patient practice until it feels comfortable. For practising this, I would recommend the same procedure as I described in the last article, which involves isolating the movement by ascending across each open string individually (E-A-D-G), then descending (G-D-A-E). Start this exercise in your regular position (thumb mounted on top of the pick-up) and just slide it down to rest on top of the E string when playing strings A and D. Then when you’re playing the open G string, lightly rest your right hand fourth finger on the A string. I also recommend isolating the latter of the two movements entirely by simply playing your open G string with your first and second finger while your fourth finger lightly rests on top of the A string.

Dampening is just as necessary when playing with a pick, although the technique is totally different. It involves using the far side of the palm on your right hand as your anchor. For example, when playing lines in the upper register on your G string, lightly place the far side of your palm against the remaining three strings (*Figure 3*). When you’re playing with a pick remember to keep your third and fourth finger comfortably tucked up towards your palm, as opposed to



*Figure 1.*



*Figure 2.*



*Figure 3.*



*Terry Gowan has been touring and recording with Gowan over the past six years. He is currently enrolled in a jazz program at York University and continues to gig and record with various Toronto blues bands.*

pointing out. If they are pointing out they’ll prevent you from effectively employing this dampening technique (as well as probably giving your right hand cramps).

With 5- and 6-string basses becoming increasingly more popular (and therefore giving us more open, ringing strings), I’d recommend trying to get some control over the use of your 3rd and 4th fingers of your right hand as a means of dampening. Remember, you use all four fingers on your left hand, so you may as well try using all four fingers on your right hand as well. If you’re worried about having to think too much while playing, I don’t blame you. Personally, the last thing I want to do while playing is to stand there and concentrate on technique. However, with individual practice (which, let’s face it, can be a little boring at times), these techniques can become totally natural in execution and will give you a bigger sound. I’ve always found the bigger the sound, the more fun it is to play.

Another way to get a bigger sound is to try to play your lines where they will sound best on the instrument. For example, the A located at the 12th fret on the A string sounds fatter to me than the A found at the seventh fret on the D string — and it certainly sounds much fatter than the A found at the second fret on the G string. The reason for this, quite simply, is that the A string is fatter than the D and G strings. In fact, working on this notion that fatter strings sound fatter, I play most of my lines moving up the neck as opposed to across it. I find the timbral quality more consistent and the sound remains fuller. I would also recommend using strings with a heavy gauge — this really does make a big difference.

Most of these techniques are methods I have picked up from other players, while the rest of them just sort of formed on their own. If you have your own way of dealing with dampening or if you like the sound of thinner strings then so much the better! These are simply techniques that I have found work best for me.

So, before investing your money in some new equipment, try investing your time into a few of these techniques. The equipment you now own may start to sound a lot better.



# K.I.S.S.

## Keep It Simple, Stupid

### PART TWO • What the Heavies Say

In part one of this three-part K.I.S.S. series I touched on a few points which merit repeating and summarizing before reading on.

First off (and simply put), a drummer's priority is to keep time — this is true for virtually all styles of music. Second, a drummer should strive to achieve a level of integrity that puts playing simply on par with complex, busy playing. This applies whether performing or watching a performance. Lastly, the term "overplaying" means playing more than is necessary. Do not confuse this with "busyness". Busyness, like overplaying, can mean a lot of notes, yet if the music calls for a busy approach, the verdict of overplaying cannot be handed down.

Having said this, I'll now take a back seat to share with you my conversations with some of North America's top performers, songwriters, producers and music industry professionals. Each was asked the question, "What do you look for in a drummer?"

Singer-songwriter Kim Mitchell likes a "signature sound" in the way a drummer plays. He's a fan of what he calls "identifiable attitude music" and lists Alex Van Halen, Stuart Copeland and Neil Peart as examples of drummers with a distinctive sound and style of their own.

"Most hit records could get away with the use of drum machines," Kim says, "but most of the world's great bands never could. As unique and strange a drummer as Charlie Watts is, he's the only guy that's right for The Stones. The same goes for John Bonham and Ringo Starr."

Although the groove is important to him, Kim dislikes the "sterile, generic, let's-

make-a-hit-record, drums-as-an-afterthought" approach to popular music making. He prefers a drummer with "attitude" who plays as if to say: "This is what I do, I dig it. Check it out!" He then adds with a laugh, "That's why I've always had a great band and no hit records."

Veteran songwriter and producer Eddie Schwartz believes any number of drum parts and fills *can* work in a song.

"It's important to work with a drummer who reacts directly to the song and in support of the vocal," Schwartz says. "A drummer who performs with the lyric in mind is

Schwartz sums it up: "I like a pragmatic approach to drumming coupled with a good, cooperative attitude from the drummer."

Singer-songwriter Rik Emmett, formerly of Triumph, offers some suggestions for the sideman drummer.

"My drummer fills more than just *that* position. I look for a musician: a comprehensive artist whose job it will be to play drums. He becomes somewhat of a drum consultant who will bounce his ideas off me yet not be offended by my having the final say."

Emmett continues on the popular subject of attitude: "He must be professional, friendly, down-to-earth and a regular sort of guy." He chooses a drummer who, "has an understanding of show business and entertainment value that contributes to ticket sales, along with a sense of musical judgement that helps make the band sound good."

Elaborating on the drumming qualities he looks for, Emmett says: "A drummer needs propulsion. He must be a dominant time-keeping force, with the knowledge of what the tempo should be and the confidence to count the band in. Because he's static, the drummer is the best judge of what is happening time-wise, unlike the front line who are often running around the stage to entice the audience or bending over backwards to do their



Greg Critchley can be heard on recent recordings by Kim Mitchell, Regatta, Gowen, World On Edge and Harlem Scarem. He can also be heard on upcoming appearances with Rik Emmett, Gowen, Zappacosta and the Portland Brothers. Greg endorses Sabian Cymbals.

a rare bird. It's a quality that makes him or her that much more special to work with." Schwartz, like Mitchell, cites attitude as an important attribute, although in a different sense of the word.

"A drummer must be open to trying many different options, to giving input if needed, with the ability to take and follow direction. They must be inventive if necessary, but also extremely basic when called upon to be so."

solos.

"I need my drummer to really understand song form and know the arrangements stone cold. It's his responsibility to keep on track and not wander too far from what the song is all about. When a drummer overplays it becomes more difficult to hear the song because the audience attention becomes less focused."

*Continued*



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## K.I.S.S. *Continued*

However, Emmett is quick to differentiate between overplaying and busyness, pointing out that world cultural influences in pop music have resulted in the merging of more intricate and interesting drum parts as opposed to the usual 2 and 4 approach.

"Although the less-is-more thing is a great place to begin," Emmett says, "sometimes taste will dictate a necessary busyness from the drums. I definitely have no use for a drummer who is so humble that he disappears."

Summing up with a few words on the topic of chops, Emmett states: "As a singer and songwriter, I would never want a drummer with tons of chops at the expense of his lacking in contextual judgement. It's much better to work with someone whose sense it is to play appropriately than another who only has chops."

Turning now to Kevin Doyle — engineer/producer whose work with Alannah Myles and Darryl Hall speaks for itself — I found a common denominator in his choices of a drummer.

Like Emmett, Kevin feels that: "a drummer should possess good listening skills in response to the arrangements of the song. He also needs to be consistent in the recording discipline of staying with a drum part once it's been decided on."

Like Schwartz, Doyle concludes that, "the drummer should be open-minded to ideas and spontaneity, yet respect the final decisions of those in charge."

For some artists, like singer/songwriter Gowan, the addition of a drum part can be the very reason that a song has vitality and spark. He loves that magical moment of discovery when a certain turn in the music dictates the direction of the rhythm.

"For the drums to groove is not enough," Gowan explains. "I like the drummer to search for the *inner clockwork* of a song, be it simple or intricate." He does feel, however, that many drummers are too quick to choose the latter.

"The players who can say the most with the fewest notes tend to make the greatest statements." He quickly reminds us that there are different clockworks for different songs and sometimes the necessary direction is from a "notey" standpoint.

"A good drummer has the where-with-all to play intricately when needed and to have the brains not to when it isn't," Gowan says. "The problem with the music I write is that sometimes the drum part needs to be quite quirky and unconventional. I need a drummer to know when to give me a standard approach, and when to give it an odd twist."

Gowan concludes with some comments

on experience: "Beware of the prejudices that experience brings. Be careful not to discount the value of the classic, simple drummers. I was talking to Liberty Devitto [Billy Joel's drummer] once. Ringo Starr was his favourite drummer and always had been, because Ringo plays exactly what the music calls for. As great a drummer as someone like Buddy Rich is, his style of playing wouldn't have complemented the sound of the Beatles."

To offer a final perspective, I spoke with producer/writer Tim Thorney, well-known in the advertising music field through The Einstein Brothers jingle house. Tim is in a position to hear drummers almost daily and offers the following words:

"Being a good drummer in the recording scene is a given. If you weren't good you wouldn't be here." Thorney believes that a drummer should be well-rounded with regard to musical idiom, although he admits to hiring different drummers depending on the style of music to be recorded.

Echoing one of Kim Mitchell's thoughts, Tim adds: "I like it when a player imposes his style or sound on a drum track. It's also good if he instinctively builds a drum arrangement by second guessing what's needed. That way, less time is wasted discussing the options."

Thorney stresses that an ear for the unconventional is an asset. "It depends on the melody and lyric. Usually a less complex drum part allows for a more adventurous melodic and harmonic approach. The rhythm track should be hypnotic and allow the melody and lyrics to take the listener along the path of the song."

Summing up, Thorney mentions the importance of attitude: "In a commercial jingle, qualities of cooperation, adaptability, memory retention and resiliency keep the drummer employed and coming back. He can't get bummed out when asked to change his part. If he does, the session goes downhill and no one will want to work with him again. There's always someone new ready to come in and do a good job."

It's easy to see how competitive the music industry can be, especially given the few coveted dream positions available. We owe it to ourselves to heed the advice of the people in this article (as well as others like them) if we are to succeed. If it's your goal to play drums in a band like Ornette Coleman's or James Blood-Ulmer's, then perhaps you've wasted your time reading this. However, in popular genres of music these comments from the "heavies" would be wisely explored and digested.



# The Root of It

*By Dr. Jack Train*

**R**oot Canal Therapy. Three little words that have been known to place terror in the hearts of the weak, cause palms to sweat and hearts to fibrillate. In fact, root canal therapy (or endodontics) in the '90s is a form of treatment that, with very few exceptions, can be performed with little or no discomfort, let alone pain.

To be sure, this form of treatment was indeed very painful in the past — both in delivery and afterwards. Regrettably, this was a function of dentistry's lack of understanding of how and why the treatment seemed to work. As a result, many clinicians tended to over-treat and over-instrument the tooth. It was this over-instrumentation that caused the discomfort — not the treatment itself. In any case, today the dental profession has a much clearer understanding of the physiology of disease and the effects of treatment. In most cases, root canal treatment is delivered painlessly and with few appointments. With very few exceptions, root canal therapy is as painful as cutting your hair.

Now, what's this got to do with musicians? In our previous columns we discussed the effects of lack of treatment, over-treatment, "fixing it before it breaks" and "if it's not broken, don't fix it".

Our experience with musicians for the most part leads us to believe that musicians adopt the latter philosophy. This is due, in part, to a lack of understanding of the destructive and degenerative forces caused by dental disease — and economics. For the former, teeth can and often do break down with no associated symptoms until it's too late. When this occurs, there is almost always associated pain, swelling and infection and most certainly, interference in lifestyle and of course, the inevitable career interruption. Any musician who has ever suffered a dental abscess will attest to the above.

A tooth is a hard, calcified tube that is attached to our jaw-bone by a ligament. This ligament (called the periodontal ligament), remains alive throughout life and in addition to attaching the tooth, acts as a shock absorber

and secondary source of nutrition.

The nerve of the tooth (called the pulp) fills the internal "tube" and supplies the tooth with everything it needs for life. If the pulp becomes damaged, bruised, infected or injured in any way, it becomes swollen. The enlarged pulp presses itself against the walls of the "tube". The pressure has no where to go and the tooth begins to throb.

Unless the pressure is relieved, the tooth will strangle itself and an abscess and accompanying pain will result. Years ago, the pressure was relieved by removing the tooth.



*Dr. Train is a dental consultant to brass and woodwind musicians in Canada, the U.S. and Europe. Dr. Train also plays the trumpet.*

Today, we leave the tooth intact by "punching" a hole through the tooth. It sounds painful, but in fact, the *reverse* is true and relief is dramatic and almost immediate. What follows, is root canal therapy — dentistry's attempt to take a dead or dying tooth and create an environment within it so the body does not react and discard what it now considers to be a foreign body.

Not all treatments are successful, but this form of treatment, when completed, enjoys an 80-90 percent success rate.

