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OCTOBER 1993



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St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A3
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Canadian Musician is published bi-monthly by Norris Publications, a division of Norris-Whitney Communications, Inc., at 23 Hannover Dr., #7, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A3. All rights reserved. Contents may not be reprinted without written permission from the publisher. Subscription rates: Canada: 1 year \$16.00, 2 years \$28.00, 3 years \$38.00, 5 years \$56.00. Outside Canada: 1 year \$21.00, 2 years \$28.00, 3 years \$38.00, 5 years \$81.00. Single copies \$2.95. Canadian residents add 7% GST. To change your subscription address, please send your new address with your old address (including former postal code) to Subscription Dept., *Canadian Musician*, at least six weeks before moving. *Canadian Musician* advertising and circulation offices: 23 Hannover Dr., #7, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A3 (416) 641-3471, FAX (416) 641-1648. Compuserve ID #76270.3727. PAN ID # NORRISPU.B. *Canadian Musician* editorial offices: 67 Mowat Ave., #350, Toronto, ON M6K 3E3. Phone/FAX (416) 533-8303. Compuserve ID# 76570.1056 Back issues of *Canadian Musician* are available in Microform from Micromedia Limited, 20 Victoria St., Toronto, ON M5C 2N8. Please do not send unsolicited manuscripts, artwork, photos. Query only in writing. *Canadian Musician* takes no responsibility for return of any unsolicited material. Printed in Canada. Publications Mail Registration No. 4666. Postage paid at Toronto, ON.

ISSN 0708-9635

Indexed in the Canadian Periodical Index.

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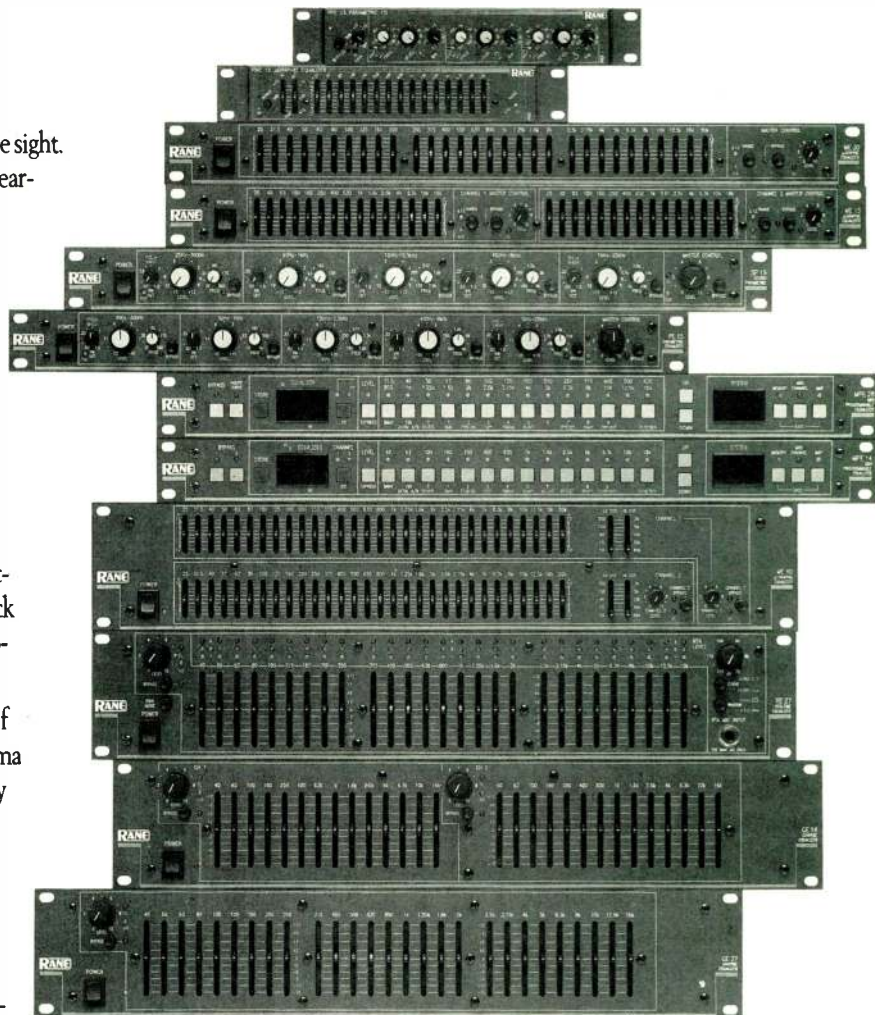
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FEEDBACK

GRAB SOME OF THE PAST

As an advocate of Canadian music, I enjoy reading your magazine and I'm grateful for all the support you give to Canada's pride and joy. Canadian musicians have to work ten times as hard as musicians south of the border because although Canada is very accepting of music from the States, our talent has to make an extra effort to break in the U.S.

I applaud Canada for all the talented and wonderful musicians we have today, but let's not forget the Canadian superstars who put Canada on the map such as Loverboy, Corey Hart, Bryan Adams and Platinum Blonde.

This brings me to the purpose of my letter. In October of 1985, you put out an issue which did a feature on Platinum Blonde and I missed it. I realize that a lot of time has passed, but if it is possible to order that back issue I would really like to have it as part of my collection.

Jazz S., Vancouver, BC

**Ed: Jazz has been mailed the back issue featuring Platinum Blonde. Remember that back issues of Canadian Musician are available by calling or writing to our head office at 23 Hamover Dr., #7, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A3 (416) 641-3471, FAX (416) 641-1648.*

THANKS, SHOWCASE!

We would like to thank you for your more than favourable review of Fourteen Eyz in your June issue.

Because of that article, our career has taken a step forward. Furthermore, it's a great addition to our press kit. Thanks!

*Michael Diabo, Fourteen Eyz,
Dartmouth, NS*

HOW ABOUT SOME NEIL CHAPMAN?

Hey, what's the deal? I searched Richard Chycki's article "Guitarmania" (CM, June '93) with a magnifying glass and nowhere did I see any mention of Neil Chapman. Did I miss something? After all, Chapman is not only one of Toronto's busiest session players and sidemen (having toured with such artists as Ian Thomas, Carole Pope, the Sattalites and George Oliver); not only a creative visionary (having co-founded the Pukka Orchestra and the NeoTones); not only the guitar demon of *Friday Night!* with *Ralph Benmurgui's* infamous band, the House; but he is also definitely the liveliest guitar personality I have ever seen.

So why is it that, in Chycki's article, I didn't see Chapman's name come up even once? Was there a page missing from my magazine perhaps? That must be it! Gee, ya never know what they're gonna censor next!

*Laurel Federbush,
Ann Arbor, Michigan*

**Ed: It's great to see that there are fans of talented Canadian musicians like Neil Chapman in the U.S. We give Chapman top marks too here at CM. Unfortunately, with the wealth of talent here in Canada, it's impossible to cover everyone; but sending us a letter letting us know what you, the reader wants is the best way to ensure that we take note! Thanks for your input and we'll certainly try to oblige —no censorship, we promise!!*

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HOW TO SHOWCASE TO YOUR BAND

Probably the most unnerving live situation for a band or solo artist is the Showcase. There's usually (and should be) a lot more at stake than merely filling a room.

A Showcase is a live performance that's geared particularly to individuals from the music business and media industries. Whether your objective is to celebrate the release of a new album, introduce your act to a new city or obtain press, a manager or a record deal, it's an act's chance to "knock 'em on their ass" or bore them to death — so if you're considering showcasing your band to these industries, the key is to do it right the *first* time. Words travel fast within this incestuous music business, and if you flop once, you'll rarely have a better chance to present yourself because no one will show up (the truth always hurts, doesn't it?).

Preparing Musically

Before you even consider nailing down a date for your showcase, be sure your band is tight, well-rehearsed and committed to making the best of this opportunity.

Forget playing all the original songs you know — choose only the absolute best material you perform for your showcase. The objective is not to entertain a venue from nine 'til one — your showcase should be only one set long. If you feel so-so about a particular number, leave it out — it's far better to have a shorter set and leave them wanting more.

It goes without saying that indulging in alcohol (or whatever) before, during or even after your set should be done in extreme moderation or not at all. People in the industry are rarely as amused as your fans at your band's reputation as party animals, and besides, you have serious business to attend to after the show (more on that later).

When and Where

Your choice of venue and time for your showcase is very important. Choose a location that is in close proximity to the majority of the industry in your city. The venue should also be slightly upscale (you don't

have to rent the Ritz, but don't take them to the Badass Saloon either). Make sure the venue has a great sound system and a capable soundman or hire your own.

The time of your showcase should make it convenient for people in the industry to attend. It may make sense to hold it on a night in the middle of the week, when there is less chance of conflicting events (be on top of when trade shows, awards ceremonies or major label acts are coming to town — if you can schedule your showcase right, you may take in some heavy-hitters you might not get the opportunity to play for again). Hold your showcase early in the evening for maximum turnout (dirty tip/trick: buffets look really good to industry people at the end of a long day), perhaps beginning at 6:30 p.m. with cocktails (you *are* having free cocktails, right?) and starting your set at 7:00. Do start on time — there may be other events the industry has to attend. Having people leave during your set is the worst thing that could happen.

Another popular option is to hold a later set (in addition) that same evening (say at 10:00 p.m.), and have it open to the general public as well as industry people who may not be able to make it to the early show (play your same tightly rehearsed set, and remain on your best behaviour). There's a chance that some interested parties may hang around for a double dose, and it's an opportunity to get some live coverage on the late news.

Who to Invite?

Basically, anyone you want to impress, anyone who can help you in any way or anyone who has helped you in the past, from the record company A&R departments to that nice receptionist who gave you the correct title for Mr. Big Shot.

You should include in your invites as many label people as you can think of (send extra invites for the guys in shipping), personal managers, booking agents, freelance writers and publicists, entertainment writers from local dailies and weeklies, television reporters and entertainment show personalities, radio DJs and music directors,

managers and salespeople from music stores or rental shops you deal with, producers and recording engineers, manager and staff of the venue you hold your showcase at, managers of venues you would *like* to play (no one ever thinks of this one), entertainment lawyers, your accountant and bank manager, anyone who worked on your demo tape or CD (don't forget the graphic artist and printer), representatives from industry associations (SOCAN, CMRRA, FACTOR, etc.), the owner of the company that's catering the event (we did mention you were spending money on this didn't we?) the guy that lent you the van when yours broke down and your mom!!!

Mail out invitations, fax invitations and follow-up by phone a few days before the event (hiring a publicist to do this is good idea if you can afford it).

It's Showtime!

Now that you've got a full room and a captive audience, get ready to play the most entertaining and energetic set you are capable of! Hire someone to work the door and get the name or business card of everyone who attends. Do spend some time before your set introducing yourself around and thanking your guests for coming out (going around with plates of canapes is a dandy way to break into those tight little circles of industry honchos — get as many business cards as you can). It's also a great idea to have a complimentary CD or cassette (or better yet, full press kit) for your guests as they arrive at the venue. Do your soundcheck before any guests arrive.

Once you've finished playing, don't retire to the dressing room for long. Get out there and continue your PR until the last person has left the room. If your hand isn't blistered the next morning, you know you didn't give it your best shot! Follow-up the next day with thank you cards to everyone who attended.

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Saturday, October 30, The Walker Theatre
- T** **oronto**
Monday, November 1, Minkler Auditorium, Seneca College
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Tuesday, November 2, Canadian Museum of Civilization
- L** **ondon**
Thursday, November 4, Talbot Hall, UWO
- M** **ontréal**
Tuesday, November 9, Spectrum De Montréal
- H** **alifax**
Friday, November 12, Queen Elizabeth Theatre

BREAKS

... *Canadian Musician* will be presenting two seminars this fall, one in Toronto and one in Ottawa. **Songwriting Seminar '93** will take place Sunday, November 27, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Harbour Castle Westin, Toronto. The full day conference will feature a morning-long demo critique session where songwriters can bring their demos and have a chance to be reviewed by a panel that will include A&R managers, music publishers and artists. The afternoon will break into two focus workshops, one on songwriting for the Country market and one focussing on Pop, Rock and Dance music. Topics will include demo recording, shopping your music and publishing. Registration is \$75.00 for the day and there will be a reception at the end of the day for networking opportunities.

... **Takin' Care of Business '93**, also a *Canadian Musician* presentation, will be held Sunday, December 5 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Westin Hotel in Ottawa. Panel discussions will feature some of the top music industry executives, including A&R reps, managers, agents, lawyers and artists who will discuss the ins and outs of the Canadian recording industry and the future of the business — which should be of vital interest to up-and-coming artists. Registration is

just \$65.00 for the day-long conference. For anyone interested in attending both seminars, there is a special package rate of \$120.00 (GST included in all prices), as well as room rates available at the hotels. For more information on both events, contact *Canadian Musician* at 1-800-265-8481.

... Folk and Blues artists on the West Coast will be interested in obtaining the *West Coast Folk-Blues Rag*, a guide to Folk and Blues music on the West Coast and around the Pacific Rim to Japan. The *Rag* will be distributed free at outlets in dozens of coastal cities in the U.S., Canada and Japan.

For more information, contact Medusa, c/o Folk-Blues Rag, PO Box 69775, Los Angeles, CA 90069 (310) 399-4550.

... **Roland Canada Tour '93 "The Creative Link"** hits ten cities across Canada between October 24 and November 10, 1993. These events will showcase top Canadian musical talent as well as new Roland products, multimedia presentations and special guest artists. The tour will appeal to both the professional and amateur musician as well as students and hobbyists. Proceeds from the events will be donated to local charities. The tour is co-sponsored by *Canadian Musician* magazine.

Cities to be included in the tour are Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, London, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax. Tickets for the tour will be

available through Roland Canada offices and authorized Roland Music retailers. For more information, contact Roland Canada at (604) 270-6626 or (416) 890-6488.

... SOCAN is presenting **Songwriting: Something to Talk About**, a free songwriting workshop on Monday, September 27 at 8:00 p.m. at the Bathurst Street Theatre (736 Bathurst St.) in Toronto, ON. Confirmed panelists for the workshop include Devon, Bob Wiseman and Dave Betts, who will host the panel.

For more information, contact SOCAN at (416) 445-8700, FAX (416) 445-7108.

... In honour of the centenary of the birth of Sir Ernest MacMillan, SOCAN is reviving the popular **MacMillan Lectures**. The lecture series was created in 1963 by CAPAC in homage to composer, conductor, educator and administrator Sir Ernest MacMillan.

The first SOCAN/MacMillan Lecture will feature Stephen Sondheim, and takes place Thursday, October 21 at 8:00 p.m. at the MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building, University of Toronto. Tickets are \$5.00, \$2.00 for full-time students and may be obtained by calling (416) 978-3744 or through SOCAN (416) 445-8700.

... The deadline for the **du Maurier Arts Ltd. Canadian Composers' Competition** is September 24, 1993. This national com-

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BREAKS

petition is open to composers who are either Canadian citizens or Canadian landed immigrants and there is no age restriction. Finalists will compete for \$13,000 in prizes.

Works submitted should be between eight to 15 minutes in duration, and scored for an ensemble consisting of 15

to 67 players. Each composer may submit only one work. For full information on contest rules, contact Debra Chandler, Director of Music Administration, Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, at (204) 949-3950, FAX (204) 956-4271.

... Korg users will be interested in joining **KUCH (Keyboard Users Centre of Holland) Canada**. This user group is dedicated to Korg users from Europe and North America and offer a 24-hour BBS (8-N-1,

two lines up to 9600 bps; file download privileges for members from an extensive PD/Shareware library of patches, samples, editor/librarians, bank loaders and MIDI song files; and E-mail messaging) as well as a quarterly magazine and semi-annual newsletter.

For more information, contact Peter Follert at KUCH Canada, 438 Watfield Ave., Nanaimo, BC V9R 3P7 (604) 753-0444, FIDOnet: Peter Follert @ 1:351/230.

EVENT SCHEDULE

Country Music Week
Hamilton, ON
September 16-19, 1993
(416) 739-5014

Canadian Country Music Awards
Hamilton, ON
September 19, 1993
(416) 739-5014

Leonard Cohen Conference
Red Deer, AB
October 22-24
(403) 342-3320

CMJ 1993 Music Marathon
New York, NY
November 3-6, 1993
(516) 466-6000

Songwriting Seminar '93
Toronto, ON
November 28, 1993
(416) 641-3471

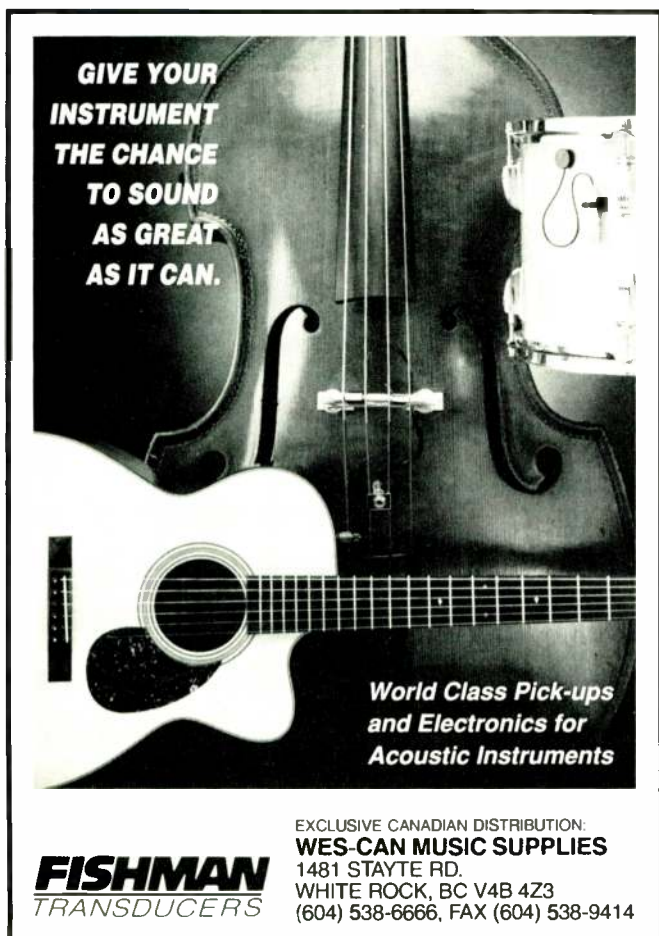
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December 5, 1993
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March 17-20, 1994
(416) 695-2553

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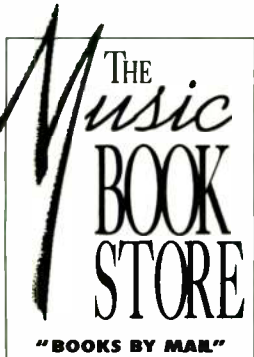
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élite EX350M Loudspeaker

by Al Craig

ABOUT 16 YEARS AGO I PURCHASED MY VERY FIRST SOUND SYSTEM. IT WAS COMPRISED OF A TRAYNOR YVM4 MIXER AND A PAIR OF TRAYNOR 412 COLUMNS. LIGHT DUTY BY TODAY'S STANDARDS, BUT HIGH TECH FOR BACK THEN.

Well, it's 16 years later and a few things have changed. The name Traynor has fallen by the wayside and the name élite has prevailed. Industry demands have increased and thus, so has manufacturing. Yorkville Sound, the company responsible for that fine line of Traynor products (of which I still own a few), has become Canada's largest manufacturer of professional audio equipment. From the ever popular EX2000 full range enclosures to the reliable workhorse, the AP3000 power amp, Yorkville Sound has been dominating the market with new product after new product. The latest of these new products is the EX350M. A low profile, high efficiency monitor capable of unsurpassable output before feedback with minimal equalization.

Every engineer loathes the idea of pleasing singers of musical groups with high stage volumes. It's a constant struggle to keep the vocal monitors on top with any level of clarity without the problem of feedback — until now!