The few failures we have seen over the years have resulted from overwhelming infection, athletes who got hit in the mouth

during treatment, and most importantly, in trumpet players — "screamers" who tend to play a great deal in the very high upper register.

For trumpet players, we believe the increase in "back pressure" in the upper registers alters the diameter of the capillaries feeding the teeth. The nutrients to the affected tooth becomes diminished and the tooth loses its ability to respond. The tooth virtually starves, and treatment fails.

It is strongly recommended that all brass and woodwind musicians who are undergoing root canal therapy refrain from playing in the upper registers during treatment and for at least one week following.

Once you've been advised treatment has been successful, have the tooth reinforced or "capped". Teeth that have had root canal therapy become dark, dry and very brittle. As the last article described, these teeth have an elevated predisposition to fracture. Not all do, but if it's your front tooth, you are facing possible tooth loss, embouchure change and certainly, a career interruption.

It is not uncommon for successfully treated teeth to elicit some symptoms for up to six months after completion, particularly in brass players. Be patient. This sense of bruising almost always disappears uneventfully, although we do know of some cases, particularly trumpet players, where the "root-canal" symptoms lasted for over a year.

It is interesting to note that over the years and hundreds of cases, two trumpet players, an oboe player and a singer have observed that after root canal treatment, the timbre of their high notes seemed to disappear — almost as if the tooth was dampening the resonance. We would be interested to learn if any other musicians have had the same experience.

Finally, the *best* treatment is the *least* treatment. Prevention always leads to good dentistry. Pain is nature's signal that something is wrong and requires attention. As the TV commercial for auto repairs goes — "See me now...or see me later".

# Practise Makes Perfect

**W**e've all heard the old adage "practise makes perfect" and seen the numerous scale, technique and pattern books that are available. But, first things first. What about actually being motivated to practise in the first place? Be realistic about the difference between how much time you have to practise and how much time you will. There's nothing worse than setting four hours aside to play and then feeling guilty about only playing for two.

## Getting There

When was the last time you practised for four hours? If you're the type of player that can easily spend four or more hours a day practising, I congratulate you, but for me to get to that point, it took a lot of willpower and organization. There will always be obstacles in the way of practising: from not enough time, to boredom, to having to make a living. In order to be in the right state of mind for playing, you need to eliminate as many barriers as possible.

Let's start with your practice space. It's really important to have a place where you feel comfortable and can have easy access to your exercise books, stereo, piano or whatever. You need to feel like practising when you walk into it.

I like to leave my saxes set up so whenever I walk by them their little voices say, "Play me, play me". If you live in an apartment with unforgiving neighbours, you might have to consider some soundproofing tactics, or play with a towel in the bell of your sax. It cuts down the sound as well as forces you to work on getting a bigger tone.

## Being There

How many times have you found yourself with time to practise but can't focus on exactly where to start? It's like walking into a record store, being overwhelmed by the possibilities of things to buy, and then forgetting what you went in there for in the first place.

Now that you've made it to the "record store", what do you do? The more prepared and organized you are before you sit down to practise, the more you'll accomplish. Therefore the more you'll want to practise tomorrow. Set yourself a time limit of one hour and plan what you'll work on before you start. I learned many valuable things from studying with Pat Labarbera, but the one lesson that has stayed with me for all these years is how to organize practice time. This is my adaptation:

- Long Tones — 10 minutes
- Scales (Warm-Up) — 10 minutes
- (Sometimes I like to warm-up a bit before

I play long tones so these two may be reversed.)

- Technique/Tonguing — 10 minutes
- New Idea Licks/Pattern — 10 minutes
- Play With Record Song (ear training) — 20 minutes

It's important to touch on all of these areas. The time you spend on each section will vary depending on your needs, but the whole point of these exercises is to give you an obtainable goal with your valuable practice time.

Time of day also plays a role in how effective my practice time is. I practise "brain work" (technique and scales) early in the day and save playing with records or writing for the afternoon or late at night.

The next step is to keep a record of what you practise. Have a notebook to write down tempos, keys, amount of time you spend.



PHOTO: IMAGECO

*Colleen Allen plays saxophone for the Rik Emmett Band.*

where you have difficulty, and so on (I also keep track of which mouthpieces and reeds I'm using). This will help you focus on specific areas that you need work on as well as give you a place to start the next day. I think it was Hemingway who suggested to young writers to always leave a day of writing with somewhere to begin the next day with.

It's a great reward to look through my diary of six years and see how my playing has progressed.

## Staying There

Taking lessons is the best way to motivate and discipline yourself: finding the right

teacher is the key. Start by asking someone whose playing you admire. If they don't usually teach, maybe they'd consider having just one or two sessions with you. Go to the lesson with a direction in mind.

As a student, I gained more from going into a lesson with specific questions rather than saying, "Teach me everything you know." As a teacher, I love it when my students come to the lesson prepared with questions or goals. It shows me that they're motivated, and that helps me to plan lessons with their individual needs in mind.

## Balancing Practising and Performing

Because practising is an individual "sport", it can become incredibly insular. It's crucial to try out your new skills in public. If you're playing regularly with a band, you can set your next gig as a goal for when you'll have that new song, lick or pattern ready. (It may not be appropriate to be trying out your blazing diminished scales at a bar mitzvah, unless nobody's listening, or the band is so quiet nobody can hear you anyway.)

If you aren't in a band yet, there are many other options:

- 1) Sitting-in with bands is a great way of meeting other musicians, making connections (that may lead to other work), as well as simply having a place to play. (Don't forget: always be musical. Don't "Bogart" the solos — leave something to say for the next one!)
- 2) Set up a weekly session with other players to work on new songs, arrangements and improvising.
- 3) Have a practice partner. Find someone that you can trade ideas and skills with.
- 4) Get out and listen to live music.
- 5) Practise away from your sax — think about music all the time. I do a lot of practising in my head before I even reach my sax. I visualize my hands on my saxophone and imagine playing melodies and exercises while I'm driving, on the streetcar or walking. When I'm on the road and someone else is driving I take out a horn and practise fingering patterns.

6) Sing! If you can sing something, you can play it.

7) Regular physical exercise is as important as exercising your mind.

In order to become a competent musician you need to practise. All of these ideas are ways of motivating yourself to do so. Set realistic, obtainable goals — like practising an hour a day — and I guarantee your playing will improve as well as your desire to play. Have fun.





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# RUSH

## STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART



“ Suddenly it occurred to us, there’s a future ahead of us. - Neil Peart ”

Rush is doing it again. With the band’s 14th studio album on the racks and an impending tour, the multi-platinum trio is set to satisfy its legions of devoted fans around the world. Needless to say, a lot has been said about Rush since it released its self-titled debut in 1974 and rocketed to international stardom in the ‘80s. Much more can be said, but it may be better to give Geddy Lee, bassist, vocalist & keyboardist, a little breathing room. Here’s the interview, taped in Toronto in July after the band completed its latest release, *Roll The Bones*.

**BY: FRANK SCHULTE ■ PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDREW MacNAUGHTAN**



You just finished a new record — how did it go for you?

**Geddy Lee:** It was probably the fastest we've made a record in some time. We say we made the record in 8 weeks, but we spent 10 weeks rehearsing and writing so the recording time was quick — that's good because that's usually the painful part.

**CM:** Neil Peart told me it took a day and a half to put down all the basic drums, which is incredible.

**GL:** We did the drums and bass tracks over a long weekend, so that was good. It's nice to know you can do them quickly, but I don't think it really amounts to anything. The bottom line is what you end up with, whether it takes you a long weekend or four weeks. I don't think it matters, as long as you get what you're after.

**CM:** I've listened to the record once. To me it sounds like a very joyous record, especially the opening track. There's a breath of freshness.

**GL:** Yeah, our intent was to express ourselves in a kind of looser, more hard rockin' way, so I guess we were fairly exuberant during our writing. The chemistry that went down was very up, and I hope that would translate onto the vinyl.

**CM:** As a band you seem to have found some kind of hope for continuing — that there's a real purpose for doing it and a renewed sense of identity.

**GL:** Yeah, I'd say that's accurate. There was definitely a "clicking in" of mental frame of mind between the three of us. When you've been in a band for as long as we have — and there haven't been very many bands that have been around as long as we have — you go through many different frames of mind. Sometimes the three of you are just not in sync. You think you are and you act like you are but you're really not — I think sometimes that shows in the stuff you write and the way you behave on stage and the way you tour. Other times you're very, very much of one mind.

Fortunately for us we're really at home when we're writing — that's the moment where the three of us are most happy and the most in sync with each other. This time we found ourselves at home in that writing stage with more of a united purpose. I don't know if that makes any sense to an outsider. It's a subtle difference, but a very profound difference in the kind of energy that you're willing to put into the project.

**CM:** Is that perhaps one of the reasons why you think Rush has held together as long as it has.

**GL:** I think we've stayed together for a lot of reasons. One, we're all pretty soft-spoken and we don't have a tendency to blow up in each other's faces. Good or bad, I think that means if something's going on in the band and you're not happy about it, before you freak out you think about it. It's just our nature. We're a little more introspective as individuals and I think that lends itself to longevity.

On the other side of it (away from the personal side), there's a very strong musical vision that is always, or almost always, very united. So you get these three people that have had, say, six months off and have gone through completely different experiences on their own, and then you sit them down together and you think: "My God, how are these three people going to decide on what to write; how are they going to have any point of reference anymore?", because their individual lives are quite different. But time and time again we want to

do the same kind of thing. Our musical goals are frighteningly aligned. I think those two factors are really the only factors that have kept this band together for that long.

**CM:** On the new album you've once again used Rupert Hine as a co-producer. Why did you use him and how is he in sync with what you're trying to express? What are his strengths and his contributions to the record?

**GL:** We had a very pleasant experience on *Presto* working with Rupert. He and his engineer Stephen W. Taylor are very professional, very congenial, extremely musical and we found things went very smoothly and very quickly. It was an efficient process.

I think we're fairly capable of producing ourselves, but we need that little extra sounding board — that person who we can bounce ideas off of and sometimes contribute with an idea that we would never have thought of. But for the basic writing and arrangements on the last two albums, I think there's been very little [difference], in a fundamental sense, from before we had producer's input to after. There's a confidence that the songs that we're writing are in fairly good shape by the time the producer comes in.

So the producer, for us, helps us with feel in terms of putting a record down and making sure that our fanaticism in terms of tightness and perfection does not overwhelm the song from feeling good. I think that's something we've learned from Rupert to a large degree and I think that's probably, to my mind, his strongest influence on us over the past two records — even though the track may not be 100 percent tight in terms of a microscopic view, that's really not the issue. The issue is making the song feel good and making the performance feel right.

I think we had a tendency to be almost sterile in the way we went about putting together a performance. I mean we were very adamant about tightness to the millisecond between bass, drums and guitar. Super, super, super tight — beyond, in some people's opinion, anybody else's ability to hear the difference.

So I think he's brought more of a feel... helped us be more aware of when a song is feeling good from us. It's created a bit of a looser vibe and I like that a lot. So, his overseeing the performances going to tape has been very helpful to us and his contribution in terms of vocal arrangements and things like that, to me, are Rupert's strengths.

Both [Hine and Taylor] are musicians so they understand and appreciate everything you're doing regardless of how complex it is. That helps cut down a lot of time and wasted energy in the studio. They're a very musical-efficient team and they complemented over the last two records the job that we had already done as co-producers.

**CM:** I find that you're using the word "efficient" quite a lot. You obviously live by your own rules, because you've been together for this long and done so much. Efficiency must mean a great deal to you and the rest of the band with the way you run things.

**GL:** Well, just in the fact that we've been a band that's been together for a long time. Time is very important to us. Personal time, home time, family time.

**CM:** And yet you've done so much.

**GL:** Yeah we have, but as we progress, and, I hesitate to use the phrase, as we get older, those things are important. When we're together in a studio we want to make sure we're not

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“Our musical goals are frighteningly aligned”

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wasting our time. We don't mind working — we like to work and get down to it, but we don't want to sit around the studio twiddling our thumbs and frittering away time when we could be doing something else, which at that point could be more important to us. So we want to make sure that there is a sense of efficiency and we are making the most of our hours there.

When we were younger, we did albums in residential studios and we were working 24 hours a day. We'd work all night and we would spend a long time making records and it was... it was the lifestyle. It's not any longer. Now it is a way of getting our music on tape and we want to make sure we have a good time doing it, but we want to make sure it gets done right and then we're out of there, onto the next thing.

**CM:** You're efficient in another way — musically. You're a trio that sounds like a 10-piece band. You use your talents very efficiently. Neil writes the words, you and Alex write the music, and the way you then put it together sounds like a gigantic rock orchestra — and there are only three of you. You're not adding people — there's never been a fourth member of Rush. You've sparsely used even background vocalists.

**GL:** Yeah, we have been pretty self-sufficient over the years. Whether that's good or bad I guess only time will tell...

We are very much a closed circle — it's just the three of us. Sometimes I think that's unhealthy. When we can have somebody new in the control room — whether it be a producer, engineer, keyboard player, string arranger, vocalist

— all these things help teach us something. And that is something I think that we probably did not do enough of in our earlier years. As a result, I think that's why every couple of records we seem to be changing producers. Just for the sake of moving on and learning more. There's somebody else out there that can bring some fresh influence to the band.

**CM:** You're talking about influences now and people influencing you. How much do you listen to and get influenced by what's happening outside of Rush musically? You've seen popular music change radically since you began. How much do you let that affect what you're putting out right now?

**GL:** Right now there's very little influencing me in terms of rock. I don't listen to very much contemporary music at the moment — there's just not very much that catches my fancy. I seem to be listening to old records and things that are very different from what I'm doing. I listen to classical records, I listen to Billie Holiday, I listen to Louis Armstrong; all kinds of stuff that really has nothing to do with what I'm doing at the moment, aside from the few rock bands that I really like a lot, like The Cure, Simple Minds, Talking Heads — I always have time for those bands.

Nonetheless, there are different times in our past where we have been very influenced by what's going on. It was the late '70s when bands like The Police — there was a heavily rhythmic influence on rock and pop that we liked a

lot and we reacted to. We wanted to be part of that movement and learn from [it]. That was a big influence on us.

In the early '70s when we first started, we were very heavily influenced by a lot of the progressive rock bands like Yes and Genesis. So we started off being very influenced and at different times there are different kinds of music that do influence us. But I think we're always being influenced by music that we listen to, whether it's contemporary or not.

In one way or another, as a musician, you're always listening and you're always asking the same questions to yourself as you're listening to a piece of music. So I think it's very hard for an active musician not to be influenced by what he's listening to, whether it be in an overt way or a very subtle way. I think it always goes down and as I say at the moment there's no great contemporary influence, but there are probably 10 or 12 more subtle influences that are affecting each one of us in our own way.

**CM:** I asked you that question because I noticed on the title track, "Roll The Bones", there's quite a funky groove to it and there's, what appears to be, a little bit of a rap in the middle of it. So I was wondering if you were stretching out and exploring that area as it pertains to the success and the popularity of that musical form today.

**GL:** Yeah. I guess that track is something that was influenced by more of the spoken word stuff that is going on, although I can't sit here and say I'm a fan of rap. I like some rap things, but a lot of it I don't like. I think there's some of it that's really well done — there are

## NEIL PEART ON...

"There's a running joke among us about doing solo albums," Neil Peart says cheerfully. "Lucky there's only three of us."

As Rush's lyricist and percussionist, Peart is privy to one of the most popular and longest running rock icon bands in the world — but you wouldn't know it to talk to him on the phone.

"We work under a kinda superstition — an element of change is critical for us. We feel there's no sense of guarantee at all," Peart says, referring to his many years of hard work and dedication to the precarious craft of musicianship.

"As a young musician you're used to disillusionment and disappointment. You're disillusioned and disappointed so many times; even when I had a chance to join this band... I never thought it would turn out this way."

"This way", as Peart describes it, is pretty much on the top of the heap in terms of Rush's musical success.

"I always think of Rush widely spread on musical influences — from African, to hard rock, to Toronto R&B. There are no areas of frustration."

Then there is Peart's personal contribution to the art of rock drumming, something not to be trifled with as he has earned the respect and admiration of his peers and fans around the world.

"I don't need to practise every day any more. After 25 years it doesn't go away. If I leave drumming for a few months I sit down at the same level I left at; I just have to build up the calices again."

Pulling his weight not only as an extremely effective drummer, Peart has also been Rush's wordsmith practically since the day he joined the band.

"Lyric writing is as technical as drumming is, and should be approached with purpose and discipline," Peart says. "I'll sit and stare at a blank sheet of paper for three days if that's what it takes."

"I have long discussions with Geddy about

which type of lyrics work and which don't. I'm very sensitive to where the vocalist may be, and if I want to punch up or drop out.

"I realize that sometimes the lyrics are secondary. Lyrics used to be so good and so finely crafted in the '30s and '40s — no one would put out second rate lyrics. Then the '50s came out with things like 'Be-bop a-lula'. A sense of craft and care is not definable... I please myself with structure, but realize that it doesn't matter."

With the release of *Roll The Bones* and a massive tour just around the corner, Peart is, as he surely always has been during his long association with Rush, genuinely enthusiastic about what the future holds.

"We're driving full bore; we've moved our plans way up. You have to create your own challenge; make it dangerous; keep it exciting. You can't let the excitement go away."

"We've learned not to take anything for granted. We don't know, but we can *hope*. That's something you can't allow to die."



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some clever people out there. But it's also not a new influence.

People are talking about rap music like it's something new — it's not new at all. It's been around for over a decade, if not always in one form. And there are songs, like "Territories", where we have used a similar kind of thing, although it was never related to rap because it wasn't the music of the moment — so we have used spoken word sections before.

This one is written more from Neil's point of view. The lyrics were written

very much in concert with contemporary rap music: the way the words react against each other and the structures form more in sympathy with what's going on in a contemporary rap way. To a degree we are having fun with that. We couldn't make up our minds really if we wanted to be influenced by rap or satirize it, so I think that song kind of falls between the cracks and in the end I think it came out to be neither, it came out to be something that is very much us.

CM: It definitely sounds like Rush.

GL: I guess with the three of us it's pretty hard not to. I mean there are certain elements of our sound that are kind of inimitable at this stage.

CM: You rely a lot on technology. How much does the technology you're using affect your songwriting? Is there an experimental element to the technology that you use?

GL: Yeah. It's definitely experimental. I think technology has a great effect on what we do — less of an effect now than perhaps records of the past. The last two records were rebellion, in a sense, against the technology that we kind of got ourselves locked into.

With *Hold Your Fire* and *Power Windows* we were so technology-oriented. We were really after a marriage of synthesizer technology and hard rock. Those records were experiments in balance of those two, and that experiment started with *Signals*, really. That was the first major experiment.

After *Signals* was finished, we felt it was kind of a failure in getting the right balance. With *Grace Under Pressure* we still felt we were experimenting with that balance; with "Subdivisions" we felt like we leaned too heavily into keyboards and ignored the guitar aspect of it. With *Grace Under Pressure* we felt we over-reacted too much the other way.

With *Power Windows* and *Hold Your Fire* we felt we kind of achieved the balance. So because we'd gone through literally four records of trying to balance those two things out I think by the time we came to write *Presto* and this record we didn't want to know anything about being restricted to a concept. We just wanted to write.

As a writer I hesitated going to my keyboards, hesitated going to my sequencers — always thought of first writing from a vocal and guitar point of view. So if those four albums were experiments in guitar/synthesizer balancing, then these last two records have been a bit of a return to our fundamental — I hesitate to use, return to basics, because I don't think we ever do have a "back to basics" approach — trio attitude with the experimenting all done in the vocal area.

Melodically I think these last two records are much different than something we could have done four or five years ago. The vocal layering and the influence that writing around a vocal melody has on the rest of the song has been really what these two records for me have been about as a writer, and I think the band as a whole.

CM: So you're feeling fairly stable with the balance that you've managed to create.

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GL: Yeah, I guess to wrap it up correctly, the last two records have been freer attempts at writing — less confined. There are incredible orchestration and textural possibilities when you're locked into using sequencers and synthesizers. It's a great sonic advantage, but there's also an emotional and feel restriction when you get too locked into that technology, so these two records (and particularly this one) have been a bit of a revolt against that restriction to create a freer sound with the band.

We will use [technology] as a way of enhancing our songs as opposed to it being the fundamental song itself. And that is coordination with an interest in experimenting with vocal melodies and layering — again a much more organic approach to writing.

CM: How are you going to reproduce the vocal layering and the much more complex vocal stylings in a live situation?

GL: Well, a lot of that is very difficult. You see, the freer we get in the studio the more it creates a hell-on-earth onstage. It was very difficult last tour. Obviously Alex has to be a lot more involved in singing back-up, and there's always the decision of what parts to sequence and what parts to use backing sampling and things like that. So it's a very difficult thing and I'm not quite sure how we're going to achieve it for the next tour, although last tour we got quite a good balance between Alex and electronics helping us out.

There were certain things on the last tour that were very heavily animated so there were moments where soundtrack on film took over certain moments of our songs and we'd come back in afterwards. It's kind of a mixed media thing. Because we're so heavily involved in using sampling and sequencing machines and audio visual stuff it's very much a combination of technology and human beings onstage when you go to a Rush show. It's a marriage of the two. And all of that fuss is just to avoid adding another person onstage.

There's nothing that we use onstage that's triggered by anyone else, because there's this kind of unwritten code that if we're going to use a sampled piece or a sequenced piece it has to be triggered by us, which is why we have this elaborate foot pedal setup. Nothing happens without some connection to performance for us. So you have to be there and if you have a small rhythmic sequence that's going to be playing, somebody has to trigger it at the right time — it's more of a choreography of technology.

You've got to be there at the right time,

you've got to trigger it in time, you've got to add that element of performance, and if you screw up you can't use the part, so no matter how complex our show gets in the use of technology, we make sure that there has to be that element of human error that makes the difference. You have to be able to trigger it. It has to be connected to us in some way.

CM: It seems like you're making it very difficult for yourselves when it could be done a lot easier. You say it's an unwritten rule in the band, but...

GL: Yeah. It could be a lot easier with another person. And I don't know why... We talked... Before the last tour we had very serious talks about adding another member.

CM: Just for the tour?

GL: Just for the tour, yeah — not in the band. But we came to the conclusion that our fans would rather see us use technology to try to pull it off than have somebody else on the stage. And I really think that that was the main reason why we opted to try to do it ourselves. We figured that people who have been com-

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ing to see us for 15 years would rather see us up there fighting our way through the show and trying to do it than hiring somebody else. We figured that technology was a more acceptable answer than not being a three-piece.

**CM:** You mentioned your marriage between technology and the human element. How much do the visual aspects come in? Do you get very involved in that personally?

**GL:** Yeah, very involved. Personally I have a lot of input into the film portions of our show. In the past, lighting effects

and all those things have always been left to our lighting designer. But as far as the use of animation — that's something I'm very interested in. I'm pretty proud of the kinds of animation we've put together over the last few years because we've used some very talented artists in town here and I think we've achieved some really unique pieces of work that I think stand up. And it's an area that I'm very interested in and have a lot of fun doing.

**CM:** And you also have a lot of personal input into the videos you put out as well.

**GL:** Well, I have as much as will fit. Sometimes we work with the director; sometimes we let them do the job because they have a very strong sense of where the project should go; other times you have to put in a lot more; and sometimes you want to put more in, so it really depends.

I figure that some of our videos have been very successful, some of them haven't. It's never a completely satisfying experience for me because there are so many limitations. It's such a strange thing, this video — it's gotta be too practical to be considered really a piece of art, although you can be very artful about doing it.

It's basically a commercial for your song. There's something about that that really kind of turns me off right from the word go. And depending on the director you're using, you know they usually have very little feel for the music itself and that kind of bothers me. So it's very rare that we've used the same director twice.

**CM:** We were talking a little bit about influences before. I want to do a little extension of that: Rush seems to be in a certain niche in the musical sphere that no-one has been able to duplicate.

**GL:** Or want to? *(laughter)*

**CM:** I don't know about that... You have a lot of fans and you're very popular not only in Canada, but also on the international scene. You must have come across many instances where someone will come up to you and say, "You've really done a lot for me in my musical career and one of your records changed my life. It made me decide to do this and this." How do you react to something like that?

**GL:** It's a difficult thing to react to in any real way because you're gratified that what you've done has had some effect on that person, although the intention was not to change their life — just to entertain them.

The fact that they've taken something you've done very seriously is kind of a double-edged sword. You're complimented, but at the same time you can't let it go beyond that kind of compliment. Otherwise you start thinking of yourself in much too serious a light. Like, "what I'm doing affects someone else's life."

You can't think like that because it affects the way you write. It allows part of your ego to become awkwardly large. It's not for any great reason to be a humble guy, it's just that the more out of proportion your ego gets, the harder it is to do a good job; the harder it is for you to be in touch with what it is about your music that works and doesn't work. Likewise what it is about your personality that is happening or not

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happening. So to take those kind of compliments too seriously I think damages your ego. People say it pumps you up, but I think that's wrong. I don't think it helps you in any way as a person, and I think it can have a very negative effect on you as a writer.

**CM:** Perhaps you'd also have a sense of responsibility. It would tag you; you might think: "Oh, I'm responsible for that." It might make you feel uneasy.