Yorkville Sound has done it again. The EX350M is one of the best monitors I've ever had the opportunity of using. The secrets behind these beauties are: (1) the Absolute Boundary Horn. This new technology provides a multi-dispersion, multi-angle horn capable of supplying an equal amount of frequency response regardless of one's positioning in front of the monitor; and (2) The dual trapezoidal shape. This allows a tight close placement of two monitors with a minimal amount of comb filtering, characteristic of most conventional wedge type monitors.

With high output from a regular vocal microphone, the EX350M required very minimal equalization to produce a very pleasing vocal reproduction capable of overcoming an extremely loud stage volume. In the sound reinforcement rental business, a happy group of singers capable of hearing themselves on stage means the difference between repeat business or none at all. Hav-

ing the greatest mix out front won't mean a thing unless the band is happy on stage. After testing these out with some of the fuzzi-



est of vocalists in the circuit, the results were unanimously positive. Not an unhappy one in the bunch! The vocals were crisp and clear and in one instance we were asked to turn them down. Now when is the last time you've heard that? Guitar and bass reproduction were equally satisfying. As a drum fill monitor, we found that the enclosure was less than adequate in the bottom end (50-60 Hz region). This is characteristic of this design and is reflected in the frequency response specifications. By doubling them up, we were able to increase the low end response, but on smaller stages where space is

Manufacturer's Response

We would like to thank Mr. Craig for his positive review of the EX350M.

As stated, the EX350M works well with vocals, guitar, bass and keyboards. As drummers are usually stationary and require "more bass", we do suggest use of the EX401M single 15" monitor in professional high SPL applications.

*Ron Tizzard, Sales Manager,
Yorkville Sound*

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a problem, this would not be feasible. When used as a keyboard monitor, the results were excellent. The EX350M provided an incredible amount of output with excellent distinction and separation before finally protecting itself via the external circuit breaker. For DJ applications or sound reinforcement use, the EX350M is fitted with a pole mount fixture for use with or without a subwoofer. I would highly recommend these enclosures for any pre-recorded music application for either the travelling disc jockey or a permanent club installation. Without getting into a lot of technical jibber-jabber, I can honestly say that with a suggested list price of \$1,700 a pair, one can expect to get way more than their money's worth of high quality sound reinforcement from the EX350M loudspeaker.

For more information, contact: Yorkville Sound, 550 Granite Ct., Pickering, ON L1W 3Y8 (416) 837-8481, FAX (416) 837-8746.

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

Opcode Galaxy Plus Editors

by Benjamin Russell

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1985, OPCODE SYSTEMS HAS BEEN A MAJOR PLAYER IN COMPUTER MUSIC AND HAS EVOLVED AN IMPRESSIVE RANGE OF HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE PRODUCTS FOR THAT MARKET. NEXT TO A SEQUENCER, ONE OF THE MOST MUSICALLY USEFUL COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IS A UNIVERSAL EDITOR/LIBRARIAN TO HELP YOU KEEP TRACK OF ALL THOSE GREAT SOUNDS YOU BUY, CREATE AND USE. GALAXY PLUS EDITORS, FOR THE MACINTOSH, IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL OF THESE PACKAGES AVAILABLE TODAY. LET'S CHECK IT OUT . . .

In the old days, if you wanted an editor/librarian for your synth, you had to buy a package especially for that machine. If you had another module, you had to buy another package, and so on. This could get expensive! Thankfully, those days are over. For not much more than a single package in the old days, Galaxy Plus Editors will act as a librarian for over 100 different synths, drum machines, signal processors, etc. from every major manufacturer. Many, but not all of these are supported by software modules to graphically edit patches, combinations, etc. (the program is also available in a version without the editor modules for less money if you feel you can live without that facility).

A major feature of Galaxy is that while it's a stand-alone program, it shines in its ability to interface directly with Opcode's sequencer packages. Dump all the patch information from your synths over to Galaxy on your computer, then save this information in a "bundle" (more about bundles in a minute) and if you're using Vision, for example, tell it to "subscribe" to that bundle. From that point on, if you want to find a particular sound or just want to browse what's avail-

able, merely click on the screen and a menu pops up allowing sounds to be selected by

(you can use it with or without Apple's MIDI Manager). OMS is a cool system extension that acts as Grand Central Station for your MIDI setup. Once you've defined which ports are which, where your MIDI gear is connected and whether you're using a patch bay, it's on to installing Galaxy itself. This is simply done by means of an installer program requiring the insertion of each of eight disks, one after the other, loading the editor modules you specify.

Bundles are one of Galaxy's fundamental concepts, as we've already seen. These, as their name implies, gather together various "banks" of patches and are used to globally organize and save information for a particular setup or project. For example, if you have a couple of sound modules and a drum machine, you could create a bundle including banks of patches (sound information) as well as banks of global information about your synth's setups (combinations, master settings, etc.). One bundle could be your default setup, another could be the particular changes you made for a project or a song, and so on.

Used to its fullest potential, Galaxy with a MIDI patchbay and well planned bundles could save every single variable of your MIDI gear for each project automatically. It was terrific to watch Galaxy in action when I had finished a song. I chose "Get All Banks In Bundle" from the Bundle Menu and the

name. Later, if the sounds in the bundle are changed, they are automatically updated in the sequencer.

Setup proved relatively painless. The first step is to install OMS (Opcode MIDI System) which comes bundled with Galaxy

program whipped through my entire MIDI setup, changing patches on my patchbay, requesting dumps from my modules and then combining the lot into a bundle, which I then saved and archived along with the sequence files in case I needed to come back for a

remix in a couple of months. At that time, all I'd have to do is "Send All Banks In Bundle" and watch the process in reverse.

(Note: As of the time of writing, there are no specific editor or librarian modules for my Allen & Heath GS3 mixer with MIDI mutes or for my Alesis SR-16 drum machine, yet these were seamlessly integrated into the bundle by means of bulk sysex dumps. The only difference is that I had to watch the computer screen until it requested the dump and then hit a button on the mixer and the drum machine to send the sysex info. For those whose MIDI expertise can handle it, Galaxy allows you to program your own custom modules for synths too new or too far off the beaten track to have been included with the program.)

As a librarian, Galaxy is comprehensive, to say the least. Besides the usual ability to copy, cut and paste patches and names from bank to bank and library to library, Galaxy has extensive features to flag duplicate names, find patches with identical settings but different names and attach keywords and comments to specific sounds (making for quick and easy searches). For painless experimenting, there's the Factory Menu with choices to randomly generate new patches based on ones you already have. Test the results, trash the ones you don't like and keep the ones you do.

Opcode's years of experience designing editor programs shows in the editor modules. These are easy to use with logically laid out graphic screens showing all parameters clearly, making you wonder how you ever managed when you had to monkey around on your synth with its too few buttons and too many pages of parameters on its tiny display.

Trying out changes can be done in several different ways. There's an on-screen "keyboard" on which you can click with the mouse, you can play your computer's keyboard, or you can use your MIDI controller. On-screen buttons allow you to choose which MIDI channel on which to send. There is also a rudimentary built-in sequencer so you can try your changes in context.

The bottom line? If you're already using one of Opcode's sequencers or are looking at a package, the combination of, let's say, Vision and Galaxy Plus Editors is irresistible — especially if you've got an extensive MIDI setup to organize. Strictly as a universal librarian, there are less expensive alternatives, but if you're looking for a comprehensive package, you won't do better. Highly recommended.

For more information, contact: Opcode Systems Inc., 3950 Fabian Way, #100, Palo Alto, CA 94303 (415) 856-3333, FAX (415) 856-3332.

Benjamin Russell is a singer/songwriter/producer based in Montreal. He is preparing to release his next album this fall.

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Flamenco PURO



When we venture for the first time into the true and authentic world of Andalusian popular music, we may be startled by an unexpected and surprising revelation. All said and done, it is not at all an easy thing to reveal the mystery which seems to shroud all genuinely Andalusian rhythmical expression to those who have merely come to examine it as a sample of Spanish folklore music. It is not, and this statement is even more justified if we think just of *flamenco puro*. Though it may seem too much to claim, we can say that it is impossible for us to manage to obtain from the gypsies the spiritual discovery we were referring to without knowing how to rid ourselves of all prejudices and being left with our spirit surrendered and our senses absorbed by the liturgical ceremonies with which *flamenco puro* is performed. We have to try to understand that everything existing in it is produced by means of an esoteric feeling for the art and culture of the people.

Flamenco puro is in itself, a hermetically sealed world, an unfathomable abyss into which the ropes of logic cannot be lowered. It is by its very nature an elusive, anarchical thing. Perhaps it is necessary to be born with a natural predisposition in order to sense the inner breath which gives its tone to deep, profound and emotionally draining pure flamenco. Perhaps it is needful to identify oneself with the substance of it, to plunge into its shades, to forget the world and the mists which normally surround its heart-rending truths. When *flamenco puro* is given out of its natural surroundings, it is as if it were uprooted; it lacks the most needful and spontaneous conditions for it. There is no striving to express an inner feeling, an artistic or musical gush of blood. In its own pure atmosphere, and only in it, can flamenco unleash its own mysterious force, its brutal rhythmic liberty...

The cry of the guitar begins.
The crystal goblets of dawn shatter.
The cry of the guitar begins.
It is useless to silence it.
It is impossible to silence it.

It weeps monotonously like water weeps,
like the wind wails
over the fallen snow.
It is impossible to silence it.
It weeps for things distant...
O guitar —
heart grievously wounded by five knives!

Garcia Lorca

The guitar is to the Spanish what the violin is to the Hungarians, perhaps more so. To speak of the Spanish guitar is to speak of a national character. To speak of the flamenco guitar is to speak of Andalusia. At one point in time, among a musical people, an instrument is adopted or invented that best expresses their soul and their innermost thoughts. In Andalusia, there is a way of

discussing things, a rhythm, a symmetry. In Andalusia, it can take time. Words are savoured for their flavour. Sounds are chopped off. Careful attention is paid to style. Even the ordinary gypsy can be quite baroque. Leisurely, yet formal. What is reflected in the language can be found in the guitar. Rasqueados, picado, ligado, breathtaking thumb. And always there is poetry.

The guitar is the only instrument used in flamenco as the instrument is able to combine percussive, rhythmic elements with a softer, lyrical line essential to the performance of this music. Thus, the appeal of the flamenco guitar is widespread and there are a great many aficionados all over the world keenly involved in the art of flamenco.

The technique for flamenco and classical

Falsetta of Diego Del Gastor

guitar is very similar. The technical demands on and the requirements of a flamenco guitarist's left hand are the same as that for a classical guitarist (and others). The right hand is also basically the same, but with subtle differences. Right-hand fingers play at right angles to the strings and move from the knuckle. Unquestionably, the most flamenco sound is the one performed with the thumb (notated as *p*) of the right hand (strumming hand). The thumb is the fastest finger of the hand and, when developed properly, can achieve astonishing results. It is used to strike strings in sequence, achieving a series of individually struck notes which can be interweaved with any number of ligados. The role of the thumb is not limited to playing the bass strings. It very often crosses over into the range of upper strings (treble) in order to bring out the sound required by particular falsettas (licks). Developing a fast thumb is extremely difficult, but when a certain level of proficiency is achieved, your playing shall become truly unparalleled. It is important not to force the sound of your thumb, as any tightness of the right hand will slow your thumb down. Imagine your thumb being a tiny feather, gliding effortlessly over the strings. This is exactly how you want to think of it. The sound you want to achieve with your thumb has to be powerful, yet a minimum amount of energy needs to be expended. At first, try playing with very little sound. This will insure almost no forcing in the right hand. Always hold the thumb straight and move the hand from the wrist, bringing it to rest on the next string; this is *apoyando*, or rest stroke. Also, strive for clearness of notes. Make sure that in your zealous state, you don't sacrifice clarity of individual notes, phrases and thought for the speed. Remember, it takes time to develop a confident, powerful thumb!

People have different ways of learning flamenco. Some learn from tapes, records and CDs. Others labour arduously over falsettas that they have gleaned from the same CDs, tapes and records.

Today, there is a dangerous drift away from "making music", yet records will never replace learning from the masters. Records also create false expectations. As a result, both soil and fertilizer are becoming contaminated at a time when modern conditions have made many young people look to flamenco as embodying something they feel has been lost, a spontaneous, lyrical alternative to the anonymity of life in a mass age. Flamenco is a nuance, contradiction and exception to every rule. It is an act of defiance. It is beguiling to talk about it. It must be lived to be believed. Manuel Torre, one of flamenco's greatest singers, said that everything that had *sonidos negros* (black sounds), had *duende* (soul). The black sounds were black sorrows — *penas negras*. For those who can hear them, they will always be there.

Daniel Estulin is a Toronto-based flamenco guitarist who performs internationally.

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STRIKING @ BALANCE



M this, my third column for *CM*. I'm going to discuss a disturbing trend in music today. I've noticed that more and more music is being made by one person in a MIDI studio, without the collaborative efforts of other musicians, be they guitarists, drummers or other keyboard players. This, in my humble opinion, has led to a lot of pretty mediocre music ending up on radio. This is not to say that the songs themselves are mediocre! The music is what I'm referring to here. By that I mean the drum parts, the bass lines, horn and string parts or other parts that up until the advent of MIDI, had to be played by someone who knew how to play the instrument itself.

The advent of MIDI has opened up two paths. The first is that those artists who were unable to find or work with other musicians (for whatever reason) now have the ability to create and record their work with the help of technology. The second and more disturbing path is that those people who *were* able to get together with other players have stopped doing just that! More and more keyboard players have retreated to their own private little worlds, content to spend hours upon hours finely crafting their performances and songs before releasing them to the world. They have stopped interacting with other musicians, and don't actually play live for an audience until they feel that their music is ready to see the light of day.

Now, for the minority of these people, the second path is the way to go. These are the modern Mozarts, today's Tchaikovskys.

But, as I said, they are a minority. Music is about communicating and expressing emotions. If you're locked away in your basement with your gear and your cat for company, nine times out of ten you aren't going to create anything that is fresh, vibrant and alive. But never fear, for I have the answer... as the Lord said, "go forth and multiply", so say I: **GO FORTH AND PLAY!**

Oh, okay... so it doesn't translate well. So sue me! I do hope that I've gotten my basic point across, though. Music is about communication. Talking to yourself is NOT communication!!

Now, if I've offended or incensed any of you out there (and I hope that I have!), feel free to write me here at *Canadian Musician*. Tell me how you feel, and if you feel strongly enough about it, send me a tape! Hopefully you can show me something that will make me eat my words, or at least reconsider my opinion (and this column is, after all, only my opinion — don't forget that!).

I'd also like to address a topic that is connected to my main theme. That is, striking a balance with technology.

There was a time, not so long ago, when music was judged on one's personal performance (there's still some of it around... check out your local jazz club or symphony!). But then, in 1983, a new force appeared on the music scene. People looked upon it and were in doubt. It was MIDI, and it heralded the end of one era and the be-

ginning of another. The day had arrived where one could use technology to correct one's mistakes. The day of multiple takes to capture a performance were at an end (at least for keyboardists, drummers and bass

players — guitarists were out of luck!). Thousands of people who couldn't play a note were suddenly blessed with the ability to create full, lush musical arrangements on their home computers, and music would be taken out of the hands of the elite few and given to the masses (at least, that's what the ads all said!).

Fast forward to the present...

Well, here in 1993, things aren't quite the way we had pictured ten years ago. There is, however, another "split path" in this topic (don't you love it?). Path #1: Money and time can be saved by sequencing parts before entering the big, expensive studios; song writers can flesh out the arrangements on their demos before getting players in to record the albums; etc., etc., etc. You get the idea... technology as a tool.

Path #2: (Here's where the letters start pouring in...) People who can't play "Chopsticks" start using computers to augment their sorely lacking skills, turning out music that they could never play if their lives depended on it (Uh oh... it's gonna hit the fan now!). This is the "technology as a crutch" path. To qualify this, I have to say that there are some people for whom technology allows an opportunity to express genuine musical ideas (i.e. the physically challenged), but there are people out there who are taking work away from honest musicians who have studied and practised religiously since childhood. I think this is wrong, and I'm interested in hearing how the general musical community feels about it. I feel that it has had a detrimental effect on music in general, as more and more shows are machine-driven. Maybe I'm in the minority here; if you think so, let me know. I await your responses anxiously, and I'll try to answer every letter that I receive. Let the debate begin!

The opinionated Rob Cooper is a freelance keyboardist who currently plays with Warner recording artists Harem Scarem. He's dying for mail, so send your letters to him c/o Canadian Musician.

... there are people out there who are taking work away from honest musicians who have studied and practised religiously since childhood. I think this is wrong, and I'm interested in hearing how the general musical community feels...





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World Radio History



Songwriting as a Bass



Sometimes it's easy to miss seeing the forest for the trees, to lose touch with what you're doing. We musicians can get so caught up in scales and exercises and chips and transcriptions that we can actually forget about . . . music. We sometimes forget about creativity and character and passion, we forget that most of our audience barely knows the difference between a bass and a guitar.

If you're a serious musician, you want to develop your technical and theoretical command of the instrument. You want to be impressive to musicians. But it's entirely possible (and should be entirely desirable) to be impressive to both musicians and non-musicians. Think of Jimi Hendrix, Jaco Pastorius, Eddie Van Halen, Stevie Ray Vaughan — all serious players who touched anyone who listened. They were all great musicians to be sure, but just think about why we know their playing. It's because their playing arrived via their music, which consisted of songs which appealed to all kinds of people. If it weren't for the hordes of non-musicians who bought their records, most of us musicians might never have heard them!

Which brings me to my central point; if you're a player who wants to develop an original style and become known, there's no better way to achieve that than to develop your songwriting and incorporate your musical, technical, rhythmic and harmonic ideas into original songs. No one is better qualified to write songs to suit your playing than you are.

Songwriting also forces you to look at the whole picture. As a bass player, you are a team player, and your worth is largely determined by your ability to function within a group. When you write or co-write songs, you stop looking at just the bass part and start thinking more about the music as a whole. You end up with more musical music, which will appeal to more people and carry your playing to the ears of a wider audience.

The more you develop your songwriting, the better you will be able to incorporate your "bass" ideas into good songs. For example,

say you have some outrageous lick where you play a paradiddle on the E-string with your right elbow, while executing false harmonics on the G and D strings with your right hand. If you play it once during a solo on a Sunday night at a jam session in a chicken wing bar after a few beers in front of 12 people in the middle of "Hey Joe", you can pretty much relegate your lick to obscurity. But if you standardize your lick and make it a hook in a song (good luck), you'll get rich and famous.

Hey! No joke! The majority of income to be made by musicians in this loony industry comes from songwriting royalties. Every time your song gets broadcast or performed by yourself or someone else, you make money. If your songs are accessible to a large number of people and a few industry string-pullers agree, you're on a road to recognition.

It's interesting to watch hot technical bassists discover songwriting midway through their careers. I remember seeing Stuart Hamm (hot *bassiste du jour*) a couple of years ago at a Rock 'n' Roll Heaven gig where he ditched his L.A. fusion style in favour of a straighter, hard rock sound. Gone were the bass solos, slap grooves and two-handed tap licks. Stu had decided to appeal to non-musicians as well as bass players. Only one problem. He had no experience writing (let alone singing) rock songs, and the set came out limp, contrived and passionless. Any decent Toronto bar band would have blown him clear off the stage. He let down both the bass fans who wanted to see Stu do what he does best, and he let down the Rock 'n' Roll Heaven regulars who wanted to rock.