**GL:** Yeah that's true. You want to feel the freedom of being able to do what you want. A complaint that I get a lot from fans is: "Why don't you do this record again... how come you don't sound more like *Moving Pictures* or *2112*, or how come you don't play like *Hemispheres* anymore??"

It's very hard to explain that thing — you kind of have to be making records or writing music for a long time to understand it. It just doesn't come out. You've got other things that interest you and you want to keep challenging yourself, but it's not this big decision to keep challenging yourself. It's a very natural thing. I cannot stand still.

You have to be honest about what you're doing. And again that is a natural thing. You go in the studio and you just

start writing. We get together, and we just start writing. So what you end up with has a lot to do with who you are at that point in time. So you cannot sit there and go, "OK, let's write *Moving Pictures* all over again — let's go back in time 10 years and see if we can capture that feel".

That would be somehow dishonest to everything you've done since then and it would feel like you were just going through the motions — and you cannot stay a band for very long if you're just trying to capitalize on some successful moment you've had in your past and build your future on your past.

It's all stepping stones. I still like to think that we haven't made the best record we can make. I still like to think that we're looking for that real fabulous combination of performance and writing and feeling that will make a timeless record. But I don't think you can do that by looking over your shoulder.

**CM:** Despite your personal philosophy on making records and the changes you've made, you've managed to maintain a sound which is distinctly Rush.

**GL:** I think that's because it comes from your hands. A lot of people are afraid to change producers. We used to be like this. We said, "Well, we can't change

producers because our sound will change." And then suddenly you change producers; your sound changes a little bit, but it doesn't really change — the heart of it is still the same.

Here we are, four or five producers past Terry Brown, and we still sound like Rush. Well, why is that? That's 'cause we *are* Rush, because the combination of the three of us working together, our fingers on our instruments, has a particular sound that you really can't erase. Our views of music and our style of writing are so much *us* that I don't think you can squash that — you can't really take it away from us.

It's just the way we are — it's the way we sound. I think musicians have to have a lot of confidence in themselves — if they have a sound to call their own they shouldn't be afraid of working with other people or be afraid anyone can take that sound away from them as long as they have a strong sense of where they're at as a writer and as a musician. I don't think they should be scared of that kind of change because their sound comes from their fingers — it comes from their way of thinking. ■

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# W A N C G L A N C

## MEN WITHOUT HATS LOOK AT THE WORLD... .....SIDeways

**E**verybody knows Men Without Hats are Canada's premier electro-pop outfit. With international hits like "Pop Goes The World" and "Safety Dance", the hatless wonders have bopped and battled their way into the heart of the music industry. But hang on, the band has just taken a giant step. *Sideways*.

That's right, *Sideways*. It's the name of the latest Men Without Hats album, but it's also indicative of a shift in the direction of the band. The once heavily programmed and synthesized sound has given way to a hardcore guitar group sensibility.

Hats' frontman Ivan Doroschuck says that the shift was a natural one for the band, more a consolidation than a departure.

"It's back to the beginning for us," Doroschuck says. "When the Hats started out in 1979, it was a basic guitar band. It was guitar, bass and drums. We were doing Cramps covers and Chris Spedding tunes and things like that. We only got into electronics in '81, and a bit later we got into being a full-fledged electronic band."

Doroschuck says that the current album came about innocently enough. It grew out of informal jam sessions with musician friends from other notable Montreal bands.

"It's something we started working on with the last record, *21st Century*. We put more guitars on that record and tried a bigger

band. This time, it was no major plan or anything. It just happened naturally from hanging out with guys from Voivod, The Doughboys and the scene in Montreal. We just started jamming and it just turned into a Men Without Hats record."

Indeed, the cast of *Sideways* reads like a Who's Who of the Montreal music scene. Along with the hardcore Hats, Doroschuck and his brothers Stefan and Colin, the band includes Michel Langevin from Voivod, Felix Matte of Ideas Noires and John Kastner from The Doughboys.

"I'm not really into technology. I appreciate it and I know what it's all about. But sitting in front of a computer all day is not one of my most cherished activities. It's a lot more immediate playing with a bunch of guys. Our last tour was for "Pop Goes The World". We did 60 shows in the States, and every one was identical. Computers were running the whole thing. There were seven people onstage, but each show was basically identical. Now it's a real band. I'm rediscovering how easy it is just to change things around. It's just a lot more immediate. It's a lot more fun."

### Ivan The Not-So-Terrible

Not so long ago, Men Without Hats were regarded as the *enfants terribles* of Canadian music. Doroschuck believes that the sudden success of "Safety Dance" caught the band off-guard. It was a learning process for everyone.

"I spent a lot of time learning about the business. I spent a lot more time in managers' and lawyers' and accountants' offices than I did in a studio. Everyone dreams of having a hit record, but

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when it actually happens it really affects you; it affects everybody. You know, when you get into this business it's something you look forward to; you expect a hit record in a way. But when it happened to me, when I actually had a hit record, I had nothing to bounce it off. Having never had a hit record before, when you get the first one it's like you have to make what you can of it."

The post-hit era was a difficult one for Doroschuck personally, but it also disrupted the band.

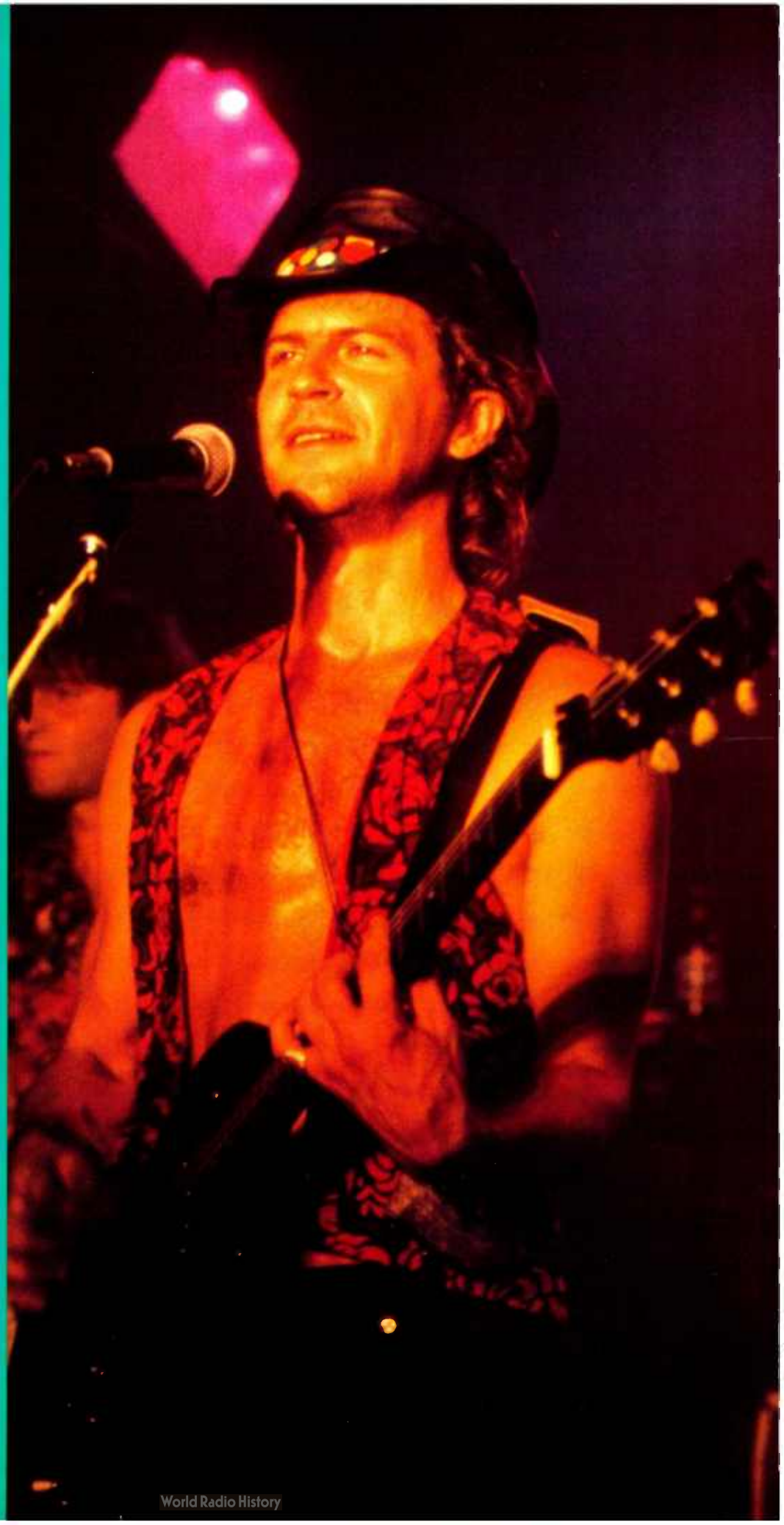
"At that point I perceived Men Without Hats as an electronic hardcore band, and the industry perceived us as the opposite. So there was a kind of struggle. We broke through on college radio, but as soon as you get a big hit, you're blacklisted. Our problem was that we didn't fit in anywhere — we didn't fit in the street, and we didn't fit in the boardroom. It was kind of wild for a while there."

For a man whose relationship with the press could once be described as strained at best, Doroschuck now seems at ease with the media. What happened to "Ivan The Infant Terrible"?

"I learned a lot. There's no point in your life where you have to have everything figured out. I've learned to be a lot more relaxed about it. There's way less pressure now than there was back then. Now I'm learning how to make records, and learning how to deal with the hype, and discovering what level I want to operate at. That's really the whole thing. That's the story of *Sideways*. There are really a whole lot of directions you can go in. There's not one set of rules.

*Continued*

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"I'm at a point where I just want to make records. I've been in this industry for over 10 years now, and I've only made, like, five records. I haven't been too prolific, so we're concentrating on that now: just making records. Maybe a record a year or a record every 18 months."

## Home Is Where You Hang Your Chapeau

Montreal is the home where the Hats hang out, and despite some of the problems that come from being outside English Canada's music mainstream, Doroschuck and company are happy where they are.

Ivan, who's bilingual, says that being an English band in Montreal takes a lot of initiative.

"The English music community is not very large there. It's about the size of Hamilton's music community. English rock bands in Montreal know that whenever they play there's not going to be any English press or industry people there. There's not going to be any guy there with a big cigar and the blonde on his arm, ready to sign you up and make you a star. So it gives people a different perspective. It forces bands to get out there, to go on the road and do it. That's an advantage in a way over Toronto, where a lot of bands wind up just playing the bar circuit for the rest of their lives. In Montreal you can't do that. You have to get your shit together; you have to go out there and do it for yourself.

"In Toronto there's so much industry that bands have a sense of what the industry wants. Whether consciously or unconsciously, a lot of bands tend to conform to industry expectations. They start to sound the same. In Montreal, there is no industry. Kids can do what they want. They can come on and walk around in the nude if they want, and it's not going to hurt their career for the moment."

Although language is not a big issue for Doroschuck, he's found himself pulled sideways into the French-English debate. Originally, many saw him as a sell-out: a Francophone singing in English to make it. In fact, he's English.

His parents sent him to French schools because, Doroschuck says, "they wanted me to be a real Canadian." For Doroschuck, it's the various levels of intolerance that put this country at risk.

"That's Canada for you. People want to keep this thing together, but nobody wants to speak each other's language. Each province has different rules. Some people can buy beer in the corner store next to their house, some people have to go line up at the beer prison. Some people can stay out 'til late, some people got to go home early.

Some people can drink at 18, some people can drink at 21. Some people can see naked bodies on TV, some people can't. I like what Stompin' Tom Connors says: 'The rest of Canada should join

Quebec and we can all separate together."

## A New Lease

With the pressure off, and a new focus, Doroschuck has found that the music comes a lot easier. *Sideways* took only nine months to go from idea to record stores. Not bad for a band that has only recorded five albums in 12 years.

"We spent about three weeks practising and wrote a bunch of stuff. I had a couple of songs before we got all these guys together, but most of it was written with them. I would come to the band with the basic song. My brother Stefan handles the arrangement — he's sort of the band leader. Michel is responsible for a lot of the different time signatures that happen on this record, as opposed to the other records which were pretty much 4/4 all the way. There are a lot of tempo changes and things like that on *Sideways*."

Already, Men Without Hats have their next album two-thirds written. And for his part, Doroschuck looks forward to exercising his new-found freedom.

"*Sideways* allows me to do whatever I want. I can come back with a dance record next, and it will fit in. Since I've gone from electro-pop to hardcore rock 'n' roll, next time I'm a lot freer. I can do the next one without any kind of commercial pressure. That means I can open up and be receptive to whatever comes along."



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# SUCCESS ON

# KASHTIN

As recently as two years ago, Florent Vollant and Claude McKenzie were as removed from the conventional music industry as it's possible to be. Living on an Indian reserve near Sept-Îles (about 800 kilometres north of Montreal on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River), the Innu natives were busy writing songs and becoming a popular attraction at local pubs and traditional native ceremonies. It was at such a ceremony that a Montreal news crew showed up and filmed the duo doing their thing. When producer Guy Trépanier happened to see the report, he knew what to do.

Several months later Vollant and McKenzie were in the studio recording what would turn out to be a smash selling album, and Kashtin, which literally means "tornado", began living up to its name. Their self-titled debut effort, produced by Trépanier, has sold over 180,000 copies in Canada, spawned a hit single, *E Uassiuan* (My Childhood), and has gone Gold in France. Heavy rotation video airplay and a rigorous touring schedule has helped the album become a vehicle with which to pierce the Canadian Anglophone market as well.

Vollant and McKenzie sing in their native language Montagnais, which only about 10,000 people in the world can understand. It matters little, however, as Kashtin's sweet, folk-rock style clearly demonstrates the duo's intent. In concert, head-banded, acoustic-playing Vollant (31 and father of four) rollicks about the stage, clearly enjoying himself. In contrast, McKenzie (24) projects a leaner, tighter image with black electric guitar and spiked haircut.

Together they are Kashtin — with a little help from a great band of session players. Their follow-up album should be released in October. *Canadian Musician* spoke with an effervescent Florent Vollant in a telephone interview.

**Canadian Musician:** How much do you



attribute to video for getting your music across to a wide audience?

**Florent Vollant:** Video helped get us across to Canadians and across to the world, in fact. You have no choice but to do them in our business because without them you'll miss a lot of audience.

We did four videos for the first album. I think it's a new kind of art for musicians; another kind of work musicians can do. Our videos are like small movies about our songs and people can see what we are and where we're from. Some of them were done at our own place and you can see some of our elders and people.

**CM:** What topics do you write about?

**FV:** We write about what we are, what we see and dream. We try to talk about what counts for us in life: friendship, brotherhood, our people, our children, our land. We're inspired by our friends and our love.

**CM:** What process do you go through to write your songs?

**FV:** We have worked separately in the past, but for writing the next album we worked more closely. Claude is the first



# THEIR OWN TERMS

# INNUE



guy who hears what I do and vice versa. Sometimes Claude will come to me with a melody or harmony... We give each other advice and our comments.

**CM:** What's your musical background and who are your influences?

**FV:** We have many. We grew up on a small reserve where they play a lot of country music. Other than that we were influenced by a lot of good music like The Beatles, Eagles, Neil Young, Dylan, Rolling Stones, Bob Seger. Traditional music also.

As for training, we don't have any — we're self-taught. We don't read or write music and we don't use any computers.

**CM:** Do you use any instruments that are indigenous to the Innu people?

**FV:** On the first album we didn't, but on the next one we'll record some songs with our traditional drum, the *teueikan*. We don't compose with it, but we do use the rhythms found in our traditional music.

**CM:** What's the history of your success so far?

**FV:** We'd been on the road for a few years with a cassette to help pay our costs. A lot of people had heard about Kashtin around the reserve but we didn't want to leave the reserve. We'd had several contract offers from different people but were afraid to go to the city.

One day a TV crew came to report on the Innu people. They asked us to play some songs and we did some to have a good time. The program was aired a few months later, and three days after that, some people from Montreal (producer Guy Trépanier) called and wanted to talk about recording in a studio. We decided to meet and talk and six months later we had our record and were working on our live show.

**CM:** How has your recent success changed you?

**FV:** I can't say that success has changed us. We're musicians — our music stays the same, it's just that we have a different, big audience now. We have to spend a lot of time on the road and answer questions — it's not easy. We have to give a lot of time to our passion, but we try to do our best. It's our choice.

I know that a lot of bands would love to be in our place. The best place where we can be is on stage, and we're there a lot — we can have a good time! If we can share what we are and our music to a big audience, I think it's great. If people buy the LP and come to our concerts, that's great too. Plus, I can buy my ski-doo!

**CM:** What about the future?

**FV:** Last year we went to Europe ten times and we were on the Top 40 in France. This summer we stayed in Canada doing lots of touring to promote our new album. The musicians who play with us live also play on the new album: Donald Meunier, Alan Cavallo, Serge Durocher and Claude Guay. We've got a lot of support from a lot of creative people.

**CM:** Any advice for our readers?

**FV:** Be yourself, try to do your best, and give peace a chance. ■



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BY RICHARD CHYCKI

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For the virgin P.A. buyer/user, the world of P.A. gear can be a bewildering barrage of frustration. Dave Filchak is the assistant manager at Steve's Music in Toronto:

"You can get a surprisingly good sounding system for a respectable amount of money. Keep in mind that the more money you're prepared to spend, the more sophistication, versatility and power you'll generally get in return."

It's also important to assess the immediate P.A. needs at hand and temper them with some insight as to what may be required in the future. This will help avoid premature obsolescence.

"Peavey makes a mixer as small as four channels in a head with 100 watts (W) of power built in," Dave explains. "Combining this head with a pair of small full range speaker boxes like the Peavey 112PS will yield a P.A. suitable for rehearsal and very small club situations. Adding in a processor, which is somewhat like a small speaker optimizer, will give the illusion of a much larger speaker array with the added benefits of an extended bottom end, punchier sound and speaker protection."

Continued \_\_\_\_\_

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# SOUND

If all this talk of house P.A.s has roused your fear of the unknown like an old *Twilight Zone* rerun, fear not. **Randy Miller**, who's been the head audio technician at the Town Pump in Vancouver for the last five-and-a-half years, offers some information about the contents of that house rig.

"Our seating capacity is about 460 people. Bob Haig from Paul's Music in Richmond, BC designed our bass bins and they're powered by 4,000W of QSC MX1500 amplifiers. The mid cabs are Adamson and the horns are a combination of 90" and 120" horns with E-V drivers, all Bryston powered. We have a unique horn array because the room is somewhat awkward (It's about 25'x90' with the stage on the long wall. All seats are in the wings with a dance floor in front of the stage.)



Andi Charal

"A Soundcraft 200B is our main console with a Steveson 24x8 desk for monitors. We're set up right now to offer a band coming in here five individual monitor mixes. We generally use Shure Beta 58s for vocals to limit feedback; there's an assortment of E-V 408s, Shure SM57/58s, and Sennheiser 421s for miking things up. The system's outboard gear has a Lexicon LXP1 reverb, an Alesis Midiverb II, a Korg SDD3000 multi-effect, four Gatex gates, four Yamaha GC2020B compressor/limiters, and several Rane and Klark-Teknik EQs."

So what kind of bands frequent the Town Pump and "risk" using a house P.A.? How about Living Colour, Faith No More, Pat Travers and the Red Hot Chili Peppers for a start.

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Although the small club P.A. and the arena rig seem completely unrelated, there are certain aspects that tie together. Andi "Stav" Charal has toured with David Lee Roth, Saga, The Tubes and Kim Mitchell. He's had the chance to mix everywhere from small venues to the largest halls.

"The main difference between a club date and an arena — technical complexities aside — is the uncontrolled environment of an arena," Andi says. "A great deal depends on the structure of the building. It's usually cement and very reflective, which the soundman should attempt to offset. The simplest way to minimize the problems associated with reflected sound is to aim the speakers directly at the bulk of the audience. Aside from this, you *still* have to sit down and mix a killer show with a lot of dynamics just like any place else."

Neil McDermott from PA Plus Productions shares the sentiments: "As the size of the coverage area increases, the placement and configuration of speakers becomes increasingly critical. It's important to have knowledge of coupling, lobing and phasing to get the most from your P.A."

With credits including mixing for Al DiMeola, Kim Mitchell, Lee Aaron and April Wine, Neil also expresses the importance of efficiency, compatibility, and reliability in a rig of such magnitude. The systems assembled by PA Plus are fully compatible and interchangeable due to a sophisticated interface system known as the "G-Block". Using a series of multi-connectors, the G-Block allows rapid and consistent set ups and tear downs.

Jamie Howieson, who in the past has mixed Toto, Rita Coolidge, Luba and Blue Oyster Cult offers this last piece of advice:

"Keep in mind that with any gig, no matter what size, you're at the mercy of your environment. In a hockey rink, there is no mercy. Try to tune your setup using a CD of the band playing so you get a good point of reference. If you're having problems with your sound, try this before reaching for the EQ: Listen to the sound source first and get it to sound the best it possibly can. Mic it close for good isolation and focus. Then listen to it through the P.A. Move the mics around a little to see if the sound improves. *Then* reach for the EQ."

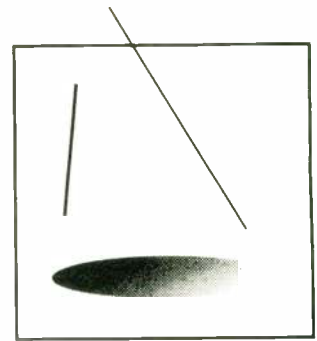
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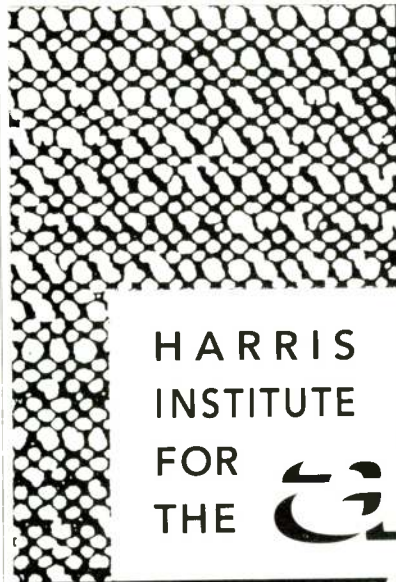
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## VOCALS

# I'm Listening, But is that Really Me?

by Rosemary Burns

The other day I listened to an interview with the great Oscar Peterson and he was asked how he decided what to play when he was playing jazz. (Jazz, of course, is improvisation, so when a performer begins, s/he may have very little idea where they may end.) Peterson's answer was that he *listens* — a note or chord will trigger an idea or a thought and he'll know just where to go.

Now the most important word here is *listen*. How many people listen? Not many, and not many singers in particular. We should always anticipate ahead of ourselves — hear where we are going, then go there.

Singers today very often listen *after the fact*. This is a result of stage monitoring. Vocal stage monitors began to get widespread use only in the '60s. Before then, the singer had to rely on him or herself. With the introduction of stage monitoring, the singer became fascinated with their own voice and started listening to what they did rather than what they were going to do. This is like driving a car down the street while looking in the rear-view mirror.

Yes, I know the argument — the instruments are so loud that you can't hear yourself. The trouble with vocal monitors is that many singers rely on them so much that they forget to listen to where they're going.

So, how do we hear ourselves? In many ways. It's a medical fact that we have *five* ears — two outer ears, two inner ears and a middle ear for balance. If you don't believe it, try an experiment:

Stand in front of a microphone and cup your hands over your ears, covering them completely. Recite a bit of your favourite song and record it. Next, cup your hands behind your ears — leave the ears open. Record that. Now put your hand in front of your mouth and make like a megaphone. Finish the song.

As you listen back to the tape, you'll

notice a few interesting points. When you first cupped your hands over your ears you heard your voice muffled and inside yourself. This is because you were listening with your inner ears. On the tape you'll hear that there is no projection at all from the recorded voice. In fact, the muscles of your body are not working very much and it sounds dull and uninteresting. Now listen to yourself with your hands cupped behind your ears.

You'll hear a little more energy and the voice will seem to be more forward. At this point you're using the inner and outer ear to listen — and you're using more of the body muscles to hear. Now listen to the last test — it should sound a lot clearer, with more energy and definitely more projection.

What happened? You didn't feel that you'd expended that much more energy. In fact, your body

involuntarily gave more energy because you were being forced to listen with the outer ear.

Have you noticed that when people who aren't used to being recorded find the pitch and tone of their own voices foreign when they hear a tape of themselves? That's because most people only listen to their own voices with the inner ear or a combination of the inner and outer ear. Almost no one listens with only the outer ear if they haven't been taught to do so. A singer should *always* listen with the outer ear.

So, for example, when you're singing in the recording studio you should never cover both your ears with the headphones. If you do, you'll never be satisfied with your performance. Also, it's very hard to listen back immediately to what you've just recorded. I suggest that it's better to put it aside for a while and do something else — then listen back. You'll be surprised how much better you'll be able to hear what you've done.

Remember, just as a painter sees a stroke before he paints it, a singer should hear what they're doing before it's done. This is what makes him or her an artist.



Rosemary Burns is a professional vocal instructor.