Other examples of higher learning include rock bass tapmaster Billy Sheehan and pop bass slapmaster Mark King. Sheehan paid his dues on the bar circuit playing mostly covers (with wild bass solos) with his band Talas, scored a gig with David Lee Roth, then put together Mr. Big and realized he had to learn to write songs. The speed-demon of bass found himself at the top of the charts, playing

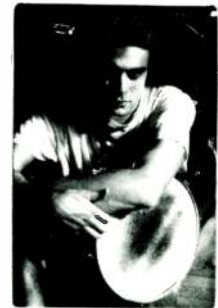
two notes a bar on "To Be With You". Paycheque and fame for Mr. Sheehan. On his first instructional video, he says: "I come from a song era — songwriting to me is really essential. Once you've got a good song, you take off. Everybody's wowed by the new hot kid on the block, and that's cool, but it really doesn't have the dimension and staying power that a song does — the song is everything."

Mark King started out playing mostly instrumental funk-fusion until after five albums with Level 42, he realized he wanted to reach a wider audience (read: non-musicians). He focused his playing, spent more effort on songwriting and ended up with the hit album, *World Machine*. In his words, "The lesson I've learned over the last seven years, is that a good tune that everyone can sing is what makes a hit record. It doesn't matter if you can play well on the bass, play really fast — Stevie Wonder is not hailed as the greatest keyboard player. I mean, he's a tremendous keyboard player, but no one says that; all they say is 'Gee, isn't that a nice song he wrote'."

The lesson to be learned is that songwriting is the way in which music is packaged for consumption by the world, and therefore an important skill for all musicians to develop. People listen to and remember and identify with songs, not licks. But if you get the listener's attention with a song, they'll hear your playing. The experience of songwriting works hand in hand with the development of your bass playing, and for the maximum benefit of both, both skills should be worked on simultaneously and the sooner the better. Don't wait to be Jaco Pastorius before you start writing songs, but also don't wait to be Bob Dylan before you learn about modes and alternating fingers.

Peter Murray is a bass teacher, session musician and producer. He plays with Toronto-based act surrender dorothy and is busy completing his instructional book.

EXPANDING THE DRUMMER'S VOCABULARY



I don't know about you, but one of the funniest things for me to watch when I go out to see a band is drummers watching other drummers play. I could write more than a few essays on the diverse body language that goes on during a single evening's concert. You will never meet anyone more passionate or more involved than a drummer when talking about his or her own instrument. Next time you are out seeing a band and the drummer is hot, check out the herd of drummers side stage, like hungry animals at a feast. Oh yes, drummers are like magnets towards each other and a herd can be found anywhere. Who knows? Maybe it's the fact we know no one will crack dumb drummer jokes when we're in a group together or maybe it's the fact that we didn't have some old man coming to our house to tune our instrument every month and we had to learn everything on our own and yes . . . from each other.

Checking out other players for me is very important, but this isn't some kind of "it's OK to copy" article. No. Inspiration is the key idea here, and mind expansion is the other. Inspiration as in the kind of night you go to see Glenn (Blue Rodeo) Milchem play, go home, and then play 'til the cops come over to see if they can help with your time keeping. That's inspiration. Finding it doesn't really come if you're looking for it. How many times have you heard people say "I'm not really doing much, I'm looking for inspiration". Open your head! Or more in the context of this article, open your ears!

It always amazes me when I meet musicians who really don't listen to or respect other musical styles besides the one that they are playing. To me, this is akin to someone who considers themselves a good film critic, but has only seen films coming out of Hollywood.

Spending a few years with a West African drumming ensemble was one of the best experiences of my life. I basically went from hearing a big sound of drums (which was great) to hearing all the little parts in the music and how they fit together (which was better). In playing this style (which hailed from the country of Ghana), every person in the group had a particular pattern to hold down. What was really great was, when you felt comfortable with your own part you could listen to how the other drums, shakers or cowbells related. The way to best describe

the music would be how it was described to me, that the piece should have the movement of a teeter-totter, one drum plays, then the other — but always connected. To give you an example of what I'm talking about, here are three parts (there are nine in total) for a piece called "Gahu":

Studying West African rhythms had not only a profound effect on my playing, but as well, on the way I listen to music. Suddenly I could hear when a drummer gave other instruments space. I could also tell good and bad relationships between bass and drums.

In *African Rhythms and Sensibilities*, a fantastic book by John Miller Chernoff (University of Chicago Press), he talks about how

 Cowbell 1

 Cowbell 2

 Kagan Drum

we feel the downbeat. Westerners feel the downbeat on the 2 and 4, but Africans mostly feel the downbeat on 1 and 3. Now, this could sound like a vast generalization on both accounts, but I think what is important here is that by opening your ears and mind we can learn about other musics and understand (eventually) about our own music. Open your head and let yourself become inspired by them. If you happen to get inspired by a jackhammer, well hell, that's great too, but the first step is to open your ears to let yourself be inspired by that jackhammer.

The greater our vocabulary, the better we can get our idea across. I've always felt I will just be getting to what I'm striving for when I'm around 50 (if all goes well). By that time, my vocabulary will be four or five times larger than it is now. In returning to my original point, it is interesting to watch someone that age or older play. Like a young kid watching his dad fix the car, I watched Elvin Jones put on a stellar performance. What an incredible understanding of the instrument. A lot of it (if not all) had to do with the mind set he was in. To watch Elvin play was to watch him in another world with complete focus. He not only had complete control of his instrument, but he also had complete con-

trol of the room. If you listen to him play you can hear everything from Latin to African and of course, to standard swing all moulded into his own sound. As an aside, some of the ride cymbal patterns on *Love Supreme* are very similar to the Ghanaian patterns I talked about earlier.

We are so lucky to live in this cultural mosaic of a country. We can walk around the block and catch many traditional bands playing their music. A very special night comes to mind. I was walking along College St. (downtown Toronto), and some very lively percussion caught my ear. I stepped into this bar and heard four guys sitting

around a table playing traditional Persian music. I sat there in amazement watching the drummer playing a pitched drum pronounced "doombek" come up with intricate poly-rhythms when they finished playing. I stepped out of the bar full of energy from the music I just heard, only to walk two blocks to hear a full blown gospel choir going into a chorus of "He Chose Me". Well, I did feel chosen that night. I just stood thinking, there's so much out there to taste, to learn, to hear. Open your ears, your mind, always show respect and remember to live each day with a capital L.

World Music albums to check out:

- Tom Ze *Return of Tom Ze*
- Bob Marley *Rasta Revolution* (check out the hi-hat work against the rest of the kit)
- Wild Tchoupitoulas *Wild Tchoupitoulas*
- Trichy Shenkeran (I'm proud to say he's living in Canada. Do not miss any live shows by Mr. Shenkeran)
- Remy Ongala *Songs for the Poor Man*

Andy Stochansky is a freelance drummer who has recorded and toured with Bob Wiseman, Mervyn Cadell and U.S. singer/songwriter Ani DiFranco. Andy also composes scores for film and dance.



part one

IMPROVISATION

Though this is a brass column, most of my trumpet students also study some jazz improv with me, so I thought I'd put down some general thoughts on my approach to the subject.

First of all, what is improvisation? When I ask this question I am often met with answers like "Learning hundreds of chords and scales so that one can play very fast without music." While this may be a slight exaggeration of a typical reply, it is true that many students are intimidated by the concept of improvisation, because of the fear of all the study they perceive to be necessary to master it. These fears are largely unfounded, and in my teaching I try to show how easy it can be to play an improvised solo, using only a few simple guidelines. For the student who wishes to delve into the study, of course, there is an ever-expanding world of information and directions in which to head. My point is that it is not necessary to have an extensive understanding of harmony and chord construction to play a simple solo that sounds good.

Improvisation is the art of playing what your ear tells you to play at a given musical moment, rather than taking your cues from the written page. Far more important than the actual notes you play, is the way you play them. As listeners, we do not respond to displays of knowledge and virtuosity, but to human communication. Is the soloist using their instrument as an extension of their voice to express some of what they are feeling inside? Are they listening to the other players and trying to respond to what they are doing? How is their time feel — do you feel like tapping your foot along with them, or does it feel disjointed, rushed and alternately dragged as they struggle to keep up with the changes? What is the actual sound of their instrument like? Do they look like they are having a good time? Do they build their solo, or start off with all the hot licks and go downhill from there, eventually dribbling off at the end of the solo to walk away with head bowed?

There are a number of important concepts raised in these questions that I would like to touch upon. First of all: time. I consider the

time feel of a soloist to be the number one most communicative factor in their playing. If a player plays all the "wrong" notes, but plays them with a beautiful time feel, it will still be an interesting and listenable solo, albeit a bit quizzical. This rarely happens, as most players learn at least some of the right notes before even thinking about time feel, but I stress it right from the outset, as this is a way to improve any solo without one bit of theoretical knowledge.

Running a close second in the communication sweepstakes is your sound. If you get a beautiful sound on your instrument, you can play a whole note 'C' on a C chord, and it will sound great. Your sound is your voice, and will be the most personal aspect of your playing. Forget about the notes you have just played, or the ones you are about to play, make the one you are playing right now as beautiful as you can. One of the highly expressive things about the trumpet is that we can alter all sorts of aspects of a note; we can bend it, vary the volume, change the attack, get a brighter or duller or more breathy sound. Don't ignore these.

Next is listening to the other players while you are improvising. Picture a conversation with an individual who talks incessantly, never allowing anyone else to get a word in edgewise. Most novice improvisers commit a similar infraction, playing notes in every beat of every bar. There seems to be a fear that if a soloist stops playing, the music stops. This of course doesn't happen. First of all, the rhythm section background rises to the foreground for a second, drawing the listener into the web they are weaving. This also seems to draw the actual rhythm section players together as they get a chance to hear just themselves. This creates a more cohesive and inspired underpinning for the soloist when he/she resumes playing. Secondly, it gives the soloist a short break to rest chops, and listen for a second in order to continue thinking of ideas. Additionally, it gives the listener a breather, the better to appreciate the next onslaught of improvisational genius.

Now for the construction of the solo itself. Common sense says you do not show

everything you've got in the first couple of bars. Start with less notes and more space, while listening intently and trying to get into the groove with the rhythm pals. If you are following another soloist, who has just finished a solo with a flurry of squeals eliciting howling applause, wait a while before beginning in order for the audience to settle down, and for the rhythm section to come down in volume. The rhythm section invariably gets quieter if the soloist doesn't play. This quieter starting point will help you to build your solo. Always try to end your solo on a high point. To do this, you must fight the natural tendency to keep on playing when your energy is high, until you run out of ideas or chops or both. Save some for the next solo. Leave 'em wanting more!

Finally, are you having fun? If not, try to look like you are. Like it or not, jazz is music, and music is show business. The feeling about the music which you present to the audience visually will strongly effect how they perceive it. The best is to be truly enjoying what you are doing, and if not, why would you pursue this difficult, under-appreciated art form? But if for some reason you are not enjoying it at that moment, illness, problems in the band, etc., try not to let the audience in on your dissatisfaction. Play your best, and accept any compliments graciously.

Lest I have given the impression that one can become a great jazz player without any hard work by smiling and emoting, let me say that this is a very difficult but rewarding pursuit. If you choose to devote your lifetime to it, you will have no difficulty discovering endless new approaches and expanded horizons to occupy your mind. "But where do I start?", you say. "How do I go about expanding my understanding of jazz improvisation, the better to express the burning emotion inside of me?" For that, dear reader, see the next instalment!

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

LITERARY MUSINGS

Welcome to "Gene's Autumnal Musings on Great Works of Literature Pertaining to a Honkin' and a Squeakin'" or, "A Little Fall Readin' for Y'All"

The list to follow names and briefly outlines some of the sources that have either profoundly affected me as a player or that I've found indispensable as a teacher of music. All of these titles are available through your local bookseller or music store, or you can contact CM. Happy Fall. HONK!

RUBANK SAXOPHONE METHOD

Hal Leonard Publishing Corp.

An excellent series of books for the young and mature student. Information is laid out in concise, bite-size chunks that introduce the beginner, intermediate and advanced player to the fundamentals of saxophonology. With some assistance from a good teacher, this program covers all aspects of technique that are applicable to any style of playing. Contains scales, duets, broken chords, etudes and most importantly *does not* contain "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star". The fingering chart can be used for lining your bird cage.

THE ART OF SAXOPHONE PLAYING

BY LARRY TEAL
Sumy-Birchard Inc.

This book explains specifics of the operation of the saxophone, mouthpiece, reeds, breathing, embouchure, trill keys, tone production and possesses the only logical fingering chart for the saxophone that I've ever seen. Before a first lesson with a new student, I assign the first 50 or so pages as mandatory reading as they offer everything a student needs to know about creating a sound on the horn. All this and lots of pictures too! Excellent for all levels and styles of performance. Highly recommended.

ELEMENTARY RUDIMENTS OF MUSIC & ANSWER BOOK (SOLD SEPARATELY)

BY BARBERA WHARRAM
Frederick Harris

Theory. The very word strikes fear in the hearts of many players, but the fact remains that music is a language and this is an excellent and straightforward way to understand its syntax and grammar. With a sharp pencil, a knowledgeable teacher and consistent applied study over a few weeks, you can, on day one, learn how to read music and shortly afterward become literate in the world of vertical music (chords). The trick to making this book work for you is to play everything

you write out, especially the "Intervals" section.

Theory will become practical. The usual trap that most people fall into is that theory becomes abstract, mathlike gobblede-gook and is mutually exclusive of playing the saxophone. If you play this stuff, it becomes real. At the back of the book are some test papers to track your progress. Do purchase the answer book to check your work and to provide you with clues as to how to arrive at your answers. And see if you can spot the typos (I believe there are three).

IMPROVISING JAZZ

BY JERRY COKER
Jamey Abersold

This little book is a hands-on guide to playing in a small combo. Plenty of things to play plus creative exercises to discover your role as a saxophonist (or drummer or pianist, etc.). Also, great explanations on solo construction, the concept of playing swing and basic jazz (or whatever) theory. The appendix contains examples of song forms that have typical characteristics like turnarounds, chord progressions and modulations. An excellent follow-up text to *Elementary Rudiments of Music*.

SCALES FOR JAZZ IMPROVISATION

BY DAN HEARLE
Columbia Pictures Publications
/PR Studio Publications

More than just a book of scales, the text explains the various chords they apply to, how to construct them and lays them out in every key. Rather than read through every transcription, get the sound of the scale in your head and allow your ear to lead you through the different keys — learn the scales as sounds/melodies. The preface provides a number of approaches to their study, practice and application.

TOP TONES FOR SAXOPHONE

BY SIGURD RASCHER
Carl Fisher

This is one of several books currently available on the subject of playing in the altissimo register of the saxophone (harmonics). Of all the texts, this is the only one that provides a step-by-step development of the "natural" register as a foundation to the production of top tones. I provide this prelude to harmonics to all of my students: it outlines the fundamentals of proper tone production — long tones, dynamics, tone imagination and uniformity of tone character, and includes harmonic series, interval and tone matching ex-

ercises. All this *plus* an introductory fingering chart for notes only heard by dogs.

CIRCULAR BREATHING

BY TRENT KYNASTON
Columbia Pictures Publications

Apart from teaching the ultimate "stupid human trick" for saxophonists, the book's prelude to circular breathing is an excellent guide to correct breathing. It defines the 'upper', 'middle', 'low' and 'total' breaths similar to those used in yoga, rather than just the diaphragm breath. This alone was a real eye-opener for me and is always included in a first lesson with my students.

MULTIPHONICS

BY KEN DORN

Dorn Publications/Saxophone Journal

An exhaustive text on the phenomenon of playing chords on the saxophone. This book contains 100+ pages of multiphonic fingerings for producing two, three, four and five note chords. An initially quirky fingering chart becomes easier to understand as you get through the first few pages. Very little explanation is offered in the creation of the sounds — you just have to plow through and get the jist of it.

A listening session with recordings of, say, Michael Brecker or John Coltrane (two well-known exponents of this device) will definitely provide some further clues to the production of multiphonics.

THE INNER GAME OF TENNIS

BY TIMOTHY GALLEWAY

If it's worth doing, it's worth doing in a Zen-like fashion. Using tennis as a metaphor (or not), this book employs the wisdom of the Tao to enable you to play different passages, blow a wailing solo and improve your backhand on the court.

First, the typical ways in which we learn, concentrate, break habits, observe and execute actions are discussed. The author then, in a very practical hands-on fashion shows a more effortless and rewarding way to do anything. This is nothing like sharpening razorblades with pyramid power — it really works!

Gene Hardy is the alto tenor bari bass saxophonist and violinist for the Bourbon Tabernacle Choir and teaches privately in Toronto. Gene has also contributed performances to albums by the Barenaked Ladies, Rheostatics, Big Sugar, Corky & the Juice Pigs and Gregory Hoskins and the Stick People.



FROM THE TO THE METICULOUS



The human voice is the most directly physical and, arguably, the most expressive of all available musical instruments. Every aspect of vocal sound comes literally from within the singer; there is absolutely nothing between the singing body, which forms the instrument itself, and the perceiving ear to obscure or dilute expression. Herein lies the root of a vocalist's essential program: To master the vocal instrument, we must know ourselves intimately — a most difficult task.

The quest for my own voice has become a much farther-reaching and all-encompassing one. It has become a search for euphoria through altered consciousness.

Music, especially in the realm of singing, has long been an avenue for religious expression. Indeed, it could be argued that its original use was devotional, because primi-

high. In the 1950s, at the height of the era of small gospel harmony groups, Sam Cooke rose to stardom as lead singer of the Soul Stirrers, perhaps the greatest in their genre which included such talent as the Mighty Clouds of Joy, The Five Blind Boys of Alabama and the Swan Silvertones. Sam's vocal style was unique in that he employed less of the bellowing histrionics (at least on record) that are characteristic of many comparable singers. Instead, he stuck to a signature use of sweet melodic lines now instantly recognizable as his own. His performances on Soul Stirrers' recordings are among the best in vocal music because they employ subtlety, intelligence and remarkable technical finesse; but most notably because he combines these admirable skills with that raw, climactic physical quality that can only

Al Green, last of the great southern-soul singers, has had a career exactly mirroring Sam Cooke's. Al's singing began in the secular realm in the early '70s when he took off to become the biggest-selling black star of his time. His performances on gems like "Tired of Being Alone" and "Let's Stay Together" represented summits of musical understatement. No one came close to the octave-leaping yet impossibly quiet and soothing purity of Al's falsetto. He was so deeply in tune with his instrument that, like Sam Cooke, he had established a completely recognizable and characteristic style unto himself. But it wasn't until the mid-'70s, when he allowed his spiritual concerns to enter directly into his music, that he really let loose. *The Belle Album*, his first self-produced, almost entirely devotional record from 1976, is a treasure chest of freak-outs which begin in the sanctity of church and which end, like all great gospel music, in the land of blatant erotica. The point here is that he fused the intelligence and sexiness of secular song with the other-worldly motivation of spirit, a deadly combination indeed.

I think that all vocalists can learn from the experiences of Sam and Al. What set them apart from other singers and established them as historical giants was their precarious blending of subtle technical mastery with a deep spiritual conviction. Sam Cooke left one of these elements behind, losing something vital in the process, and Al Green learned midway to successfully harness his blossoming belief, achieving an artistic pinnacle. Even if we do not believe in a religious doctrine, the very fact that we gain enough pleasure from singing to take it seriously can point to our spiritual side. We are engaged in an intrinsically physical, sensual act which can potentially send us into a euphoric reverie — a state of altered consciousness which comes from the world of the unexplainable — the Spirit.

When I sing, especially in a live setting where all things emotional are heightened, I try to focus on losing myself in the song, on

We are engaged in an intrinsically physical, sensual act which can potentially send us into a euphoric reverie — a state of altered consciousness which comes from the world of the unexplainable — the Spirit



tive cultures were most often based on the relations between mortal and immortal, or non-deity and deity. Why is singing such a universally perfect medium for spiritual devotion, from Gregorian chorales to Afro-American Gospel to the meditative chanting of Buddhists? The answer lies in the physical essence of singing — it is so directly of the body that it points us to the quickest route out of the body. Yes, singing can make you

come from spiritual involvement — he is high on God. When he left gospel music in the late '50s to pursue popular music, his recordings slid into a syrupy sauce of slickness and over-orchestration and his vocals became notably one-dimensional. These records were beautiful (check out "You Send Me"), but lacklustre when compared to his faith-oriented work. He had let go of his fiery motivation.

taking off into the musical stratosphere on vocal wings, thus looking to my voice as a kind of narcotic. Often times, this transcendence is difficult in the context of a smoky bar, but I have found that if my motivation for singing revolves around the sensual/spiritual rather than rational (ie. "I can't remember the words to the next verse" or "how much am I getting paid for this?"), that I come closer to my own musical goals. I feel that if a singer looks to the voice not only as an instrument of pleasure, but as a catalyst for their own spiritual growth, that his or her life will be enriched musically and otherwise.

On his 1972 album, *St. Dominic's Preview*, Van Morrison encapsulated my entire singing manifesto in a single transcendent vocal moment. He has made his spiritual quest the essence of a seemingly endless outpouring of brilliant, stirring work, best represented by "Listen to the Lions", in which he suggests an unleashing of the hairy jungle-beast in all of us.

"I shall search my soul
I shall search my very soul
For the Lion inside of me"

The song, which begins quietly and almost ambiently, soon establishes a lengthy, unchanging vamp, in which Van uncages some of the strangest howlings and exclamations ever recorded as he recounts his ancestor's voyage from Denmark to the British Isles. This passage represents for me, one of the heights of unbridled, inspired and revelatory vocalizing. As he begins to chant "and we sailed, and we sailed . . .", we, the listener, find ourselves visualizing the ship that is Van Morrison's voice with us as his fearless crew, fearless because we are propelled by the irrepressible strength of his conviction. What we have here is a hallucination-inducing vocal performance, in which the singer himself is flying high on self-discovery.

It is no secret that proper singing technique will send unusually large doses of oxygen to the brain; strong diaphragmatic breathing involves massive intakes of air. Couple this with a marked adrenaline increase due to stage jitters or sheer intensity of physical activity and you have the makings of a big-time body high. Endorphins, those fun-loving little pleasure hormones, start multiplying and scurrying about and, before you know it, you're down-right stoned. The voice can and should be used as a consciousness-altering, trance-inducing drug. The traditions of gospel and other devotional genres point to this fact and every singer, I feel, can learn to revel in this legacy. Until the inevitable legalization of marijuana has taken place, opening up your mouth and singing might be the best legal high we've got going. Indulge and enjoy!

Dave Wall has been singing for twelve years and is the lead singer of the Bourbon Tabernacle Choir. He also teaches private vocal lessons when not touring.

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A ROOM of ONE'S OWN



I'd like to talk a bit about how a composer can get a start on a home studio without having to devote a lot of time that could better be spent writing than on technical research. Most composers are more interested in music than wires and computerized gadgets, so it can be difficult for such people to get a good start on a studio without wasting a lot of time and money. Time is wasted by the endless research devoted to picking products, and money is often wasted on either buying things that are unnecessary or that are bought many times over while searching for the right model. Let's talk about what you really need, and how to find it.

First, the idea is to buy as little as possible, and second, to buy equipment with as few functions as possible. I'm not kidding. What you really need is a few choice pieces of very high quality that will do what you need now and will not become obsolete too quickly. Such equipment will do a single job very well, rather than many jobs with fair quality.

There is a lot of gear on the market today. It is pretty well impossible to keep up on all of it, unless you really like devoting hours every day to reading technical journals and cruising the "cyberspace" networks. There is one good way, however, to bypass a lot of time in researching equipment — simply go with the accepted tools of the professionals, their "industry standards". It is possible for even a technical neophyte to discover what the industry standards are in a few chosen necessary items. Industry standard items have many advantages over the latest and greatest gadget of the week. With an industry standard you know right away that you have a functional tool for the job, rather than having to juggle figures to compare all the competition. Most industry standard equipment is more expensive than semi-pro type equipment, but again you will save money in the long run by not needing to replace the equipment so quickly, if at all.

This is where your dealer comes in. Having a dealer who is knowledgeable and trust-

worthy can save you a ton of time and money. If you get the right gear the first time, and don't have to buy replacements later, you get the very best value that you can. It makes no sense to take a chance on buying the wrong gear when you buy from a store that knows very little about the product, even though the prices there may be a bit cheaper. You will not save money as you will end up buying some equipment that is not suited to your needs which will be a financial loss. If you buy from a store with professional staff you will pay more money for the gear, but you will be much more likely to get the right gear the first time off.

Shopping for a dealer can be tricky but there are a few guidelines to follow. First, the staff should specialize in certain areas, rather than selling anything from guitars to hard disk systems. It is impossible for salespeople today to be up on everything available in every field, so the only way you will find pro-level knowledge is with sales staff that only work in predefined areas such as recording equipment, MIDI equipment, acoustic instruments, and so on.

Next, the staff should be familiar with equipment that they do not carry. I don't mean that they should be able to operate equipment that they do not stock, just that they be familiar with all common equipment and most esoteric equipment in their selected field, regardless of whether or not they happen to sell it. Sales people with this level of knowledge can help you put together a system suited to your personal needs, even if it includes a few items you may have to buy elsewhere. A dealer with this level of expertise is one to pick a long-term relationship with, as you know that they are working for you, rather than simply trying to move equipment. The money a dealer loses by recommending a system that includes anything they don't stock is more than made up for by the money they make from long term dealing with good customers.

Finally, a good sales person will be familiar with the "industry standard" professional

equipment. This you can find out very quickly by simply asking the salesperson his or her opinion of the equipment you have researched and found to be a professional standard item. If they don't know the pieces you mention, find another store.

To set up a composer's studio that works for you right off, you need first to define your needs. Next, you need to research enough to find out the professional standards on the items you require. This does not mean researching everything on the market, it only means finding out which choices the pros have already made. Finally, you need to find a great dealer who understands what you are after and will help you set it all up, both before and after the sale.

The bare minimum requirements for a typical composer's studio are:

- a) a room to work in**
- b) microphone and mic preamplifier**
- c) compressor**
- d) multitrack recorder**
- e) mixer**
- f) reverb unit**
- g) monitor speakers & amp**
- h) mastering deck & cassette deck to make demo copies**

If you only work with instrumental music, you can do without the microphone. If you work with MIDI, you need a SMPTE synchronizer to allow your computer-driven instruments to be locked to your multitrack tracks.

Let's talk about finding out some industry standards in a few items.

A composer needs to make killer demo tracks, and for vocals or miked instruments you require a professional microphone to do it. Don't buy several cheap microphones, just get one good one. To find out which ones are industry standards, phone several 24+ track studios and ask about rentals of studio time. Find out what microphones are

included and ask what they use for general purpose miking. You will discover that they all use basically the same models, and for good reason. They will as well have a collection of "vintage" mics, so find out which models they use that are in current production. Armed with this information, then look in some back issues of music magazines that have listings of dozens of recording studios and of all the equipment that they use. Check to see if a lot of those studios as well use the mic, and if they do, you know you've got a winner. Buy it and ignore the racks of 45 different cheap mics. As an aside, once you start working with your own studio you will find that your need to rent studio time in a professional studio will still exist, so make sure you remember which professional studios impressed you the most and give them your business.

Professional monitor speakers are a necessity. You cannot do even an adequate mix

... the idea is to buy as little as possible, and second, to buy equipment with as few functions as possible. I'm not kidding ...

without them. To find industry standards here, look for an engineer's opinion. Call some studios and music stores and ask for a list of freelance engineers. Ask them what they prefer to mix with. Here, the side benefit is that you will have a list of people to call in to tweak your mix when you are doing important jobs, as a real full-time engineer will be able to give your work a sparkle that you are unlikely to achieve unless you too are a full-time engineer! Next, check those back issues again, even if you just look at the cover pictures of the megabuck studios. You will see the same two or three types of speakers sitting on the consoles over and over again. Those are what you should buy, especially as they are most often in the same price range as the competition. There are other speakers that sound wonderful, but the standards here have two advantages: First, that you know they will do the job; and second, that when you call in an engineer to help you, they will know the sound of the speakers they are working with.

If you are more interested in composing music than technology, following these guidelines should help you pick out the right gear for the job and get you started on a setup that can produce professional results right away.

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

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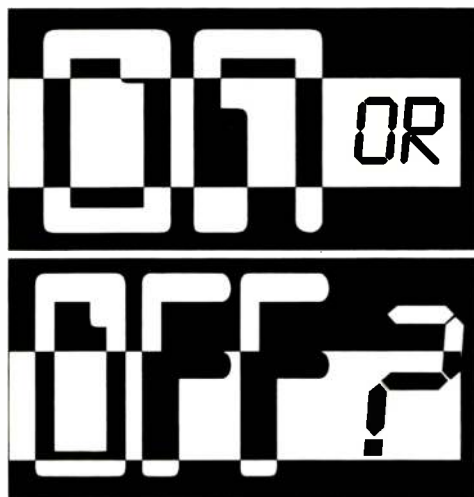
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Understanding electrically the way MIDI communicates is something few people do, and even fewer have tried to teach. So, in 1000 words or less, I'm going to give it a shot.

Your basic MIDI cable consists of two wires wrapped with a 'shield'. This shield is used to drain any stray electromagnetic interference picked up in the air before it can reach the two wires underneath it. Although MIDI data does not flow through it, it is THE most important part of a MIDI cable and beyond the scope of this article to explain why. Let's just say that a bad or improperly connected shield can make or break your MIDI data — trust me.

MIDI works exactly like turning a light bulb on and off. The person controlling the switch is the MIDI OUT of one device, while the person watching the light bulb is the MIDI IN of the other device. The two wires inside your MIDI cable merely carry the electricity to the light bulb. The way in which the light bulb is turned on, off and interpreted however, is what makes it work; and it all has to do with timing...

A MIDI message consists of ten 'bits'. One bit represents an on or off condition of the light bulb. Each bit lasts for a certain amount of time. In the case of MIDI, that time is 32 microseconds, or 1/31,250th of a second. So, the guy watching the light bulb has 32 microseconds to write down whether it's on or off before the guy at the switch either leaves it on or turns it off to represent the next bit. This process continues until all ten bits have been 'sent', then the light bulb goes off until the next message. Inside the keyboard and connected to the MIDI ports, is something called a 'Universal Asynchronous Receiver Transmitter' or UART (pronounced you-art) for short. This little chip is the MIDI data guru for your keyboard. Here's how the UARTs handle it:

The ten bit MIDI message is actually only eight bits. MIDI just adds something called a 'start' bit to tell the receiving UART that data is coming; and a 'stop' bit to say it's finished. The receiving UART translates the eight bits into a number ranging from 0 to 255 (00000000 — all bits off to 11111111 — all bits on).

When the transmitting UART wants to send a 'byte' (that's what eight bits are called), it first sends a start bit (turns the bulb on), waits 32 microseconds, sends the first data bit, waits 32 microseconds, and so on until eight data bits and one stop bit have been transmitted. Backtracking now though, the receiving UART sees the light first go on and waits 16 microseconds (half the length of a bit). Now it checks the bulb again. If the bulb is still

second lag time purposely introduced by the receiver to compensate for false data; second, a MIDI message is 320 microseconds (10 bits X 32 microseconds per bit) long; and third, MIDI speed is defined as 31.25 Kilobaud or 31,250 bits per second.

A little fogged, or is the smoke starting to clear? Hopefully you're still with me.

Oh, another little tidbit — most MIDI event data (the stuff that makes notes turn on and benders bend) consist of two or three

MIDI WORKS EXACTLY LIKE TURNING A LIGHT BULB ON AND OFF. THE PERSON CONTROLLING THE SWITCH IS THE MIDI OUT OF ONE DEVICE, WHILE THE PERSON WATCHING THE LIGHT BULB IS THE MIDI IN OF THE OTHER DEVICE. THE TWO WIRES INSIDE YOUR MIDI CABLE MERELY CARRY THE ELECTRICITY TO THE LIGHT BULB. THE WAY IN WHICH THE LIGHT BULB IS TURNED ON, OFF AND INTERPRETED HOWEVER, IS WHAT MAKES IT WORK.

on, it knows that it has a 'valid' start bit, meaning that the bulb wasn't turned on accidentally by some strange electrical interference. If 16 more microseconds were to go by, that would be the end of the start bit and the beginning of the first data bit. But, because that area is kind of questionable (the internal clocks of the two UARTs may not be exact), the receiving UART waits 32 microseconds. That puts it at about the middle of the first data bit, where it checks the bulb again and takes note of its status. The receiving UART again waits 32 microseconds, checks the bulb, notes its status, and so on until eight data bits and one stop bit have been received. Now the byte has been received and the UART signals the keyboard computer to come and fetch it.

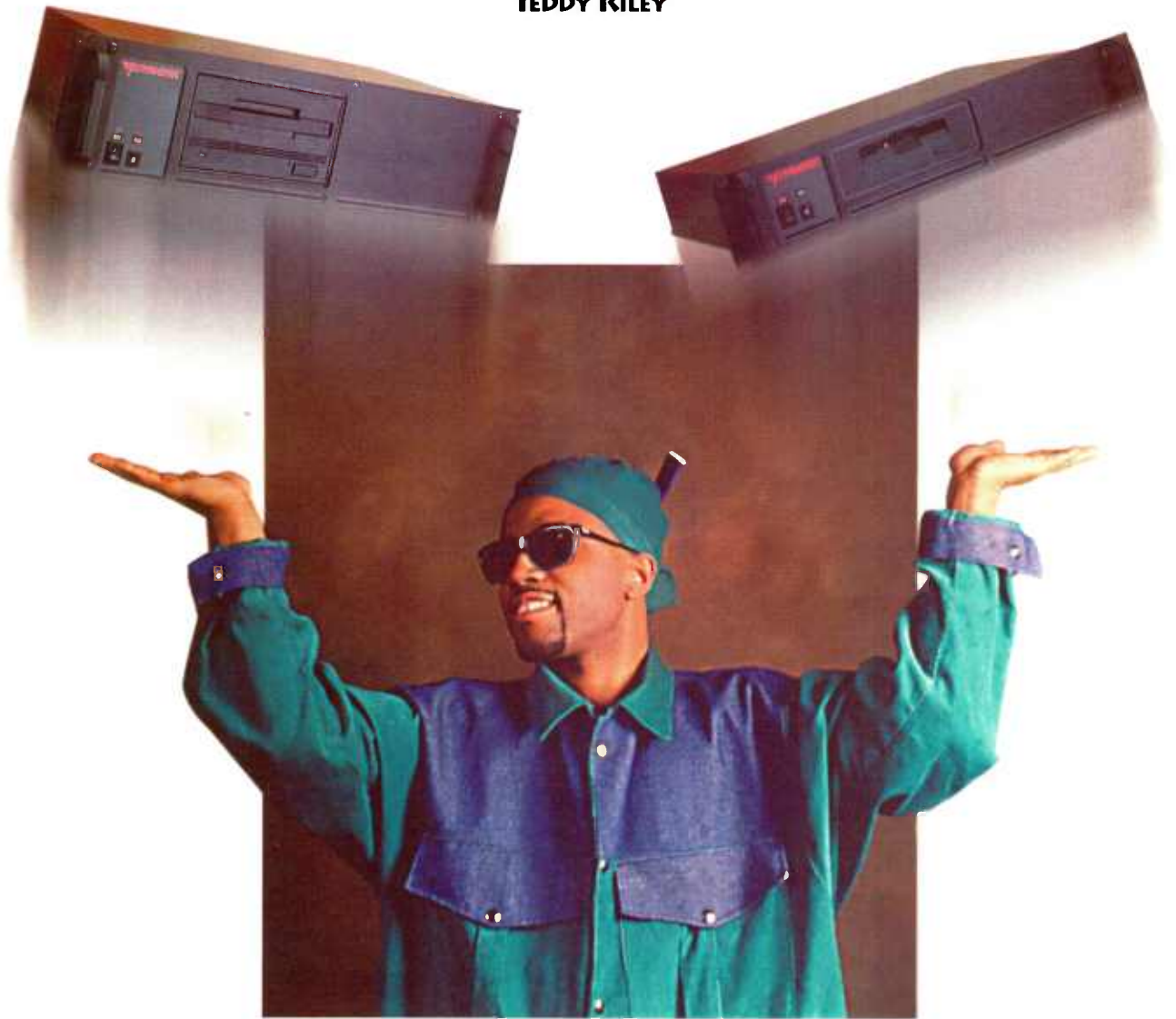
Armed with this knowledge, we can now see a number of things: First, transmission and reception of MIDI data occur simultaneously except for the 16 micro-

MIDI bytes. In the case of a note on, three bytes are transmitted; the status byte; the note value; and the velocity of the note. Three bytes X 320 microseconds per byte equals 960 microseconds — almost a millisecond! As a small adjunct however, the MIDI spec did allow for something called 'Running Status'. This just means that a status byte is only transmitted once, until a new status byte is needed. Because of this, each new note now only takes 640 microseconds. This speed optimization is the reason why the MIDI 'Note Off' command is rarely used. Instead of having to transmit a new status byte saying 'Note Off', running status is maintained by transmitting a Note On with a velocity of zero.

Howie Bertolo is a freelance keyboardist who has played with Aldo Nova, Frozen Ghost and Jon Bon Jovi. When not playing, Howie can be found building electronic gadgets for Westbury National Show Systems.

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BY PETER HAMILTON

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You don't have to stop dreaming. Dreaming is what has made the ability to record at home a reality; but understand that there are many different levels to this new reality and that there is an entrance level in the

big scheme of things. Don't be afraid to start off knocking on door number one.

Recording your demo in someone else's basement studio may end up costing you the same as what it would to build a four or eight track studio for yourself. If you're going to take the plunge, the first and most important step is to realistically identify and qualify your immediate and foreseeable future needs. You may be solely interested in capturing your musical sketches onto tape, in which case a simple four-track cassette system may be all you need. Perhaps a tapeless MIDI studio setup is all you require, or a hybrid of both. Maybe you are ready to move to eight tracks, sixteen or twenty-four. Will that be analog, virtual or digital? Maybe all of the above.

Whatever the case, learn to recognize the symptoms of studioitis. The more gear you have, the more

you seem to need. Once you recognize this dreaded disease, you can better learn to live with it and enjoy it. With the pace of technology being what it is, there will always be room to grow. As a musician however, never lose sight of why you want to put together your own setup. Hopefully it is to aid in the creation and capturing of those magical, musical moments and ideas.

THE BASIC COMPONENTS

- Mixer
- Multitrack Recorder
- Signal Processors/effects
- Monitors/Power Amplifier
- Mixdown Machine
- Synchronizer (SMPTE/FSK, etc.)
- Microphones
- Patchbay
- Cabling

b o b



p e t e r



**CHECK OUT THE
STUDIOS OF JANE
SIBERRY, BOB
WISEMAN AND
PETER MOORE
STARTING ON
PAGE 52**

j a n e



Your specific needs may require some or all of the above components. Let's take a quick overview of the main five:

THE MIXER

The mixer serves two purposes. It must amplify and route signals from instruments or microphones to the multitrack where they are to be recorded; and it must allow us to mix the recorded tracks together to two tracks.

When you are ready to make the purchase of a mixer, make sure it is a *recording console*. Time and time again, first-time buyers are unaware of the difference. Mixers are often described with a numbered configuration; for example, 16x4x2. Simply translated, this means that there are 16 input channels, four subgroups and two master outputs (stereo). In a recording console, the 16 inputs

would normally be used for instrument/microphone signals which would then be routed to one or more of the subgroups. The *subs* or *group outs*, as they are commonly referred to as, are usually connected to the recorder's inputs directly or via the patchbay. They are particularly useful if you want to send more than one signal to the same tape track (i.e., multiple drum tracks). An eight-track multitrack for example, would be best served by a mixer with eight group outs.