# The Hardware and Software of HARD DISK RECORDING

by Chris Chahley

**L**ast issue I discussed some of the principles involved in direct-to-disk recording systems. In this issue, we'll look at some of the software and hardware that allows you to use this technology with the Apple Macintosh.

One of the main players in the area of Mac-based hard disk recording systems is Digidesign, an American manufacturer. The firm's "Sound Accelerator" and "Audiomedia" cards are two of the most powerful digital audio products currently available for the Mac. Both cards plug into a NuBus slot (or processor direct slot on the SE/30) and work with the SE/30, Macintosh II, IIx, IIcx, IIfx and IIfx.

Sound Accelerator performs the digital analogue (D-A) functions for the "Sound Tools" system. It requires an external box (AD IN) for the analogue to digital conversion necessary for recording audio to disk. An optional unit called the DAT I/O provides a direct digital in/out to the Mac. Positioned as a more "professional" product than Audiomedia, Sound Tools features digital I/O options and a 90+ db signal-to-noise ratio. This is slightly better than the 85db delivered by the Audiomedia card. The Sound Tools system may also be synchronized to external timecode — a feature conspicuously absent from the AudioMedia package. The Sound Tools core system includes the Sound Accelerator and Sound Designer II. We priced the core system in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver and arrived at an average Canadian selling price of \$2,050. You can count on roughly another \$1,000 for the AD IN or DAT I/O units.

Despite a relatively modest \$1,050 street price, the Audiomedia card is in some ways more powerful than the Sound Accelerator. One of the big pluses of Audiomedia is that the card can monitor four tracks of audio playback at one time. It also features real-time equalization and digital effects that are not available with the Sound Accelerator and does not require the AD IN box. If you can live without digital I/O and are getting into this technology on a budget, Audiomedia is

definitely worth a test run.

As with all computer products, hardware requires software to access its processing capabilities. There is a plethora of amazing software that works with either the Sound Accelerator and/or Audiomedia card. Sound Designer II (part of the Sound Tools core system) is a sophisticated editing program that provides the user with a wide range of



*Chris Chahley is involved in the distribution and development of music software and retail sales of various computer products. He is president of Musicware Distributors.*

PHOTO: CATHY BIDINI

digital signal processing functions (not real-time), a full-featured "playlist", and easy-to-use cut, copy and paste editing of lengthy digital sound files. Other software programs that are available to Sound Tools users include Master List (CD mastering utility), DATa (DAT backup of digital audio files), Q/Sheet, A/V (an event-based SMPTE cue list), and Live List (triggers a soundfile playlist for live performance).

The Audiomedia card is actually part of a package that includes a software application of the same name. It is quite similar to Sound Designer II with various digital signal processing (DSP) functions and a playlist. Unlike Sound Designer II, the Audiomedia software can't be synchronized to external timecode. However, by using the Audiomedia card with a program such as

Studio Vision or Digital Performer (when it is released), you can synchronize digital audio tracks with MIDI data and external timecode.

Another program from Digidesign called "Deck" turns your Mac into a 4-track digital recorder with automated mixing and real-time EQ. Deck is one of those easy-to-use applications that delivers amazing results. You can even set up an automated mix (controlling pan, volume and EQ) to bounce all four tracks to one track — keeping the original data intact. A great feature for mixing sound effects or background vocals.

Digidesign has recently announced a four-track expandable to 16-track "Pro Tools" system. Jeff Sazant at Steve's Music (Toronto) feels, "Pro Tools should be seen as an enhancement, not a replacement to the two-track Sound Tools system. To their credit, Digidesign has introduced a factory-sponsored upgrade program, whereby Pro Tools will be initially available only to registered Sound Tools owners."

And then there is OpCode's revolutionary Studio Vision — a program that enables a musician to simultaneously record, edit and playback digital/audio and MIDI files. And for Audiomedia owners who want to synchronize audio tracks to external timecode, Studio Vision is a tried and tested solution. Hats off to the guys that did it first — OpCode has really broken new ground with Studio Vision.

The well designed user interface of Alchemy (Passport) has made it the sample editor of choice for many Mac musicians. It features powerful editing capabilities, including pitch shifting, time compression/expansion and digital resynthesis. Alchemy supports direct sample playback on either the Sound Accelerator or Audiomedia cards. At present, the size of the audio file that Alchemy can play or edit is limited by the internal RAM available on the Mac. Passport plans to introduce disk-based editing in a future update.

Another Passport digital audio product (which has just been released) will excite the imagination of music educators, multi-

# HARD DISK RECORDING

*Continued*

media developers or just about any MIDI music lover who owns an SE/30 or Mac II. AudioTrax will record MIDI data along with 8-bit audio using a Farallon Mac Recorder or the built-in microphone on the ILC or IIsi. At \$399, AudioTrax should open the possibilities of hard disk recording up to hundreds of new users.

When deciding on which Macintosh to put at the heart of your new digital recording system, or which A-D/D-A (analogue-digital, digital-analogue) card to use in your existing system, it's important to carefully assess the hardware requirements of the software you are considering. The Macintosh family of computers includes everything from the original 128K Mac, right up to the top-of-the-line Macintosh IIx. However, only a few of the 14 computers that carry the Mac name are suitable for hard disk recording applications.

The basic Mac II provides enough processing horsepower for many aspects of hard disk recording. In fact, all of the DSP functions are handled by the CPU on the Audiomedia or Sound Tools card. But if you

intend to use the machine to playback MIDI files or address other internal cards at the same time as it records audio to disk, you should consider a IIci, IIx or accelerated Mac II.

One problem that I experienced was caused by using MIDI Manager when playing back MIDI and audio from disk, with the computer locked to external timecode. You simply need a very fast Macintosh or the timing of the audio tracks may wander. The addition of a 50 MHz accelerator to my Mac II seemed to take care of this problem. Users are generally unaware of these potential snags until they have spent several hundred or even thousands of dollars on a new piece of hardware or software — only to find out that the addition of that item to their system has somehow created total havoc with it. Apple's release of MIDI Manager 2.0.1 seems to have solved most of the timing issues, but you will still need one of the faster Macs.

Another crucial aspect to consider when choosing your hardware is the hard drive that records the audio data to disk. Record-

ing and playing back digital audio files is no picnic for even the best drives. A Canadian company named Dynatek is seriously committed to providing hard drives and storage solutions for the music industry. They have several models of high-performance, rack mounted drives (typically two and three rack units) designed with the needs of the digital musician and recording studio in mind.

The bottom line is that the results of hard disk recording systems sound great and this technology enables a small studio to take on some pretty sophisticated projects that otherwise might end up in a major post audio facility. If you are seriously considering a Macintosh-based hard disk recording system, your timing may be just right. The major bugs have been worked out, the pro audio stores that sell these products generally have adequate experience in recommending functional hardware/software configurations, and there are plenty of exciting new products just around the corner.

Next issue we'll have a look at Turtle Beach's 56K hard disk recording system for the IBM PC.

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# HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR LYRIC WRITING

**W**ebster's Dictionary defines a song as "a musical composition to be rendered vocally". Sounds pretty simple, doesn't it? When I was asked to write an article on songwriting I thought the same thing.

"This'll be easy," I thought. "I could write a million articles on songwriting!" Well, that turned out to be my problem — where to start? After much thought, I decided to start with lyrics. For me, lyrics are very important to beginning a new song — sort of the foundation for the monument to be erected in your name. I hope this article will give you a few tips that will help you with your lyric writing.

First off, let's understand that songwriting (lyrically or musically) is a craft as well as an art. It doesn't just come naturally. Sure, you may have a knack for it, but you can greatly improve with months and years of practice. When I listen to some of the first songs I ever wrote, I can't believe how bad some of them are (incidentally, listening to your old stuff is a great cure for discouragement; you can't help but notice the improvement). So don't get down on yourself if your lyrics aren't earth shattering when you read them back — they'll get better!

Let's start with subject matter. The hardest part to writing lyrics for me is coming up with an idea. I'd say the field is pretty wide open, except for a few do's and don'ts. Try to write about something that you think other people will relate to or have an interest in. Just because *you're* an avid philatelist doesn't mean that everyone else is dying to hear about your new stamps from Chile.

Write about things that you know about. Remember that someday during an interview you might be questioned about a particular song, and you'll want to be able to talk about it intelligently. There's nothing wrong with writing about love, but try to steer yourself away from the stereotypical "love" lyrics. Try to approach "love" from a different angle.

People are just naturally attracted to lyrics they understand, so try not to use too many big words just to impress. A thesaurus can be a great aid to lyric writing, but don't get carried away with it. Sometimes a great song title can inspire a complete lyric.

Often when I'm in a rut I'll try to think of a few really good song titles. Remember that song and book titles can't be copywritten, so feel free to browse the aisles of your nearest library with a pen and paper in hand to jot down some of the book titles that grab you (stay away from the "How To" section). From each title, try writing your chorus, then a few verses and maybe a bridge. You might

be amazed at the results. If it's not working, move on to another one. Don't ever be afraid to forget about an idea if it doesn't thrill you, no matter how far along you are — there's lots more where that came from.

Any songwriter who tells you that they keep everything they write is lying. I know some famous songwriters who write pages and pages of lyrics for just one song. If you're like me, and want to see your song published, recorded, and heard on the radio, stay away from current events. By the time you've written "The Tragedy of Flight 666", seen it demoed, published, recorded and released, it's probably going to be very old news. (Remember that these are just guidelines, and that there's an exception to every rule.)

Now let's touch a bit on form. Every song has a different form depending on its style and mood, so there are no rules. Examples of common pop music form:

Verse	Verse
Chorus	Pre-chorus
Verse	Chorus
Chorus	Verse
Bridge	Pre-chorus
Chorus out	Chorus out

These are but two examples of the countless forms out there, and there are literally endless variations of every form as well. Analyze some of your favourite artists' song forms. Most CDs and cassettes include a copy of the lyrics. Make notes of the different forms using the A-B-C method (A being the verse, B the chorus, C the bridge) or whatever method you choose. See how the different forms work and what makes them appealing to the ear. I love to sit and read lyrics while I listen to a song on my stereo. Not only is it enjoyable, but it's a great songwriter's exercise. Whether consciously or sub-consciously, you're learning



*Jim Witter has been writing songs for BMG Music Publishing as well as writing and singing jingles. He won the CFNY Great Ontario Talent Search in 1987 and has opened for acts such as Rox Orbison and The Nylons.*

while you read and listen.

So what do you include lyrically in your chorus, verse or bridge? Obviously that's up to you, but a publisher once told me that the chorus of a song should tell the whole story — it should sum up what the entire song is about. Mind you, there are a lot of songs out there with one word or few words in the chorus, but basically the chorus should tell it all.

The verse can then elaborate in detail what it is you're trying to say, explaining who, what, when, where and why. It can tell the story in pieces, depending on how many verses you're planning to write.

Since the bridge is usually different musically, why not lyrically different as well? Maybe you can introduce some new information, maybe a little twist to the story. Again, analyze some of your favourite songwriters' lyrics and see what they do. Every song is different, so the more you read, the more you learn.

Sometimes I'll write my chorus first, which will tell what I ultimately want to say. Then I'll write my first verse which introduces the story, the characters and a bit about the situation. Then the bridge can bring a new element to the song. These are all just suggestions, so experiment and see what works best for you.

Never throw away any of your lyrics. Even if they seem terrible at the moment, they might inspire fresh ideas in the future. I keep a large, spiral bound notebook in my studio, and every time I write in it I mark the date at the top of the new section I'm beginning to work in. When the book fills up, I get a new one — but I never throw out the old one. I often glance through old lyrics when I'm stuck, and sometimes I'll find just the right word, line or even verse from a song I'd otherwise trash. This can save you hours of beating your head against the rhyming dictionary (which, by the way, you can pick up in the reference section of most book stores).

Why not keep a small notebook in your car, at work, or wherever? Use it to jot down song ideas away from home, which you can then transfer to your master book. By the way, make sure you put your name and phone number inside your workbooks. They may look pretty scribbly to others, but to you they should be considered priceless. I get a lot of song ideas in the car (usually melody and words) on longer trips, so I invested in a micro-cassette recorder. I use it all the time — best \$80 I ever spent, and it beats trying to write and drive at the same time.

I hope this article has helped you in some way to become a better lyric writer. Now, go and write something great! Now!

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## LIVE SOUND

# BACK TO THE BASICS

by Rick Boffo



*Rick Boffo is the house engineer at the Horseshoe Tavern in Toronto. He also freelances and owns and operates a rental PA company.*

**T**welve years ago when I began my career as a live sound engineer, there weren't as many sources of information available to me as there are today. I basically had only one — CM's "Live Sound" column. I'm pleased now to have the opportunity to contribute something to the column myself.