If your intention is to ultimately expand your home studio, it may be in your better interest to purchase the largest and most versatile mixer your budget will allow. Most often, you will outgrow your mixer before the multitrack.

Features you should be most concerned with when making a decision to buy should include:

Equalization

- What type of EQ (parametric, semi parametric, sweepable, etc.) is available on that particular model?
- How many bands?
- How effective is the EQ component for your application?
- How quiet is the EQ component of the board?

Effects sends/returns

- How many effect sends are available?
- How quiet are the sends/returns?
- Are they stereo, mono or both?

Inputs

- How many inputs do you immediately require and how many do you expect to require in the foreseeable future?
- Are the inputs 1/4", RCA, XLR, etc. and how will this affect your ability to plug in the gear?

HOME RECORDING

the console. Preferably, you will want one insert point for each mixer input.

THE MULTITRACK RECORDER

24, 8, 16, 48, 64, unlimited hike!!

It ain't football, but making a decision on what kind of multitrack to purchase (and with how many tracks) can be just as punishing. Again, you must analyze and recognize your individual needs and budget. With the advent of digital technology and its availability to the

home studio recordist, the decision between analog and digital can be one of the most perplexing. Digital eight-track configurations are wonderful machines; however, they are substantially more expensive and, due to the nature of their recording capabilities, if your mixer and associated gear is not up to the same standard you may find yourself in trouble with noise and distortion.

Analog is not dead — nor is it likely to be in the near future. Con-

figurations of 2, 4, 8, 16 and 24 tracks are now affordable, particularly on the used equipment market — but beware. Purchasing this piece of gear is a crucial step in putting together your studio, so if you don't feel comfortable in your abilities to spot and detect potential problem gear, seek the advice of someone you trust and who is in the know.

ANALOG, DIGITAL, OR VIRTUAL?

Your specific needs and budget can best determine which format is best suited to you. While hard disk recording is generally out of reach of the home studio, digital multitrack recorders such as the Alesis A-dat and the Tascam DA-88 are now within a competitive price range for higher-end studios. These units are both eight-track configurations with the ability of expanding to 16, 24, 32 or more tracks by way of an additional remote controller (and additional expense).

There are several analog multitracks on the market, but for the home studio, manufacturers such as Fostex and Tascam have a hold on the market share of units eight tracks and up. As a sketch pad, the four-

Phantom Power

- Is the board capable of supplying phantom power for your condenser microphones or will you be required to purchase a power supply for this purpose?

Insert Points

- Inserts are usually used to route the channel's signal directly to a signal processor such as a compressor/limiter and then back to

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track units now available are extremely versatile and convenient. While most utilize cassette format, there are some older, used units on the market which use 1/4" reel-to-reel. These units tend to give better quality recordings due to the physical capabilities of the tape stock. The downside is that the tape is more expensive and the noise reduction systems of these older units are not at par with those currently available on the newer models.

Fostex currently dominates the eight-track analog market with their R8 reel-to-reel multitrack recorder. The older but respected A8 and A80 models can currently be had on the used market for the cost of a top-of-the-line four-track cassette machine. After eight tracks, the selection widens considerably. Tape formats, noise reduction, circuitry, etc. all become factors in making purchase decisions and weeding through this maze of information is at least another entire magazine issue!

If MIDI/computer applications is your bag, there are several outstanding software programs available to you on IBM, Mac and Atari platforms. No longer limited to droning sequenced passages, the computer has earned the right to be associated with and even considered a

multitrack machine. Be cautious — while many will disagree (I can hear them screaming already), the battle of industry standard has yet to be clearly won among computer manufacturers and their formats. Today we see the crossover effect of software programs which were previously only available on one computer system, now being made available on two or three. Again, identify your needs. If you require notational, sequencing, hard disk recording, sound manipulation, multimedia or live performance capabilities (or even all of the above), there is a system available to you.

SIGNAL PROCESSORS/EFFECTS

There is a difference between signal processors and signal effects. A processor manipulates and changes the original signal, while an effect adds to the original signal. An example of a processor would be an EQ, while an example of an effect would be a reverb unit. Which to buy you ask? Both are integral components to a home studio setup.

There are several quality multi-effect units available on the market at

varying costs. Ideally, a dedicated reverb unit of the highest quality you can afford is the first purchase you should make after the mixer and multitrack. This piece of gear will likely remain in your arsenal for quite some time if you purchase wisely. Ensure that it is as quiet and noiseless as possible. There is a substantial difference between a studio reverb and the reverb settings on your favourite rackmount guitar effect. Manufacturers such as Lexicon currently offer high-quality reverbs with outstanding features at prices previously unheard of only five years ago.

Your second purchase in this area should be a quality compressor/limiter. Such devices, in addition to making that bass drum or bass guitar sound punchier, will allow you to print your program to tape much hotter, thus keeping your tracks as far as possible above the noise floor of the tape format you have chosen to go with. This is particularly important if you are working with cassette and 1/4" formats.

Multi-effectors are the extra gravy on the french fries. They allow for that different reverb on the vocal with a little pitch detune or chorusing effect. In the home studio market, they

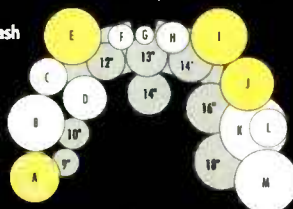
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INTERNATIONALS.



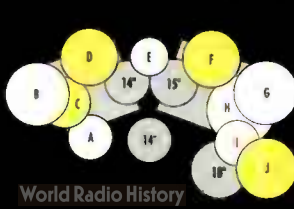
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- I 18" AA Medium Crash
- J 17" HH Thin Crash
- K 22" HH Rock Ride
- L 12" AA Mini Chinese
- M 20" HH Thin Chinese



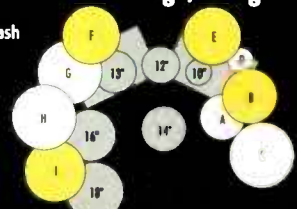
VINNIE PAUL
Pantera

- A 14" AA Rock Hats
- B 20" AA Chinese
- C 16" AA Rock Crash
- D 18" AA Rock Crash
- E 12" AA Rock Splash
- F 18" AA Rock Crash
- G 20" AA Chinese
- H 22" Powerbell Ride
- I 14" AA Rock Hats
- J 19" AA Rock Crash



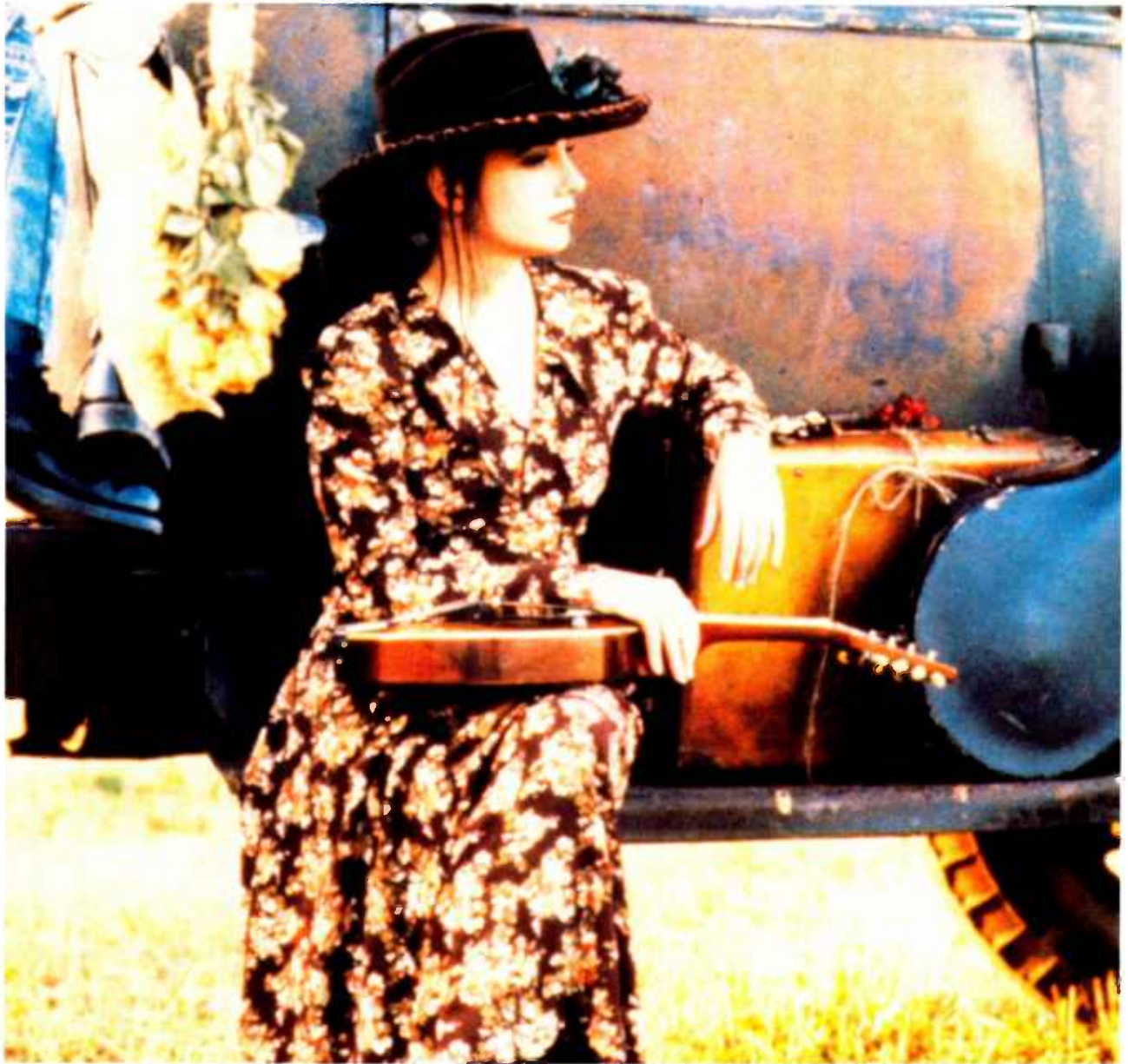
ROD MORGENSTEIN
Dixie Dregs, Winger

- A 14" AA Regular Hats
- B 17" AA Medium Thin Crash
- C 20" AA Chinese
- D 10" AA Splash
- E 18" AA Medium Thin Crash
- F 18" AA Rock Crash
- G 21" AA Dry Ride
- H 20" HH Thin Chinese
- I 19" AA Medium Crash



cassandra vasik

a team philosophy



Behind every successful artist there is always a support team — Elvis had Priscilla and the Colonel; the Beatles had Eppy and George Martin; and The Partridge Family had Rueben and Mom. For red hot Canadian country chanteuse Cassandra Vasik, that team is Tim Thorney, Erica Ehm and Peter Lee.

Although Vasik's debut *Wildflowers* came out in 1991, her path to that breakthrough release began a decade earlier. Both Lee and Vasik are alumni of the early '80s music program at Fanshawe College. As fate would have it, they lost contact until some five years later at Toronto's Manta Sound, "I used to do some engineering work at Manta," says Lee, "and one day when I went in for a meeting with Andy Hermant (the studio's owner), I came in the front door and there was Cassandra . . ."



by Ian Menzies

she was the receptionist." The two wasted no time making good use of their musical surroundings. "We spent a lot of time working in the studio," says Vasik, "me on my singing and playing and Peter on the sound." The ground work proved prophetic since Lee is the man responsible for the vocal sound that you hear on Cassandra's records today. "Even back in Fanshawe she always had a great voice," Lee says. "I always believed in her."

The halls of Manta were also the spawning ground for Lee's friendship with Tim Thorney. "I was assisting for an album by The Front with Joel Feeney when I met Tim," says Lee. "He's a great songwriter and a huge talent. I asked him as a favour to listen to some stuff of Cassandra's and he came back and said 'I really like her voice, let's get together and I'll bring over some of my stuff.'" It wasn't until he arrived that Cassandra realized what she'd lucked into. "He came over with an incredible number of

tunes," she says. "It was unbelievable." From there, the Vasik team was in place and Thorney and Ehm became the exclusive writers for the new project.

The Fabulous Foursome

Over the years, a unique working relationship has developed between the tight knit group and though there have been many changes, a few things have remained consistent. Vasik explains, "Any of the songs I select — and it's solely my choice what songs I do — I have to be able to relate to them lyrically. Even if it's different from the writer's point of view. I honestly believe that if I can interpret it in my own way, then maybe the listener will be able to as well." Thorney agrees. "Usually before we even write a song, I'll talk to Cassandra about a certain feel or idea and

then Erica and I will get together and do most of the leg-work

putting a tune together around that idea. Then we get back to her and see if she could sing something like that. For Cassandra, it's sort of like being at a tailor and looking at yourself in the mirror and there's pins everywhere. She's got to decide whether she can wear something like that before we can take the pins out and make the final adjustments."

With credits that include work with Joel Feeney, Marc Jordan and Dan Hill (he is currently working on the next Leslie Spit album), Tim Thorney is one of Canada's busiest and most successful songwriters. A prolific creator, Thorney's biggest struggle is to keep it fresh. "I have a really good collection of exotic instruments like sitars and bandolas and bouzoukis, and we write mostly on

that stuff," says the affable tunesmith. "I play all of these stringed instruments with a lot of different tunings so my fingers don't play from habit." The technique helps keep his ears open to new sounds. "If you want an E chord on a standard tuned guitar, you always go to the same old place. But with odd tunings and different instruments, everything is serewed up and you don't know how to play an E chord anymore so you've just got to make it sound good." To accommodate everyone's busy schedules, the process frequently takes place with

the help of 'Ma Bell'. "If they get a chorus or a verse they like, they call me up whenever it happens," says Vasik. "It could be any time, day or night, whenever they get inspired to write. They will sing and play it for me over the phone and get some feedback from me."

More than songwriters, Thorney and Ehm are also the producers, and Thorney has a distinct approach to studio work. "When you're producing a fairly low budget record — \$25,000 to \$50,000 — the art of the producer is to know when it's being over-done. The things that become important to work on are first impressions so we made no demos, we just went in prepared and started cutting." That sense of reality is evident in the tracks and it's a quality Thorney has always loved. "When I hear an artist going out on different limbs, that's when music is exciting. It's the flaws on the record that become attractive."

Cutting Tracks

All the bed tracks for *Feels Like Home* were done in the evenings at Toronto's Sounds Interchange. Because the studio was busy by day, each night the band had to set up from scratch. "It was a bit of a pain," says Lee, "but what it did was it gave a new perspective every night, it was kind of a neat way to work." With players changing for almost every track, the variations were endless but the fluent engineer was more than up to the task.

When the decision was made to use Sounds Interchange, Thorney warned Lee to come prepared. "I said 'here's what we're doing,'" he jokes, "'we're going into the big room at Interchange but we're not using the board so come prepared.'" Sure enough, he came in with a bunch of weird ass racks full of gear. "The weird ass gear was a collection of outboard units, ranging from vintage to prototype, that Lee has been collecting over the years. "By the time we got it set up there were about 20 mic preamps and EQs in line — Focusrites, Yamahas, Pultees and some new Brystons," Lee explains. "At the time I had them, the Brystons were still prototypes. They were being developed by a good friend of mine there, Stuart Taylor. He was still experimenting with different transformers and everything but they were already happening, they sounded great." Bypassing the sound desk turned out to be an advantage for the nightly set ups. "We didn't have to deal with a zeroed board every time we set up since our settings were in the rack," says Lee, "so that actually sped things up."

The bed tracks were cut on a Studer 24-track and immediately dumped to a Sony 48-track digital machine to preserve the quality of the original analog tape for the

Vasik's Voice

"I've never had any sort of vocal training," admits Vasik. "It's all in my head — I just feel it. I get inspired by the song first and when you add the great session players I get to work with, it just grows from there." As naturally blessed as she is, Cassandra has experienced the common problems of all professional singers. "Back when I was doing club work, five to six nights a week singing commercial Top 40 music, I would have a tendency to lose my voice by about the fourth or fifth night and I'm sure it's because I wasn't using it properly. But now it's paced a little differently, I'm more comfortable singing what I'm doing since the songs are written for me and not for other performers; and now I'm very cautious about getting the right sleep and rest and treating it like an instrument."

Although her voice is always improving, Cassandra is the first to admit she could do more. "I will hum in the shower and on the way to gigs but I still don't do any scales and such. I can tell when we're playing live that by the third song or so I'm singing better than when we started so I know warm-ups work and it makes sense to do it, but so far I don't."



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As Country As She Wants to Be

The clarity and directness of sound on *Feels Like Home* was enhanced further by the addition of Guido Luciani as arranger. Although much of his input is subtle, the 14-piece string section on "Let Sleeping Dogs Lie" is a bold stroke that works beautifully against the song's country folk undertow. "Musically, this song is a journey," says Vasik. "It takes you on a trip of self expression. It was an exciting experiment mixing country folk with full string orchestration and it really worked." Luciani's arrangements are the logical extension of the Vasik team philosophy. "When we started to work together," says Thorne, "we decided that we wanted to make the music so that it would have been the same if you played it in 1890, with no need for electric instruments." It's a

Just Duet

As a vocal showcase, the duet is one of pop music's most enduring forms. From the leather and lace crooning of Stevie Nicks and Don Henley to the Levis and strutting legs of Bryan Adams and Tina Turner, the pairing of two distinct voices has brought us some of modern music's most memorable moments.

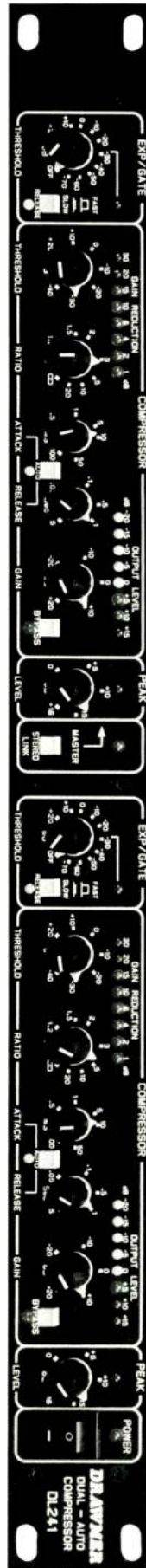
On *Feels Like Home*, Cassandra performs duets with both Russell deCarle of Prairie Oyster and Jim Cuddy of Blue Rodeo. "They're two totally different artists in two totally different situations," says Vasik, "but I'm really happy about the results with both of them." As with most things Cassandra does, both match-ups came through her growing network of acquaintances. "We had opened for Prairie Oyster over the summer," she recalls, "and Russell said he'd really like to sing with me some time if there's ever an opportunity, so later that year we took him up on it. 'Fortune Smiled On Me' is a fun song, so, even though originally it wasn't a duet, it was an obvious choice for us. It was the first duet I'd ever recorded for one of my own albums and I was nervous because I didn't know if our voices would blend. We wanted to get that live feel so I went out on the floor with him to record it and we traded off parts." The artists' interaction shines through on the final track.

Jim Cuddy's involvement came about a little differently. "Erica has known Jim a long time and thought that he would sound good on the song 'Almost Like You Cared'; and I said 'oh sure, as if he would ever sing with me', but he did." Vasik was duly impressed. "He was just the best! He was beyond professional. He made sure that the focus stayed on the lead vocal, but at the same time, he sang his heart out. It wasn't a case of whether we liked it or not, it was more like 'no that's not good enough, give me another run through'. I tend to work that way myself, so he was great to work with." For both Cuddy and deCarle, it's safe to say the feeling was mutual.

sentiment echoed by Vasik, "We have this unwritten rule between us, if it's good enough with just acoustics and voice, then it will only get better as we add things to it."

Keeping her approach fresh and surrounding herself with great people, Cassandra is fast becoming a mainstay on Canada's music scene. "I don't want to be pigeon-holed as being a country artist," Vasik stresses. "There are so many styles and variations of music that I really enjoy and have become part of my sound. Of course, that includes traditional country, but if you listen to the two albums I think you can hear the other things in there that fall in and out of country." Whatever category you put her in, Cassandra Vasik and her talented support team continue making music that people want to hear.

Ian Menzies is a Toronto-based musician and freelance writer.



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HOLLY COLE TRIO

by Geoffrey Davis

ONLY THE HOLLY COLE TRIO CAN MAKE THIS COMBINATION OF SMOOTH AND COARSE, BLACK AND WHITE, DAY AND NIGHT, WORK. BUT IT HASN'T BEEN EASY. LIKE ALL GOOD SURVIVING ENTITIES, THIS ONE HAS HAD TO ENDURE A PROCESS OF EVOLUTION. AN EVOLUTION WHICH MANY ACTS DO NOT SURVIVE, BUT ONE WHICH HAS, IN THE CASE OF THE HOLLY COLE TRIO, MADE IT A HIGHLY INTEGRATED, STRONG, YET FLEXIBLE MUSICAL UNIT.

DURING THE RECORDING OF THE TRIO'S FIRST TWO RELEASES, 1990'S *GIRL TALK* AND 1991'S *BLAME IT ON MY YOUTH*, THEY LEARNED THAT DUE TO THE TRIO'S MUSICAL STRUCTURE, THEY ALL HAD TO BE DEEPLY INVOLVED IN THE PRODUCTION OF THEIR RECORDS, MEANING THEY COULDN'T BE SATISFIED JUST LEAVING IT ALL UP TO THE PRODUCER. THIS TRAIT BECAME MORE PRONOUNCED DURING THE RECORDING OF THEIR LATEST RELEASE, *DON'T SMOKE IN BED*. "BECAUSE OF THE WAY WE WRITE OUR OWN PARTS," EXPLAINS PIANIST AARON DAVIS, "WHenever ANY CHANGE WAS INTRODUCED BY A SOLOIST, OR IF HOLLY OR DAVID OR I CAME UP WITH SOMETHING NEW, WE WOULD EACH HAVE TO RE-EVALUATE AND MAYBE REARRANGE OUR OWN PARTS." EACH SONG HAD TO BE ARRANGED WITH THE SAME CARE THEY USE IN CHOOSING THEIR MATERIAL.

FOR *DON'T SMOKE IN BED*, THE TRIO EN-

LISTED THE AID OF PRODUCER DAVID WAS AND ENGINEER LEEANE UNGAR, AND RECORDED THE MATERIAL AT BROOKLYN RECORDING STUDIOS IN LOS ANGELES DURING MARCH, 1993. PRIOR TO THEIR TRIP TO L.A., AARON, HOLLY, AND BASSIST DAVID PILTCH HAD SPENT A LOT OF TIME WORKING ON PREPRODUCTION. USING A FOUR-TRACK, THEY ARRANGED, RE-ARRANGED AND GENERALLY DISSECTED ALL THE MATERIAL THAT WAS TO BE RECORDED, THEN THEY PUT IT BACK TOGETHER AGAIN. AARON DAVIS HAD EVEN WORKED OUT THE BULK OF THE STRING ARRANGEMENTS BEFOREHAND. (TYPICALLY, DAVIS REMARKS THAT "THERE WASN'T THAT MUCH ARRANGING TO DO; IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF DOUBLING THINGS THAT WERE ALREADY THERE.") FORTUNATELY, THEIR CHOICE OF PRODUCER WAS A WISE ONE, IN THAT DAVID WAS COULD ALLOW THE TRIO THE FREEDOM THEY NEEDED. WORKING WITH WAS "MADE ME REALIZE THAT WE KNOW EXACTLY WHAT WE WANT" STATES COLE.

DON'T SMOKE IN BED DIFFERS FROM THE PREVIOUS TWO RELEASES IN THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL FEATURED SOLOISTS (DAVID LINDLEY, JOE HENDERSON, HOWARD LEVY) ON VARIOUS TRACKS AND THE SOUND IS FILLED OUT BY THE INCLUSION OF ART AVALOS (MANTECA) ON PERCUSSION FOR SOME TRACKS, AS WELL AS A STRING SECTION ON "I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW" AND "BLAME IT ON MY YOUTH".

SINCE THE HOLLY COLE TRIO ARE A TOURING ENTITY, HOW COULD THEY ARRANGE THIS SO THAT THE PIECES WILL NOT SOUND EMPTY LIVE (WITHOUT TRAVELLING WITH EXTRA PERSONNEL)? "THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR EACH OF THOSE PARTS WAS DONE IN SUCH A WAY," EXPLAINS DAVIS, "THAT THEY FIT AROUND THE PARTS THAT THE TRIO HAD ALREADY WRITTEN. ON OUR PREPRODUCTION TAPES, WE ALREADY HAD THE SONGS DOWN THE WAY WE WANTED THEM IN MOST CASES. THE EXTRA PARTS ARE USED AS COLOURING. IT ADDS TO THE RECORD, BUT LIVE, YOU DON'T REALLY NOTICE THAT THOSE PARTS AREN'T THERE."

IN THE AGE OF NIRVANA, A STRING SECTION IS AS DATED AS BOBBY SHERMAN, AND THEREFORE, KIND OF A DANGEROUS ADDITION. "THE TRICK IS NOT TO LET IT OVERPOWER YOU AND DRAG YOU INTO THE LAND OF . . . OF *SCHMALTZ*," SAYS HOLLY, "IN TERMS OF ARRANGEMENT, IT'S A CHALLENGE TO KEEP THE FOCUS OF THE TRIO, TO KEEP THE INTEGRITY OF THE SOUND AND THE CONCEPT OF THE THREE OF US WITH HAVING ALL THESE STRINGS SO IT DOESN'T TURN INTO SOMETHING NORMAL, LIKE A MUZAK SESSION-O-RAMA. WE KEPT IT UNUSUAL, AND I WAS HAPPY FOR THAT."

USING A MIXTURE OF VINTAGE AND CUSTOM-PENNED TUNES FROM THE LIKES OF CASEY SCOTT, MARY MARGARET O'HARA, COLE PORTER AND JOHNNY NASH, THEY HAVE A UNIQUE REPERTOIRE, WHICH MATCHES THEIR UNIQUE PERFORMING STYLE. THIS TYPE OF MATERIAL USUALLY RECEIVES RATHER LUSH RENDITIONS FROM OTHER BANDS, BUT THE HOLLY COLE TRIO ARE ABLE TO INJECT THESE SONGS WITH A NEW LIFE USING ONLY PIANO, BASS AND VOCALS. "OUR INSTRUMENTATION CAME ABOUT AS A SORT OF FLUKE," ADMITS COLE. "THE FIRST GIG WE GOT, YEARS AGO, FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, WE WEREN'T ABLE TO GET A REAL RHYTHM SECTION

PREFERRED TOYS

Holly Cole, vocalist

Preferred Microphone: AKG 535

"Right now, I prefer the AKG 535; it sounds really good, it's exceptionally clear. It doesn't lose the bottom-end of my voice. The Shure SM58, the workhorse of the industry, can also sub as a hammer. The AKG 535 doesn't have that durability. In fact, we find that we have to replace the cartridge in it fairly often to keep it sounding good, it tends to degrade with use. But that's a small price to pay for the way it makes me sound."

Aaron Davis, pianist

Preferred Instrument: Hamburg Steinway ("but New York Steinways and Bosendorfer pianos will do.")

Monitors: Energy 2.1e (live), Veritas 1.8 (studio monitors)

Computer System: Macintosh IICI (used for arrangement, preproduction, etc.)

Sequencer: Performer

String arrangements worked out on a Kurzweil K2000R. On the record, Aaron Davis used a 9-foot New York Steinway from Remenyi House of Music in Toronto.

"On the road, we do not travel with a piano, so I have to use whatever the venue provides. This presents a whole range of problems, from simple tuning problems to actually having to use instruments whose keys do not work, or have problems with their actions. And each instrument has a different feel. On some of the songs, I need to get inside the piano to dampen the strings, or hammer on them. I used my watch for that (a Seiko, it was lost in Japan). Different pianos have metal braces in different places, so sometimes I have a hard time getting inside in order to play, but we usually find a way. In general, the more successful the band is, the better pianos we get to play. In the past couple of years, we've been playing some pretty good pianos."

TOGETHER. SO IT WAS JUST THE THREE OF US. WE DIDN'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF AN 'ORCHESTRA', SO WE HAD TO REDO THE ARRANGEMENTS TO FILL IN THE SPACE LEFT BY NOT HAVING A DRUMMER OR GUITARIST." AND OFF THEY WENT ON THE ROAD TO MINIMALISM.

THAT ROAD HAS TAKEN THE HOLLY COLE TRIO TO EUROPE, ACROSS NORTH AMERICA AND TO ASTONISHING SUCCESS IN JAPAN. *BLAME IT ON MY YOUTH* CAUSED A NEAR "HOLLY-MANIA" THERE, SELLING WELL OVER 100,000 COPIES. THAT ALBUM ALSO CHARTED ON *BILLBOARD*'S JAZZ CHART, AND REMAINS A STEADY SELLER.

David Piltch, confessed Bassaholic

Preferred Instrument: European string bass of unknown origin (probably Czech).

Bass is approximately 30 years old, and is fitted with Schertler pickups.

Onstage sound is a mix of direct pickup and microphone signal (no amp, it runs straight to the mixer).

"I don't play a ten or twenty thousand-dollar instrument; it's price was, I think, at the bottom end of the good ones or maybe, the top end of the bad ones. The top is a good resonant wood, the sides may even be plywood, I'm not sure. But what is important, is that the tone it makes pleases me and it stays in tune. It's one of those basses that nobody knows exactly where it came from, when it was made or who made it. All we know is it's European and the top is made out of wood! A symphony player would never play it. The person who would play it would want a lot of volume, stability (in that it reacts very little to changes in temperature, or travel), and appreciate the fact that it's three-quarter size. I used to play a full-sized, high-quality bass, and there were things about it I never learned to deal with. I learned on a three-quarter sized bass, and my hand

never got much bigger, so changing my hand position was a problem. I also never got used to the temperamental instrument that was always in need of attention. I was going to sell my smaller one, but when guys came over to play it, they really liked it, so I knew there was something about it. I ended up selling the full-sized, expensive one instead.

"It's not a real rich-sounding bass, but I use a lot of equalization and a lot of direct signal to try and get the sound I'm looking for. I don't totally depend on the quality of the instrument itself. In the studio, I use effects to give my sound qualities other than a string bass would have. I like the sound of an acoustic bass, but I will enhance that to get a distinctive sound. I take advantage of the fact that the smaller instruments are more mid-rangey, and have an added punch as far as percussive qualities go. The only problem I can see, as far as following your own instincts go, is that in determining what sounds good, you may get so caught up in your own sound you lose your perspective, with the danger of becoming inflexible. I choose my instruments according to my musical needs."

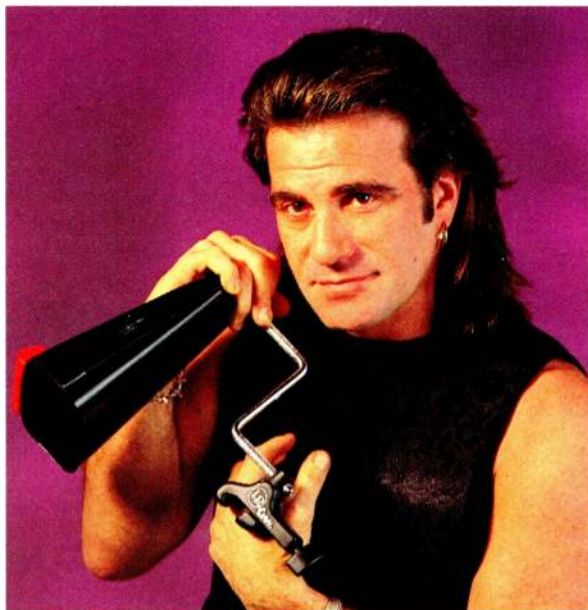
HOLLY COLE TRIO

THEIR RECENT ONTARIO PLACE SHOW GAVE THE TRIO THE CHANCE TO PLAY LIVE WITH BOTH AVALOS AND THE STRING SECTION. AS HOLLY EXPLAINS, "IT WAS DIFFERENT BECAUSE I'M SO USED TO PLAYING WITH TWO OTHER PEOPLE, AND IT'S SUCH AN OPEN, AIRY SOUND; AND THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN IT'S TWENTY PEOPLE AND IT'S A WASH; IT'S A BIG SOUND WITH ALL THE SPACES FILLED. FOR ME, IT'S ALMOST EASIER BECAUSE AS A SINGER, YOU'RE NOT SCRUTINIZED AS MUCH. TONALLY THERE'S MORE ROOM TAKEN UP BY THE OTHER PLAYERS. BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT I'VE ALWAYS SUNG THIS WAY WITH JUST THE THREE OF US, I'VE NEVER NOTICED THAT IT WAS HARDER TO DO; TO SING WITH JUST THREE THAN WITH THE WHOLE GROUP. I NEVER REALIZED BEFORE THAT THERE WAS NO 'NET'. IT WAS EYE-OPENING TO REALIZE THAT WHAT WE DO IS KIND OF CHALLENGING. WHEN I'M UP THERE, A GREAT NUMBER OF THINGS RUN THROUGH MY HEAD;" SHE PAUSES AND LAUGHS, "BUT MOST OF ALL, I WANT IT TO NEVER END; I WANT TO SUSPEND THE MOMENT FOREVER BECAUSE IT'S SUCH AN UNBELIEVABLE FEELING."



Geoffrey Davis is a Toronto-based freelance writer.

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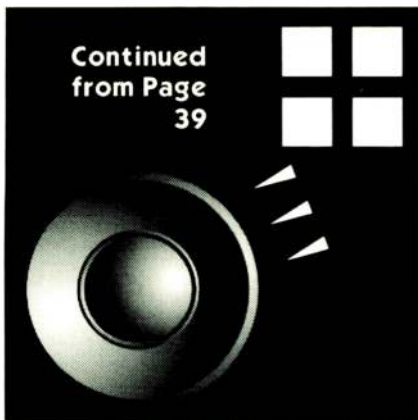
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tend to be a little noisier than dedicated effect units, but "that's part of our sound, man!". Units such as the Yamaha SPX90 and Roland DEP 5 may be frowned upon by those purist types, but you'll always find one somewhere in their pasts. Today, in the used market, they are great value for the buck.

MONITORS/POWER AMPS

Because we probably don't have room in our budgets for substantial acoustical treatments (floating floors, decoupling the room from the structure, acoustic sealants and an understanding landlord), near-field monitors are a must for the home studio. They are designed to give as accurate a representation of what you are recording as possible without 'colouring' the sound and being too affected by room resonances, etc. Unfortunately, they are the most subjective piece of gear you will have to purchase. Everyone can tell you what the best speakers are. Unfortunately, they will all give you a different answer. What to do, you ask? Use your ears. When shopping around, take your favourite CD with you to pump through the speakers. It should be a selection you are acutely aware of and, to some extent, representative of the type of program material you are likely to be working with. The frequency response should be as wide as possible (preferably 20 Hz to 20 kHz) but don't rely solely on the product's specifications. There are several manufacturers addressing this part of the market. Tannoy, Yorkville, JBL and Yamaha are but a few.

Power amps are almost as subjective as monitors. It is always advantageous to make the purchase of the power amp and monitors at the same time so as to assemble an accurate 'system'. If this is not possible, always bring one component with you when purchasing the other. If your budget will only allow you to purchase one component at this time, it may be advantageous to purchase the monitors first. A high-quality stereo amplifier or receiver can always be used in the interim. Buy the proper amp. PA amplifiers or boom boxes are a no-no, unless of course, that's all the budget will allow.

MIXDOWN

After we have recorded all that we need to our multitrack, we will want to mix it down to two tracks as a final stage in the process. Typically, the cassette is the

most common format for mixdown. It is convenient and you probably already have one in your budding studio. You may wish to keep this format and eventually upgrade the quality of the deck if need be, but you should be aware of the alternatives and their quality.

HALF TRACK:

Generally 1/4" or 1/2" analog tape stock on a reel-to-reel machine. The quality is still, in this digital age, preferred by many major studios. Working with this format allows for greater flexibility in cutting, splicing etc. Many believe there is a greater 'warmth' in the final mix using this format.

VHS HI-FI:

The mixdown is stored as sampled digital information at 44.056 kHz on video tape using a process known as Pulse Code Modulation (PCM). While the quality of this format is quite high, if you want to master the material to another format (ie., CD), it must be sample-converted to the standard 44.1 kHz sample rate. With the introduction of DAT, this type of system is declining due to competitive pricing, standards and complexity.

DAT (DIGITAL AUDIO TAPE):

With the availability and proliferation of the CD player and the quality of sound that people have come to expect as a result, it is hard not to go with DAT. A cassette player of high quality is priced approximately close to that of a basic DAT machine.

There are two standards currently in use for DAT machines. The pro standard

SCMS: SERIAL CODE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The result of a compromise between DAT manufacturers and the organizations that represent composers, songwriters and publishers, SCMS was developed to control the unauthorized copying of CDs onto DAT (thereby making a perfect digital copy), which could then be used for uses contrary to copyright laws (bootlegs, etc.).

SCMS allows for the making of a first-generation recording of the CD onto DAT, but will not allow for the making of additional copies from that DAT. The problem for recording studios is that copies of your final mixes on DAT cannot be made for backup or editing purposes. Therefore, you should consider a DAT recorder that does not have SCMS, or at least, offers a way of bypassing it.

is the AES/EBU, while the consumer standard is SP/DIF. The difference is one of connectors and levels. The AES standard generally uses XLR or optical connectors, while the SP/DIF most often utilizes RCA jacks. It is important to note that these formats are not level compatible with each other, and therefore cannot be interconnected.

All DAT machines are able to recog-

nize 32, 44.1 and 48 kHz formats at their digital inputs. The difficulty with consumer DATs is that they can only record at 48 kHz, which when used in a recording studio context, may cause problems and additional expenses to convert this sample rate to 44.1 kHz when mastering to CD (thinking ahead to that possibility). There are now many models available to the home studio recordist. The DAT machine has become one of those wonderful pieces of gear to cross the line and become available to pro studios and home studios alike. Features are varied and ultimately, one of the most important factors when considering a purchase. With the advent of SCMS (SCuMs), the decision becomes a little more complicated.

OFTEN OVERLOOKED COMPONENTS

THE PATCHBAY:

It is here that the signal passes and is re-routed and manipulated to effects, tape inputs/outputs etc. A well-designed patchbay can make your entire studio operate and function as one cohesive system.

CABLING:

Often forgotten until you bring all your gear home — only to find that you are unable to plug anything in! In the budget stage, be sure to allow for all required cabling and a little extra. Buying line and connectors in bulk and making them to your custom lengths and requirements often works out to be substantially cheaper. Make sure they are of the highest quality possible.

MICROPHONES:

If you intend to record acoustic instruments as well as vocals, a good quality cardioid condenser is a must (make sure you have a phantom power source either from the console, an external unit or, in some cases, a battery). Microphones come in all shapes and sizes, and some are designed for specific purposes — but don't let that stop you from experimenting. The highest quality mics can always be rented for sessions to avoid laying out a lot of cash.

SYNCHRONIZATION:

In this context, we generally are referring to hybrid home studios of tape, computer or video components. Synchronization allows whatever is on tape to be 'locked' together with whatever is on computer or video (or a combination of all three). The sync box may be an external unit, or a function of the computer or video system.