Starting off with some brief tips: First and foremost, a person has to have the ability to work and communicate professionally with others. If you can't control your temper or communicate with the people around you, you're in for a rough ride — whether you're a novice or pro.

Moving on, you must develop the ability to "Think Logically". This topic was referred to in the previous issue, and the comments made there by Ian Murray led me to write this next segment on what I feel is a basic *must*. (You see, I still read the "Live Sound" column, and I'm still learning.)

A logical thinking approach must be used in every aspect of live sound: speaker placement or configuration, mixing position, microphone placement and selection, and equalization, to name a few.

For me, thinking logically is a simple matter of putting everything on hold and focusing on one specific problem at a time — I listen, observe and then make a decision. If the conclusion I reach doesn't work, I repeat the process.

Now, on the topic of equalization, it's no big revelation to say that the sound engineer aims to console-EQ a band as "flat" as possible. Many nightmares can be avoided this way, from howling feedback to the dreaded, yet common, "mush mix".

In trying to achieve a reasonably flat console EQ level, you should always be aware of the relation between your console EQ and main graphic EQ while mixing. For example, if you're over-correcting several input strips at a common frequency on the console, stop and have a look at your main graphic EQ. Can that frequency be corrected at the main graph? If so, try correcting it there, and slowly return the corresponding console EQs as close to flat as possible. This can only be done after listening, observing and coming to a logical conclusion.

The above tip applies primarily to a group of microphones that display a common

problem, and shouldn't be confused with a single instrument requiring bizarre equalization, like an acoustic guitar. You may have to tackle that situation at the source or console EQ. If the console EQ can't correct the problem, the main graphic EQ may be your last resort.

I've seen sound engineers mix with some pretty bizarre console EQ settings. Some sound great, others not at all. On occasion I have to contradict my "Flat As Possible" console EQ rule — but only out of necessity, like when I'm mixing a support act and don't have access to the headlining act's main graphic EQ. In this situation I rely solely on the mixing console EQ. This is another situation where thinking logically can help: if you're unhappy with the sound you're getting and can't change the main graphic EQ, you may well have to change your method and way of thinking completely. Don't be afraid to — be creative, call the shots and make it happen.

One final point on EQ and how I approach it logically:

I start with vocals, simply because they're human and natural. I EQ my room at the main graph around the vocals in the band. It helps to try and use the same type of microphone for all the main vocals. This method will at least get you started in the right direction. If your vocal sounds aren't natural or "human" from a relatively flat console EQ, the balance of the mix may suffer.

A good sounding band, with a good room and sound system, will be the most rewarding experience you can encounter as a sound engineer. Now these conditions don't happen all the time — this is "Live Sound", after all. And speaking of less-than-perfect conditions, another great asset to have as a sound engineer is a well-developed sense of humour — sometimes you'll really gonna need one.

Finally, remember that your job is to make the performance a sound success. Good luck.



# An Independent Approach to CD Manufacturing

by Aaron Zon

If you're a major record label, you know all you need to know about manufacturing compact discs, but independent recording artists need the facts too. If you are planning a project release, be it a single or a full-length album, you should understand how to go about getting your project onto a CD format. There are many options to choose from and I will try to outline a number of them here.

There is the increasingly popular spot on a compilation CD. For about \$750-\$1,000 you can have your song included on a compilation CD that will go to radio stations across Canada and in some cases, internationally. This is a good option because it's relatively inexpensive and it could get you some airplay. It is also a good way to prolong the life of your album because you are promoting one song at a time. If 100 radio stations have your full album it is difficult to get everyone playing the same song at the same time, especially if you're not being actively promoted.

You should be wary of whose compilation you buy into. Make sure that the CD will get to radio and get some push. Try to avoid compilations that pack you in with 18 other artists; you don't want to get lost in the crowd with your potential hit single. Also, most companies that send their compilations to radio will track your song for you and let you know when and where it is being played. This is great, but to make sure that you get airplay, you should find someone who will actively promote the song to radio and not simply fill out a tracking sheet. Promotion will add to the cost of your project, but getting heard is the goal. Search for a deal that will fit into your budget.

If you want to stand apart from the crowd (and if you have the finances), CD singles are effective for radio promotion. However, the cost of manufacturing a CD single is no different than the cost of manufacturing a full-length CD. If your release has sales potential, a full-length CD might make sense because

you can recover your manufacturing costs through record sales. It may be wise to search for a company that will manufacture CDs in small quantities for promo purposes (most places have a minimum order of 1,000). It will cost you more per disc to press 500 CDs but the total cost will be lower.

CD albums are becoming increasingly popular as vinyl market share drops to near zero and radio stations play almost exclusively compact disc. There are two CD plants in Canada, but shop around and get a price breakdown so you know what you're paying for. You can go directly to a CD manufacturer or to a sales agent that works on behalf of a manufacturer. It is often advantageous to deal with a sales agent who can offer a higher level of customer service and sometimes a better price. Sales agents get reduced rates from the manufacturers because of their high volume, so the price you pay is usually the same or lower than if you went directly to the manufacturer. Also, most sales agents will look after all your printing and packaging needs for you. For the independent artist or record company, it's nice to get treated as a valued customer no matter where you go, even though your orders are not very large quantities.

It is very important that the artwork, film and master tape that you supply be as error-free as possible. Manufacturers will replicate exactly what you provide them with so your finished product is only going to be as good as your input. As you finish up in the recording studio there are a few things that you should inquire about. The master DAT that you bring to the CD manufacturer should have all songs properly levelled and EQ'd. Songs should be evenly spaced, and the space should be clear of unwanted noise. All this is done with a Dyaxis machine (or other digital editing unit) that can be found in some studios and rented by others.

Once you bring a 44.1 or 48 KHz DAT to the CD manufacturer, it is transferred digitally into the PCM-1630 system and recorded on a U-matic tape. At this point the P and Q subcoding is generated — this is what causes your disc player to track the songs and the times. All this may seem very technical, but the bottom line is that CD preparation has to be done at the CD plant or a mastering facility. Again, shop around for price and quality. CD manufacturers will also accept a PQ-coded 1630 tape as a master. From this, a glass master is cut and CDs are pressed, printed on, and packaged using your supplied graphics.

If you are an independent musician/record company and you want to manufacture CDs, it's important to find a company that will work with you and do more than just ship the product and accept your payment. If you can't properly promote your product, find someone who can. *The Music Directory Canada* (available from CM Books) has been a very useful source of information for me — you might want to get your hands on this or a similar music industry directory to use as a starting point. Ask a lot of questions.

Finally, when you manufacture CDs or cassettes, be realistic about the quantities you order. You don't want your first project to be your last just because you ran out of money. Good luck!



Aaron Zon is employed by Music Manufacturing Services in Toronto, which specializes in providing the independent music market with custom CD and cassette duplication. He is also the lead vocalist and guitarist for Toronto recording act, *Jealous of Youth*.

# PROMOTING YOURSELF TO

# RADIO

## PART TWO: KNOW THY STATION

**T**he largest AM stations in the country generally cater to either the under 20- or over 40-year-olds. A station like CFTR in Toronto, which has had up to a million listeners at a time in the past, caters to a very young audience that, while smaller, is much more active at the retail level. The station seems to have little problem playing what the baby boomers see as the alternative to what they're used to: rap music mixed in with a high concentration of dance styles and romantic ballads, with the occasional infusion of solid rock.

The other side of the AM picture is perhaps best represented by those stations that have been market leaders for 20 years or more. These stations specialize in blending classic hit songs with plenty of news and information, which seems to be the mix that works with the over-40 crowd. The best example of that might be another Toronto station — CFRB. Though it may modernize in the years to come, CFRB will likely never be considered an important outlet for breaking an exciting new artist.

These days it seems FM's where it's at, and virtually all the old rock stations are a lot tamer now than they used to be. The legendary CHUM-FM is still legendary, but the legend has less to do with modern reality than it does with the way the station markets itself.

"Toronto's Rock", a catchphrase used by the station for years in its promotions, has more to do with a perception of lifestyle than the kind of music that gets aired, and the phrase has been used by stations in other markets with equal success, including the outlet I work for, FM96, "London's Rock".

However, CHUM-FM and FM96 are not that similar despite many of the same records that find their way on the air at both stations. Most stations report their playlists on a weekly basis to *The Record*, a music trade paper that keeps record companies and broadcasters aware of what's going on outside their immediate area.

CHUM-FM reports as an Adult Contemporary (A/C) station, and is easily the most

*In the second part of this series, Greg Simpson notes the format differences between a sampling of radio stations from across the country.*

important of the reporters based on audience size. Few broadcasters can look at the numbers the station generates and not concede that they're doing something right, savvy marketing aside. After all, the best marketing in the world will only attract attention to a station until the listener's curiosity is satisfied. If the station is what listeners are looking for, they'll stay with you. If it's not, expect them to kiss you goodbye rather quickly. The hottest acts in A/C include Whitney Houston, Michael Bolton and Rod Stewart.

Stewart is also, by the way, still one of the hottest acts among *The Record's* Contemporary Album Radio (CAR) reporters. CAR refers to stations that are more rock-oriented,

including Toronto's Q107, HTZ-FM in St. Catharines, and FM96. It would be hard to find three more different stations in one category, yet each are, within reason, still similar to each other.

HTZ-FM, the new kid on the block, burst on the scene with a definite desire to snatch listeners from the "Q" — even to the point of advertising itself as the place where rock went when Q107 allegedly softened a few years ago. Those who at that time agreed that Q107 had softened too much are probably devastated at the direction HTZ-FM has taken — soft acts such as Joni Mitchell, previously ignored by the station, are now an accepted part of the sound.

The third in this triumvirate, the London operation which I call home for about 12 hours a day, is the most adult-oriented of the three. (In fact, it is only marginally harder in approach than such stations as CJAY in Calgary and CFMI in New Westminster, which report to the A/C listings.) All three of these CAR reporters are proud of their record of using their ears and common sense when selecting the new records that are added each week.

The selection process is as long and involved as the station's music director wants it to be. Some stations have music departments. Most others are one-person operations, and some also require the music director to pull down a full-time airshift in addition to his research duties. Paul Morris at HTZ-FM, who has been named "Music Director of the Year" for CAR radio for three years running, is basically a one-man department with only occasional airshift requirements, as is the situation with myself. This luxury — allowing us to listen to music as fans as well as in a broadcaster's role — affords us the opportunity to sometimes discover a record before it becomes a record company priority.

However, it is still the record company's priority tracks that most often find their way onto our playlists. And in the next issue, we'll take a look at the dynamics that occur between a radio station's music director and a record company promotion specialist.



*Greg Simpson began his radio career at CHOI London in 1968. He has since been involved in record promotion, many years in record retail, and projects including music journalism, record production, nightclub promotion and teaching. He has been the music director at FM96 London for the past 10 years, and is also the London Bureau Chief of Spotlight Magazine.*



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*Geoff Kulawick*



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## Kawai/MidiSoft Music Notation System

Kawai and MidiSoft Corp. have announced the development of a system that combines an advanced MIDI keyboard with an IBM-compatible software package to allow the creation of sheet-music notation by simply playing the notes on the keyboard.

MidiSoft Studio for Windows 3.0 is the first full-function professional sequencer with musical notation capability to be developed for the IBM-PC, according to MidiSoft.

The system includes software, a Kawai FS690 keyboard and IBM-compatible MIDI interface card. It allows users to enter notes directly from the keyboard and edit them from the keyboard. Sections can be replayed using tape recorder-style function keys, which are visible on the screen and accessed via a mouse.

The system allows for the recording, editing and playback of up to 64 polyphonic, independently controlled tracks of music. It supports up to 16 MIDI channels track.

The MidiSoft sequencer automatically registers key and time signatures, and tempo and clef changes. It lets users "step record" (note by note) difficult passages, as well as

record performances in real time to retain performance authenticity.

Other features of the system include: Note Palette, which lets the user place notes anywhere on the staff; ability to customize windows; real-time performance controls on velocity, sustain and quantizing (computerized note-shuffling to keep music in key); and visual highlighting of each note played. The system also features advanced printing capabilities, such as the ability to cut and paste scores into desktop publishing.

The program's MIDI sequencer offers complete access to all 16 MIDI channels. In addition, a user-controlled, selectable multi-band graphic EQ lets the player either boost or cut the output of all notes.

The program will run on all IBM-compatible computers, 286-based or higher. Minimum requirements are 640K RAM (1 MB RAM recommended), a mouse and Windows 3.0.

For more information, contact: Kawai Canada Music Ltd., 6400 Shawson Dr., #1, Mississauga, ON L5T 1L8 (416) 670-2345, FAX (416) 670-3634.

## D'Addario Guitar Straps

J. D'Addario & Co. has announced a line of guitar straps.

These straps are made of durable polypropylene in a webbed construction and come in 8 colours. The straps are adjustable and feature the D'Addario "D" logo in gold on the leather connector.