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY

The availability of technology has helped to create a new hybrid of musician who can now control every facet of their art and business. It is easy however, to get caught in the technology trap. Always keep in mind that the home studio should be designed to serve you as a musician, and not the other way around. The best home studios are developed over a greater period of time than many realize.

There is no way to completely elimi-



nate the process of trial and error. When you do make a mistake or lose money on a piece of gear, factor in the education you received in making that decision. It is a method of offsetting that loss.

The most important aspect in buying gear is finding someone who can not only sell it to you, but who knows what they are talking about. Don't believe everything you are told and realize that, in some cases, you are going to have to make decisions based on partial information.

Technology is and will continue to change and mutate. When you find a salesperson with whom you feel comfortable, it is often a good idea to stick with them. Even though their prices may not be the cheapest, service and good advice will ultimately save you money.



NOTABLE HOME STUDIOS

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IDEAS ON SETTING UP A HOME STUDIO, LOOK NO FURTHER THAN INTO THE HOMES OF SOME OF CANADA'S BETTER-KNOWN RECORDING ARTISTS AND PRODUCERS. AS YOU'LL SEE, THEY RUN THE GAMUT FROM SIMPLISTIC TO OUT-AND-OUT OUTRAGEOUS, PROVING THAT A WORKING STUDIO CAN BE HAD AT HOME TO MATCH ANY BUDGET OR APPLICATION.

JANE SIBERRY

"For this record, I put a band together, rehearsed one day, dissolved the band and did most of it on computer. As soon as I was surrounded by people I realized I should be working quietly alone . . ."

The importance of the home studio has never been in question with Jane Siberry. Many of her previous works include material recorded at home and subsequently transferred to the eventual masters. *When I Was a Boy*, her latest release, is no exception. Dissatisfied with her performance of the vocal tracks that were completed in a number of pro studios, Jane utilized her home studio to 'get it right'. She explains: "I bought this A-dat at the very end, and was able to take my TV mixes [program mixes that are recorded without vocals for the purpose of television performance], put them

onto my A-dat and redo all the vocals — which was really good for me because I was much more comfortable. Most of the vocals were done at my place. I did about five of the final vocals on the last night that I had the microphone rented. Just the last night, I felt something change in my apartment and I said 'Okay, go over to the tape recorder and start singing' and I did, and that's the record. I hope to do my next record, a lot of it, here . . ."

Her studio currently resides in the living-room of her home, and by some standards, may be considered sparse. Considering the importance of her home studio in the process of the final recording, one might be surprised. When asked if the presence of technology, in particular, the computer, ever gets in the way of the creative process, Siberry is quick to say no. "Why should it get in the way?"

BY PETER HAMILTON

The ART of Recording

Creative Recording: Volume I Effects and Processors

Chapters cover compressors and limiters, reverb units, gates and expanders, delays, pitch shifters, patch bays, enhancers and panners as well as related areas such as mixing, production and MIDI techniques. Volume I provides the most comprehensive coverage of this aspect of the recording process to date. **MU001 \$22.95**

Creative Recording: Volume III Acoustics, Soundproofing and Monitoring

Approach the complex subjects of soundproofing and acoustic treatment in a down-to-earth way. In non-technical English, this volume explains how sound escapes from, or leaks into, recording studios and offers remedies. Weak areas are identified with sections covering doors, windows and ceilings. Different approaches are explored, to fit all space or budget limitations. **MU003 \$22.95**

Creative Recording: Volume II Microphone and Recording Techniques

Take the mystery out of selecting and using microphones in a recording environment. Explanations include: how microphones work, the strengths and weaknesses of different types. Also: techniques for vocal and speech recording, classical stereo recording, recording rock and classical music. **MU002 \$22.95**

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The Billboard Guide To Home Recording

This complete reference on home recording equipment and techniques takes the professional or amateur musician step-by-step through the process of putting together a studio and then making the best possible recordings. **BB018 \$26.50**

How to Do a Demo-Quality Recording in Your Bedroom

Here is an itemized review of all the equipment and connections — monitor system, mixdown machine, outboard gear, grounding impedance machine. Signal Processing is also addressed in detail. Planning a recording session too! **AL002 \$21.95**

Multi-Track Recording

This comprehensive, easy-to-understand book explains how to set up a home studio, how to choose outboard gear and effects, synchronize tracks and incorporate MIDI in home recording. Suitable for working at home and advancing to the studio. **HL026 \$19.95**

Personal Recording

Both a general introduction to multitrack recording and a guide to the use of Yamaha equipment. Topics covered include: basic recording and over-dubbing; punch-in and punch-out to make spot corrections; ping-pong recording as a means of squeezing more parts onto fewer tracks; using sync recording to harness the power of MIDI; using effects units; mix-down and microphones. **HL040 \$13.95**

It's like a tape recorder — I mean, you don't consider that an intrusion of technology. I'm frustrated that I don't understand them well enough to move as quickly as my mind is going. But no, I use them (sequencers) as often as, more than tape recorders, so I see them as like a window that opens for me because I can't play all these instruments. Like most people with home studios, there's been a lot of learning in the last ten years to master all this technology . . . a lot of mental powers have gone into the music world to bring it to a new level. Not being able to play on guitar what I hear can get me the same way as technology. (It's) the physicality I like, I need very much to play real piano, to feel it come back into my chest as opposed to a monitor . . . there is something to that, for sure."

Sibbery assumes ultimate responsibility for her work, strongly believing that is how it should be. In regards to creating the sounds and ambience of a Sibbery record, she comments that it is important to have sounds that are "as undiluted and powerful as possible", a difficult task when using sampled sounds.

"It's really important that I'm not lying on the massage table and hear . . . a sound that I used, you know, where you say 'Oh my God, that sounds like a DX7 patch fourteen'. I try to keep them out of that line as much as possible. Because the power of sound is so deep and touches such deep parts, you don't want the extra baggage of (the listener) associating it with something else because

they heard it somewhere else. That's the great thing about the human voice . . . it always will be unique."

JANE SIBERRY'S EQUIPMENT

COMPUTER/SOFTWARE

Macintosh Centris 650
Performer (for sequencing)
Word (for lyrics)
QuarkXPress (for graphic design)
Excel (for budgets)

RECORDING/MIXING/MONITORING

Yamaha NS 10 monitors
Sony Compact Disc player
Alesis A-dat
Nikko Alpha 130 power amplifier
Mackie 1604 Mixer

OUTBOARD GEAR

Mark of the Unicorn MIDI Express module
MXR digital time delay
Symetrix voice processor
Yamaha SPX90
Akai S900 sampler
JAM box 4+

BOB WISEMAN

Recording artist/composer/songwriter/producer (*whew!*) Bob Wiseman describes his home studio as being akin to *PeeWee's Playhouse*. Recently offered a record deal at the New Music Seminar with U.S.-based label Bar None (They Might Be Giants), scoring a television

show for Nickelodeon in the U.S. entitled *Wild Side*, rehearsing his band for a North American tour this November and working on material for his next album, Wiseman is terminally excited about music; he loves to explore and have fun with his gear and has personalized his private studio environment by painting most of his outboard gear in brightly coloured designs. He believes the home studio is the best situation for creativity.

"The way to make the best music is by being able to try things in different ways, from different angles; and if you have to worry about coming up with anywhere from \$50-\$200 an hour, you can't really fool around. How can you when that kind of money is going down in the back of your head?" Wiseman believes that even the simplest of home studios has great value to a musician, "If your equipment is really good, you don't even need another studio, but at the very least, if your equipment isn't state-of-the-art, you can still make a great picture of what you're going to do and then go into a big studio and record." Wiseman finds his studio space offers him the ability to do just about everything he wants, "I'm working out of a basement, so room sounds are really the only thing that's lacking. I don't have the room to, say, do some distant miking; but the nature of equipment these days is such that you can do everything *but* spatial recording."

The quality of sampled sounds today is something that Wiseman finds phenomenal compared to years ago, but cautions that, "You have to have some sense

BY SHAUNA KENNEDY

The Musician's Home Recording Handbook

The ideal handbook for musicians who want to make high-quality recordings at home. With skill, creativity, and a can-do attitude, anyone can produce CD-quality recorded music at home with a minimum of technology and training. **HL090 \$25.95**

Home Recording Techniques

Without the technical jargon, this concise guide covers everything you need to know including equipment upkeep, microphone placement, track bouncing and more. Take the frustration out of home recording and make the most of what's really important — getting your absolute best on tape! **AP030 \$5.95**

Home Recording For Musicians

How to make good clean, professional-sounding demos at home, using affordable equipment. It covers tape decks, mics, studio equipment, tape, audio theory, noise reduction, acoustics and studio environment. Demonstration soundsheet included. **MS001 \$22.95**

Modern Recording Techniques

State-of-the-art topics include digital audio, random access audio and digital techniques in audio production. Ideal reference for the practising or aspiring recording engineer. **HS007 \$41.95**

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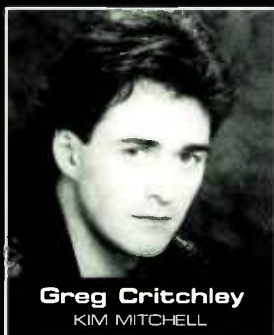
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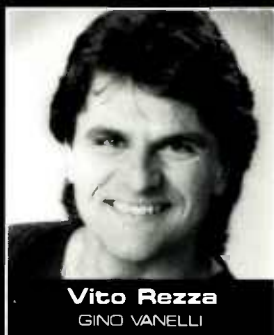
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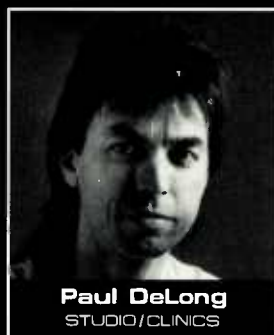
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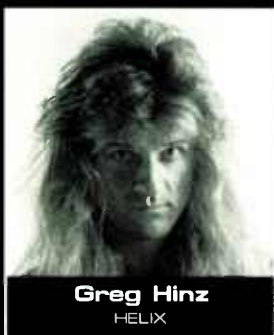
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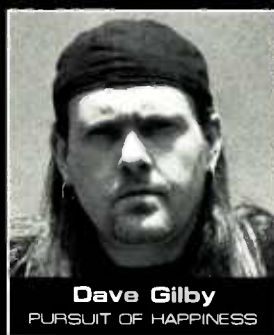
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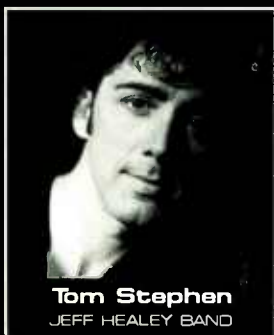
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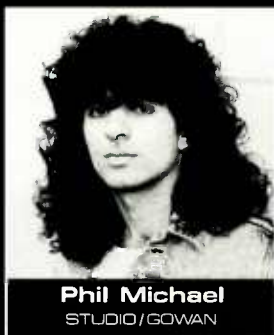
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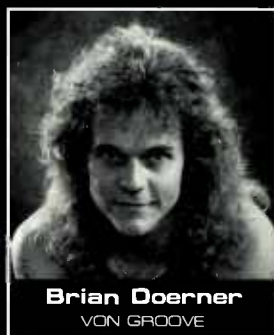
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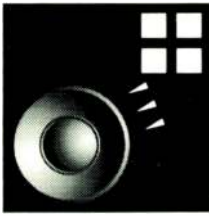


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of how to play them properly. You have to think like a violinist if you're going to play violin through a keyboard; if you don't — it's obvious. I was going to say that it's important to have some keyboard skills, but now you can trigger all that stuff through guitars or wind instruments — they're designing it so that you can control it through your natural instrument. And hard disk recording is probably the whole future — and it's the greatest fucking thing in the world!"

Having started out on a Tascam 244, Wiseman notes how far technology has taken the musician, "It's pretty funny when you think about the distance that's been travelled from PortaStudios to Pro Tools, but for all musicians, the advent of the four-track was revolutionary. It's incredible how quickly it all changed, and soon the word digital emerged — it's like going from a horse-drawn carriage to rocketships!"

So where does he feel technology will take the recording musician of the future? "It's hard to predict what's going to happen with modern recording studios. I imagine they'll continue to exist, but I think that their need is going to change. I would foresee that everyone

will become more tech-based in their day-to-day lives. By the turn of the century, this type of software could be revolutionized to the point where it's just like word processing. It's often talked about in the editorials of many trade magazines that product is going out the window — that by the turn of the century, there's not going to be stores selling cassettes and CDs — you're just going to get it on your phone line and store it in your computer."

Will such widely-available digital technology compromise the quality of music being created? Will the future usher in an age of canned compositions from mole-like basement recording technoids? "It's only progress — it's an asset; it can only result in people being more satisfied because they have the access to indulge in their work. They're only limited by their brains!"

BOB WISEMAN'S EQUIPMENT

Wiseman has obtained much of his more obscure equipment through pawn shops and second hand stores.

COMPUTER

Macintosh with Notator and Super Librarian software

RECORDING/MIXING/MONITORS

Soundtracs Solo 24-input console with MIDI muting
Tascam 16-track 1/2" (dbx)
Tascam DAT recorder

Casio DAT recorder
Tascam cassette deck
Fostex near-field monitors
Kirkland amplifier
Mackie 16D4 mixer
Ensoniq MIDI patchbay

SAMPLERS

Ensoniq EPS 16+
Sample Libraries: Phillips Essential,
Hollywood Edge, Morningstar Firetrucks

SOUND MODULES

Proteus 1, 2 and 3
Yamaha TQ77
Yamaha TX1P
Alesis D4
Morris Y89
Ilor S007
Voce (vintage keyboard/organ module)

SIGNAL PROCESSORS/EFFECTS

SansAmp
Ensoniq DP/4 (x2)
Old '70s digital delay

MICROPHONES

Neumann 87
Meshunga 69
AKG 414
Pipick 367 (x2 — long thin mics Bob uses for piano)
PZM

KEYBOARDS/SYNTHS

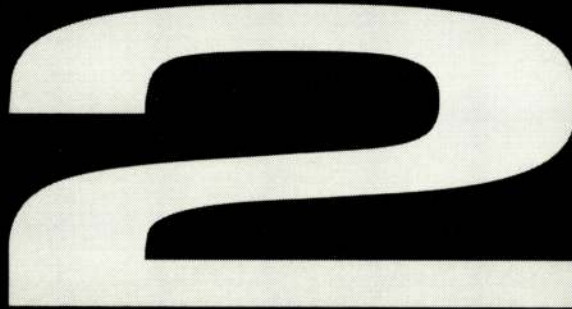
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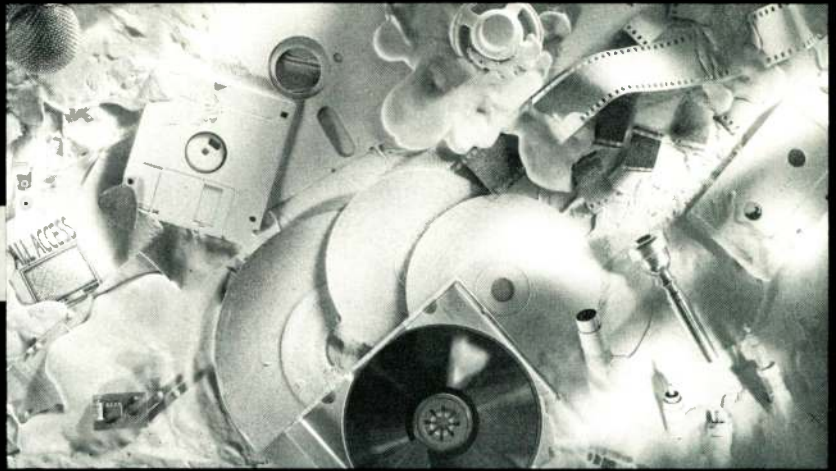


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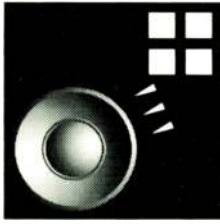
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PETER MOORE

Producer Peter Moore's studio is one example of the high-end home studio. The mastermind behind *The Trinity Sessions*, Moore's studio was originally designed as a mastering facility, but he has found that it is also suited to some recording and mixing applications, as well as being entirely portable and remoteable.

Moore explains how he designed his studio for its intended application and stresses the importance of the room

BY SHAUNA KENNEDY



OTHER GOODIES

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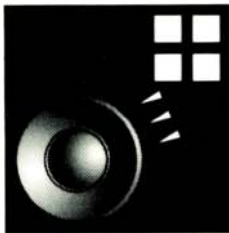
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when planning a home studio for serious work. "The primary set up of this is as a mastering facility. The room design and the Sonic Solutions monitoring array (the de facto standard for monitoring) is primarily for mastering; but it's really great when you can mix in a room that is designed for absolute final mastering, be-

cause the mixes come out amazing!

"The way I went about building this place was to do the room modifications first. I spent my money and time on getting the room correct, and then I spent money and time on the monitors. From there, I went slowly into multitrack and everything else.

"Most small studios don't give consideration to the room they're mixing in, and that's a big mistake. They always jump the gun — they buy the outboard gear, they buy the multitracks, but they don't have a room to mix in properly; and hence, many small demo recordings made sound like crap because they cannot monitor properly.

"Based on intent, the monitoring is the paramount, most important thing period;

because the minute you put an equalizer in your hand, that equalizer is totally dependent on your monitoring — everything depends on your monitoring and if your monitoring is off, why bother? If you don't have a monitoring setup that's accurate, then you might as well just do songwriting demos — but if your intent is something else, then you have to spend more time, and it's not easy. My first goal was to have a reference room — a room that I could go to and listen to my mixes and listen to other albums and CDs and have an accurate judgement of what's going on."

To achieve that, Moore hired Ottawa-based Claude Fortier, whose work includes design for Sounds Interchange and the TVO studios. Fortier is also the designer and builder of the SOTA CF 500 monitors (pretty well the reference standard in Toronto) Moore uses in his studio. Sounds Interchange uses the SOTA 2000s.

"Basically, I gave him the dimensions, the coefficients, the materials — what the walls were made of, the heights, these kinds of things — and he generated a computer diagram from that and made recommendations on what materials to use for the sound treatments (Moore uses Cutting Wedge), the big angle in the front of the room, the panels behind the speakers — these are all factors that he put in."

With 18 years experience in building and redesigning circuits and equipment, Moore also makes modifications to most of his studio gear, and has a complete tech bench with scopes and distortion analyzers — a setup most pro studios lack. "It took me two years to come up with a crossover for the NS-10s that is just amazing. The crossover now really makes the NS-10s sit properly and they still retain an NS-10 characteristic. I have stock pairs of NS-10s here too, so if that's an issue, I have pairs that haven't been modified."

Moore has just finished work on the Wild Strawberries' album, and is currently working on a project for Swamp Baby as well as mastering a new live album by Randy Bachman and the latest release by the Shuffle Demons.

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PETER MOORE'S EQUIPMENT

COMPUTER/SOFTWARE

Macintosh Quadra 950
Sonic Solutions
Pro Tools
Cubase DNA

RECORDING/MIXING

Akai OR 1200M digital multitrack (x2)
Roland M-24E mixer
Lexicon MRC remote
Akai DL 1200 programmable auto locator (Moore usually rents a mixing console once every two months for serious work and hopes to buy a Mackie 32 input console in the future)

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and with Moore's own crossover)
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Technics SL-PS900 CD player
Sony PCM 6D1ES digital audio processor
Sony Beta Hi-Fi
Sony CDW-900E Compact Disc Recorder

RACK GEAR

Moore's extensive array of rackmount
gear takes up three rack enclosures in
his studio.