For more information, contact: J. D'Addario & Co. (Canada) Ltd., 50 West Wilmot, #13, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1M5 (416) 889-0116, FAX (416) 889-8998.

## DW 10+6 Maple Shell Snare Drums

Drum Workshop has announced its 10+6 maple shell snare drums as well as a variety of new 13, 14 and 15" models of both wood and brass shell snares.

10+6 refers to the wood snare drum's 10-ply maple shell with 6-ply maple reinforcing hoops. The hoops reinforce the

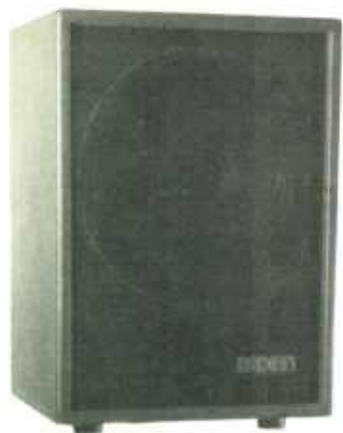
shape and strength of the shell and raise the pitch. Higher pitch is critical to getting a powerful, penetrating "crack" from a snare drum, according to DW. 10+6 snare drums also feature DW's exclusive timbre matched shell selection, guaranteed precision bearing edges and selection of FinishPly or hand-

rubbed lacquer finishes.

For more information, contact: Drum Workshop, 2697 Lavery Ct., #16, Newbury Park, CA 91320 (805) 499-6863, FAX (805) 499-7392.



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**PRODUCT NEWS**

# SoundTech Expands Line

SoundTech has added the PM15H powered monitor to its line.

This stage monitor is a 2-way system with a 100W power amp module. It features a 15" woofer and all-metal radial mounted horn, and has line I/O



jacks and an extension speaker jack to power 491-1900, FAX (416) 491-8377.

an additional 8 ohm speaker. The MC100 power amp includes a 5-band graphic EQ and level control.

For more information, contact: Boosey & Hawkes (Canada), 279 Yorkland Blvd., Willowdale, ON M2J 1S7 (416)

# Audio-Technica Headphones

Audio-Technica has introduced the 600 series headphones.

The ATH600 series headphones feature ear-pieces specially designed to improve performance and to provide natural sound. A large internal ear-piece cavity is combined with an oval cross-section shape that prevents standing waves and enables realistic reproduction of a wide frequency range, according to the firm.

The ATH609 headphones use an open-back design for linear low end response, and samarium

cobalt magnets.

The ATH610 features a closed-back design, which is useful for studio recording or other situations where sound isolation is desirable. A 44mm driver design enables a wide frequency response with low distortion. The ATH611 has the same features as the ATH610, except that it is a closed-back design.

For more information, contact: Audio-Technica U.S. Inc., 1221 Commerce

Dr., Stow, OH 44224 (216) 686-2600.





## Community Loudspeakers

Community has introduced the CSX-57 loudspeaker.

The unit is rated at 300W RMS and features: a heavy-duty mesh grille; steel corner protectors; black-carpeted exterior; a fuseless-design PowerSense circuit; and ferro-

fluid cooling of the low and midrange drivers to prevent power compression.

For more information, contact: White Radio Ltd., 940 Gateway Dr., Burlington, ON L7L 5K7 (416) 632-6894.



## DOD Super Stereo Chorus

DOD has introduced the FX68 Super Stereo chorus pedal.

The unit features a mono input and stereo outputs, and 4 controls for level, speed, delay time and depth.

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

## Ross Quad Noise Reduction System

Ross Systems has introduced the RX-NR4 quad noise reduction system.

The unit is geared for use in sound reinforcement, multitrack recording and instrument processing applications. It features 4 discrete noise reduction circuits, an expander function, reduction I/O circuits, and a sweepable low-pass filter. Controls feature threshold, ratio, decay and filter adjust, with bypass switches for each noise reduction circuit.

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

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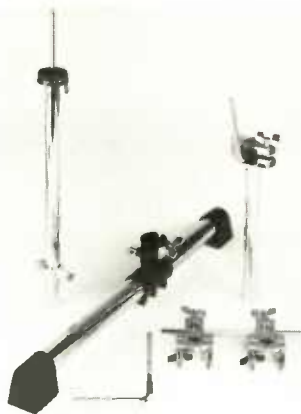
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# Gibraltar Hardware Accessories

Gibraltar has announced 5 additions to its Gibraltar Service Center hardware line, allowing percussionists to increase the versatility of their hardware and rack setups.

The SC-GPRTLA T-leg assembly adds stability and comes with 2 SC-RF rubber feet, 1 SC-GPRTLT-leg clamp, 1 SC-GPRML memory lock, and 1 SC-GPRET24 24" extension tube. The assembly attaches to a rack leg and turns it into a more stable T-leg.

The SC-HHSC hi-hat stabilizer clamp allows mounting of another stand or assembly to an existing hi-hat or cymbal stand. The SC-LR L-rod can be used for mounting toms, cowbells or an electronic pad and features both 3/8" and 1/2"



diameter arms.

The SC-TCA tom/cowbell arm is similar to old L-rod style mounts, but has a replaceable 360° ball joint, so the drummer can position the arm where he wants it. A hi-hat cymbal position can be extended with the SC-HHIX. This unit is complete with pull rod and 1" memory lock and can raise a hi-hat 2" above its maximum standard height adjustment. It fits most brands including Gibraltar, DW, Remo and Ludwig.

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

# Fostex X28 4-Track Cassette Recorder

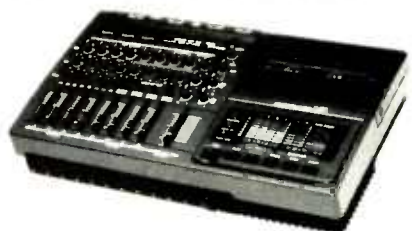
Fostex has introduced the X28 multitracker.

A step up from the entry level X26, the X28 has 8 inputs, simultaneous 4-track recording, soft touch transport controls, direct recording, a large LCD display, and Dolby B noise reduction.

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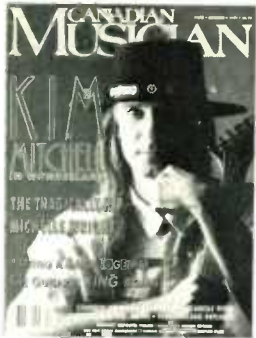


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Elan has introduced a new tube amplifier.

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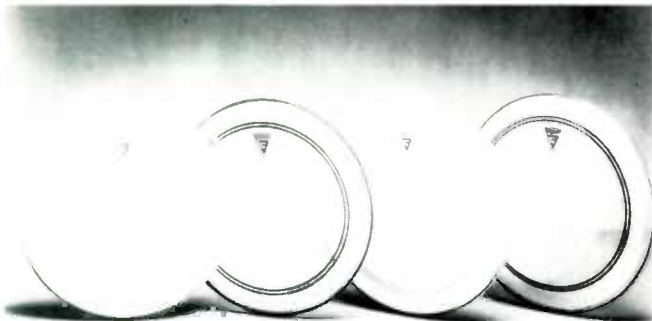


## Remo's PowerStroke 3 Drum Heads

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## Gibraltar Throne

Gibraltar has introduced the Gibraltar Extended Height Throne.

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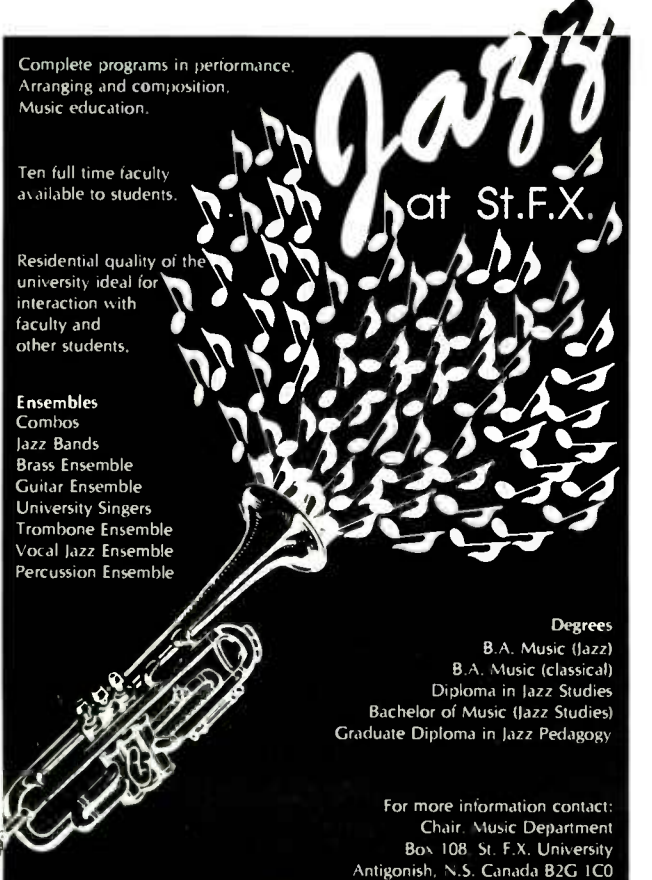
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Send your complete package to: Showcase, Canadian Musician, 3284 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4N 3M7.

## CHILD

This Montreal quartet is all grown up when it comes to writing power rock songs. Child's three-song demo is a follow-up to its six-song 1989 release.

The band is tight, and one can instantly recognize that these people have been playing together for a few years. Singer Suzi Mederos sounds seasoned, distinctive and confident belting out "attitude" lyrics seemingly always on the edge of her high range. Guitarist John Saladine plays it cool and confident, stepping out appropriately and generally lacing Child's sound with power chords.

The initial slow, heavy-rock groove of "Flower Child" later turns into a screamin' track, and "Shake Your Vice" (with a nod and a wink to AC/DC's "T.N.T.") tosses everything in but the kitchen sink. Good listening.



• **Child** •  
**Style:** Rock  
**Contact:** ALZ Promotions, 5770 Jean-Talon E., St. Leonard, PQ H1S 1M2 (514) 255-4555.

## FATAL VISION

These four guys from Toronto put out the kind of material that will easily fit into the hard rock radio format that seems to be so prevalent these days. The band's six-song demo is filled with hooky, well-written material that appears to have been taken to heart by the three producers who worked with them (one of whom is Stacey Heydon).

The first track, "Give Give Me Some Lovin'", rocks hard and features a fun, shout chorus. On its heels is a very strong ballad, "Let Love Lie the Way", complete with a 12-string intro that segues into — what else? — a power chord bombast.

Strong group vocals, a good sounding recording, and more-than-competent

playing should see this band through to a place where, as they put it, "the only thing that will change is the decimal place in the band account and the size of the venues".

• **Fatal Vision** •  
**Style:** Heavy Rock  
**Contact:** 24 Mahoney Ave., Toronto, ON M6M 2H4 (416) 242-3147



## WINSTON

Calgary rockers Winston are the third quartet to appear in *Showcase* this issue. Strange how that will happen, sometimes...

This is a solid rock 'n' roll band with a pop tinge — the band sounds good, as does the recording, and the songs are strong.

Lead guitarist Norm Lyons shows off a flowing style — very complementary to the songs' structures and arrangements. Bassist Robert Cannaday appears to be the predominant writer — I think he really scored with a track called "Sympathy".

There is no credit for the lead vocalist; the cassette indicates that everyone in the band sings. Hmmm.

Still, a good effort and enjoyable listening.

• **Winston** •  
**Style:** Rock  
**Contact:** Platinum Rainbow Inc., R.R. #1, Crossfield, AB T0M 0S0 (403) 546-2529





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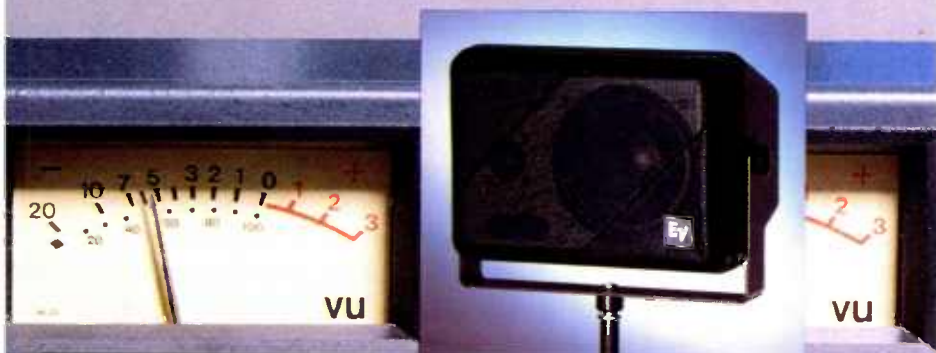
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