RACK 1

SPL Vitalizer
Lexicon 300 digital effects system
Panasonic SV-3700 pro digital audio tape
decks (x3)
Sonic Solutions optical converter
Yamaha DA202 DA converter
Rane HC6 headphone console
Accuphase E-202 integrated amplifier

RACK 2

Rane MS1 mic stage
Rane FMI 14 mixer input (x25)
Alesis D4 drum module
Rane DC 24 dynamic controller (x2)
Alesis SR 16 drum machine
Drawmer DL251 spectral compressor
BSS DPR 402 compressor/peak
limiter/de-esser
SPL Vitalizer
Rane FPE 13 parametric equalizer (x4)
Drawmer 1960 vacuum tube
compressor pre-amplifier (x3)
Drawmer DS201 dual gate (x3)
Rane RAP 10 remote AC power

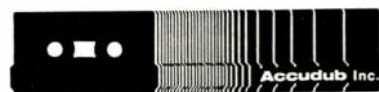
RACK 3

Mark of the Unicorn MIDI Time Piece
Pro Tools SMPTE slave drive
Pro Tools audio interface
Orban 674A stereo equalizer
Ensoniq DP/4 parallel effects processor
Lexicon LXP1 (x2)
Alesis Microverb III
Simpson custom meter bridge
Trace Elliot graphic equalizer

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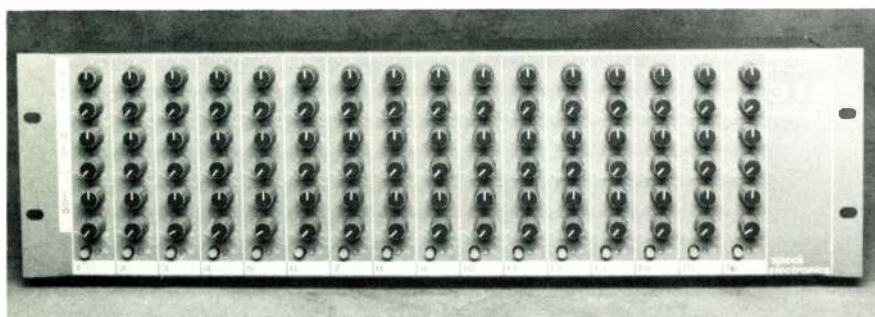


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Speck Electronics Model 316 Equalizer

The Model 316 Parametric Equalizer by Speck Electronics offers 16 independent channels of 3-band fully sweepable equalization in only three rack spaces and is designed to operate with all popular 16-channel mixers.

Each channel has six controls: low frequency sweep 50 Hz to 500 Hz with 15dB boost/cut; mid frequency sweep 500 Hz to 5 kHz with 15dB boost/cut; and high frequency sweep 5 kHz to 15 kHz with 15dB boost/

cut. Each channel has an EQ bypass switch with associated LED. There are 32 rear panel 1/4" jacks, 16 input and 16 output. The Model 316 may be interfaced to virtually any synth, sampler or mixer's patch points.

For more information, contact: Speck Electronics, 925 Main St., Fallbrook, CA 92028 (619) 723-4281, FAX (619) 723-3294.

JBL Control 1E Monitor Speakers

JBL has announced the newest addition to the Control Series line of loudspeakers. The Control 1E is a personal sized, self-powered monitor loudspeaker with built-in Energizer bi-amplifier and electronic crossover. Well balanced sound and application versatility make the Control 1E ideal for any installation requiring professional monitor performance from a compact source.

A 20-watt amplifier is dedicated to the 135 mm bass driver and a 10-watt amplifier is dedicated to the 19mm high frequency dome. Just as in large professional multi-element speaker systems, an electronic dividing network splits the signal before sending it to the amplifier dedicated to each driver. Because each driver has its own power amplifier directly coupled to it, maximum power transfer efficiency and damping are achieved.

HF and LF transducers are magnetically shielded, permitting the Control 1E to be safely used in close proximity to video monitors and computer terminals. Its balanced input with high/low input sensitivity selector let the Control 1E connect directly to any line or speaker level output. A line output with pre/post gain control pickoff allows one Control 1E to control the level of any number of other Control 1Es for master/slave zone controls or for driving a powered subwoofer or other device.

For more information, contact: JBL Professional, 8500 Balboa Blvd., Northridge, CA 91329 (818) 893-8411, FAX (818) 893-0358.

Samson Audio Q5 Headphone Amplifier

Samson Audio has introduced the Q5, a cost-effective five-output stereo headphone amplifier that fits in a half-rack space and is particularly suited to users of multitrack tape recorders.

The Q5 features a volume control knob on the front panel for each of the stereo outputs, and each amplifier produces 350 milliwatts of power at 160 ohms. A Stereo Link on the rear panel of the Q5 allows the unit to be daisy-chained into as many groups of five as needed. Additionally, the Q5 features an overall input level control and a mono/stereo switch.

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



Fostex D-10 Professional DAT Recorder

Fostex has introduced the D-10 professional DAT recorder — a low-cost production tool engineered to make working with DAT easier, faster and better. It features advanced jog/shuttle, RAM scrub, a GPI interface and instant start capabilities, making it ideal for applications in music recording and editing, radio/broadcast production and post-production.

Jog/shuttle techniques provide frame accurate audio location and monitoring together with search and cue capabilities. The built-in RAM gives a constant and immediately available stereo scrubbing facility, providing "analog-style" scrubbing. Automatic RAM loading makes this powerful feature transparent to the user.

Start ID and Program Number features, combined with a 10-key pad, allow extensive auto-location capabilities. Auto cue-up techniques can be combined with instant start mode to accurately locate to the exact start of audio modulation, providing an invaluable feature when ID addresses have not been accurately logged or recorded on the existing material.

A pair of D-10s, controlled by means of the built-in GPI interface, allow users to perform simple and fast two machine assemble editing at a fraction of the cost previously required. Other notable features include two option slots for future upgrades and a wireless remote control.

For more information, contact: Erikson Pro Audio, 620 McCaffrey, St. Laurent, PQ H4T 1N1 (514) 738-3000, FAX (514) 737-5069.

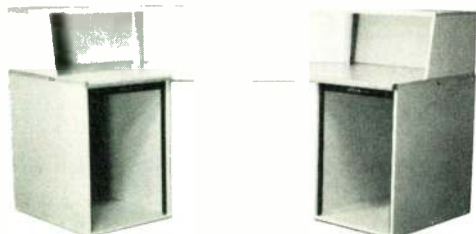


For the full story see page 66



AKG has introduced two new condenser microphones: the **€5900** hand-held vocal and the **€5600** voice/instrument mic.

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Designed for computer users and home hobbyists engaged in computer-based MIDI music file playback and composition, SoundEngine Music Module offers superb CD-quality sound, extensive connectivity and comprehensive programmability.

The unit features 384 CD-quality sounds including the full complement of 128 General MIDI level 1 sounds, the ability to play up to 32 different sounds simultaneously, built-in reverberation and serial-to-

MIDI data conversion. SoundEngine Music Module may also be used as a standard MIDI sound module for use with any MIDI-capable musical keyboard.

Other features include 16 MIDI channel multi-timbral operation, MIDI in, out and thru ports, serial data input port and a printer/modem thru port. RCA type jacks for audio output and input have been designed into the SoundEngine for compatibility with consumer electronics equipment.

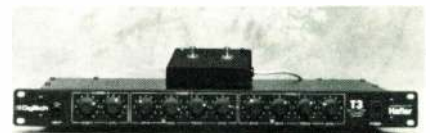
Audio input jacks facilitate passive mix applications allowing users to combine audio from CD players, microphones and tape recorders; or Macintosh audio output with SoundEngine Music Module output. The unit can also be used as a MIDI interface for Macintosh family computers, receiving serial data directly from the Macintosh and converting it into MIDI.

For more information, contact: E-mu Systems, Inc., PO Box 660015, Scotts Valley, CA 95067 (408) 438-1921, FAX (408) 438-8612.

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New Digi-Tech Hafler Amplifiers and Pre-amplifiers

DigiTech recently inked a licensing agreement giving them exclusive rights to manufacture and distribute Hafler products. The first products introduced under this agreement are the G-150 and G-300 power amplifiers and the T3 preamplifier.

The T3 is a single rack space three channel guitar tube preamp with MIDI switching. Three independent channels allow a clean, straight-forward sound, a fat crunchy tube response or an extreme metal edge for blistering solos.

The G-300 is a three rack space, two channel, 300 watt Mosfet stereo power amplifier for guitar or bass. The G-150 is a two rack space, 150 watt stereo guitar amplifier. Both deliver classic tube sound and are built to withstand the rigours of the road.

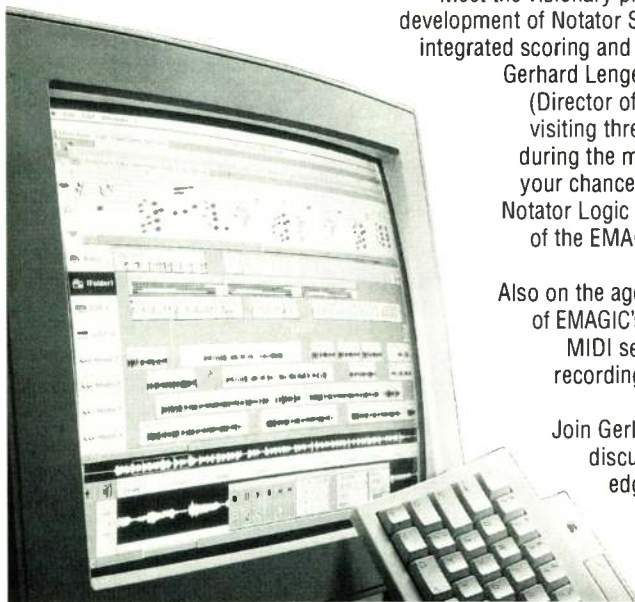
For more information, contact: Erikson Music, 620 McCaffrey, St. Laurent, PQ H4T 1N1 (514) 738-3000, FAX (514) 737-5069.

Meet the visionary programmer that lead the development of Notator SL, the first professional integrated scoring and sequencing application.

Gerhard Lengeling and Mikail Graham (Director of EMAGIC R & D) will be visiting three major Canadian cities during the month of October. This is your chance to discuss the future of Notator Logic directly with the leaders of the EMAGIC Development Team.

Also on the agenda is a demonstration of EMAGIC's new integrated scoring, MIDI sequencing and hard disk recording system - Logic Audio.

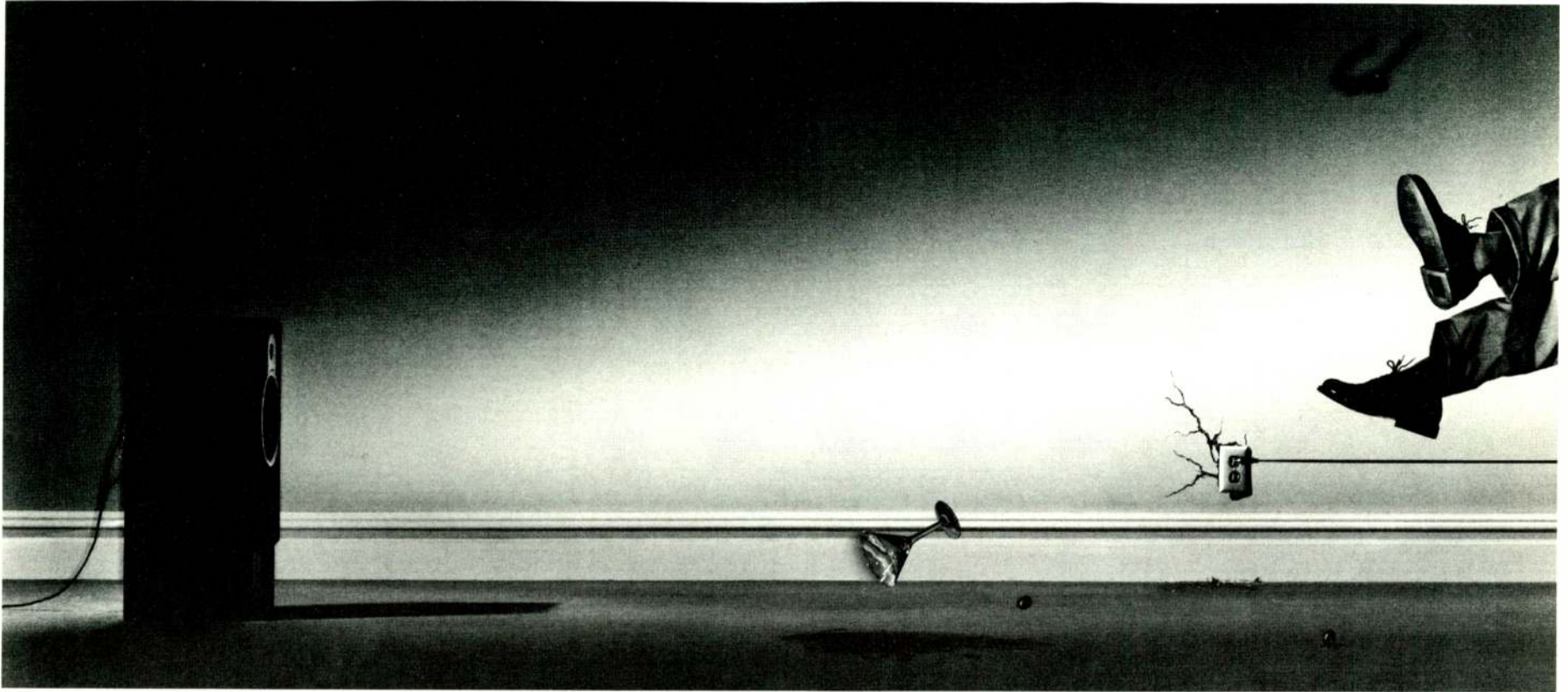
Join Gerhard & Mikail for a lively discussion of today's leading edge sequencer and digital audio technology. Your input will help shape the future of EMAGIC products.



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Spirit Folio Si

The Spirit Folio Si from Soundcraft is a new version of the Folio designed to fit into today's complex keyboard rigs. Offered in 18:2 rackmount and tabletop versions, both with 60 mm channel faders, Folio Si is suitable for live and studio keyboard mixing, submixing and A/V suites.

Folio Si has 18 inputs to handle a range of sources. There are six unbalanced stereo inputs for keyboards and sound modules, with 3-band fixed EQ. A further two balanced stereo inputs with 2-band EQ can be used for more keyboards, connecting tape machines or CD players, or as sophisticated effects returns. There are two standard Folio mono input channels to cope with vocals or acoustic instruments — each channel has a high-quality mic preamp (-129dBu EIN), 48V phantom powering, High Pass Filter and 3-band EQ with a swept mid band.

Every channel has two aux sends, with Aux I switchable pre/post fade and latching PFL

solos. AFL soloing is available on the aux masters. There are insert points on the left and right masters and 12-segment bargraph metering. The main outputs are ground-compensated and impedance balanced to eliminate mains hum.

Both versions of the Folio Si are compact and easy to use. The rack version occupies only 7U of rack space, while the table top version weighs only 5 kg and has an integral carrying handle to ensure portability.

For more information, contact: Soundcraft/IMG, 0281 Clement St., Lasalle, PQ H8R 4B4 (514) 595-3966, FAX (514) 595-3970.

AKG Tri-Power Condenser Mics

AKG has introduced two new condenser microphones: the C5900 hand-held vocal and the C5600 voice/instrument mic.

The C5900 vocal mic features AKG's new TPC-I condenser system with smooth off-axis frequency response, hypercardioid pickup pattern for high output levels before feedback and three different switch-selectable bass contour curves. Shock isolation is provided by AKG's InterSpider suspension which takes the large external spider-cage shock-mount assembly used in recording studios and puts it into the microphone itself for low handling noise in the field.

The C5600 features the new, large diaphragm TPC-II condenser system to provide smooth, accurate reproduction of complex vocal instrument waveforms at extremely high sound pressure levels. It features the same InterSpider shock isolation assembly introduced with the model C5900, and comes with the stand-adaptor built into the rugged RoadTough housing. Three different switch-selectable bass contour curves permit adjustment for proximity effect and individual instrument characteristics.

For more information, contact: AKG Acoustics, Inc., 1525 Alvarado St., San Leandro, CA 94577 (510) 351-3500, FAX (510) 351-0500.

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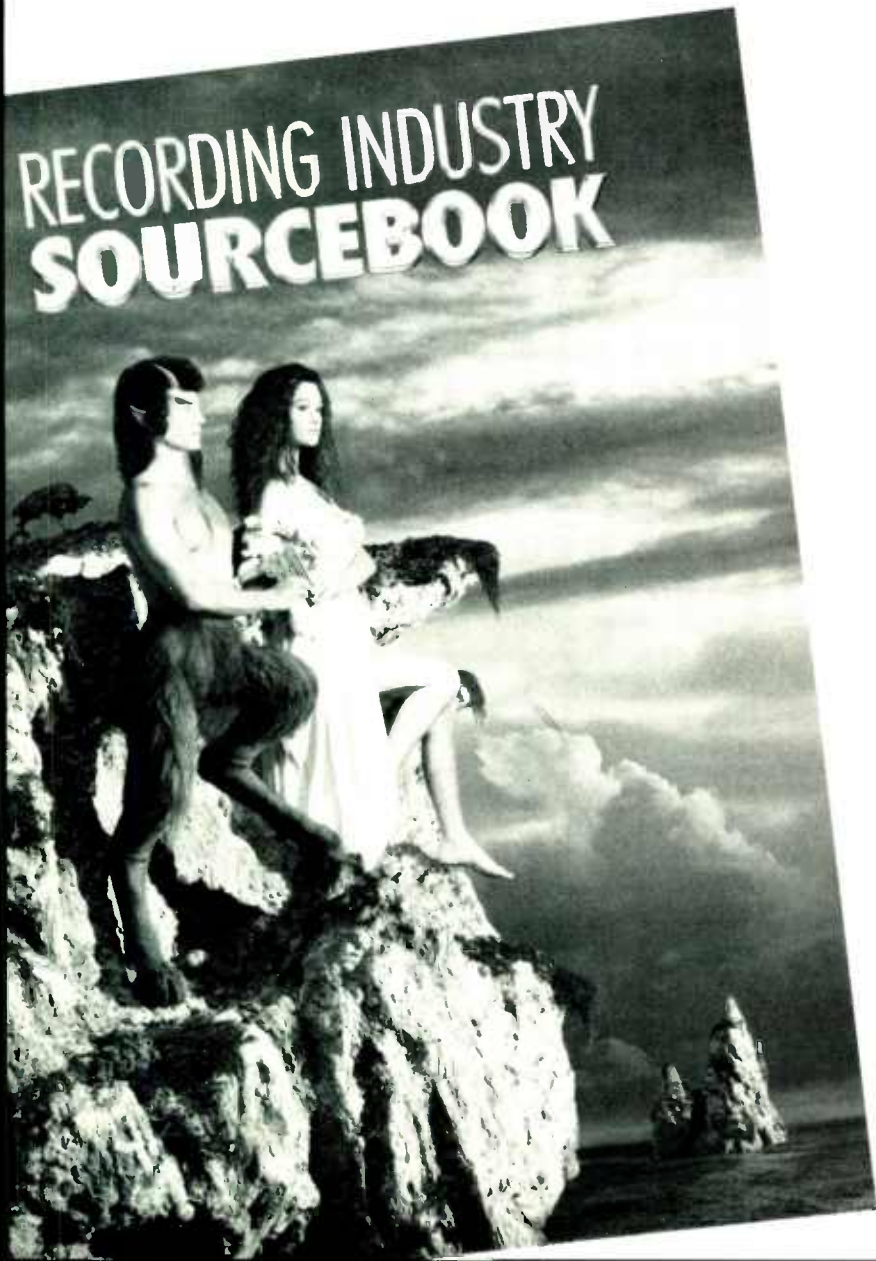
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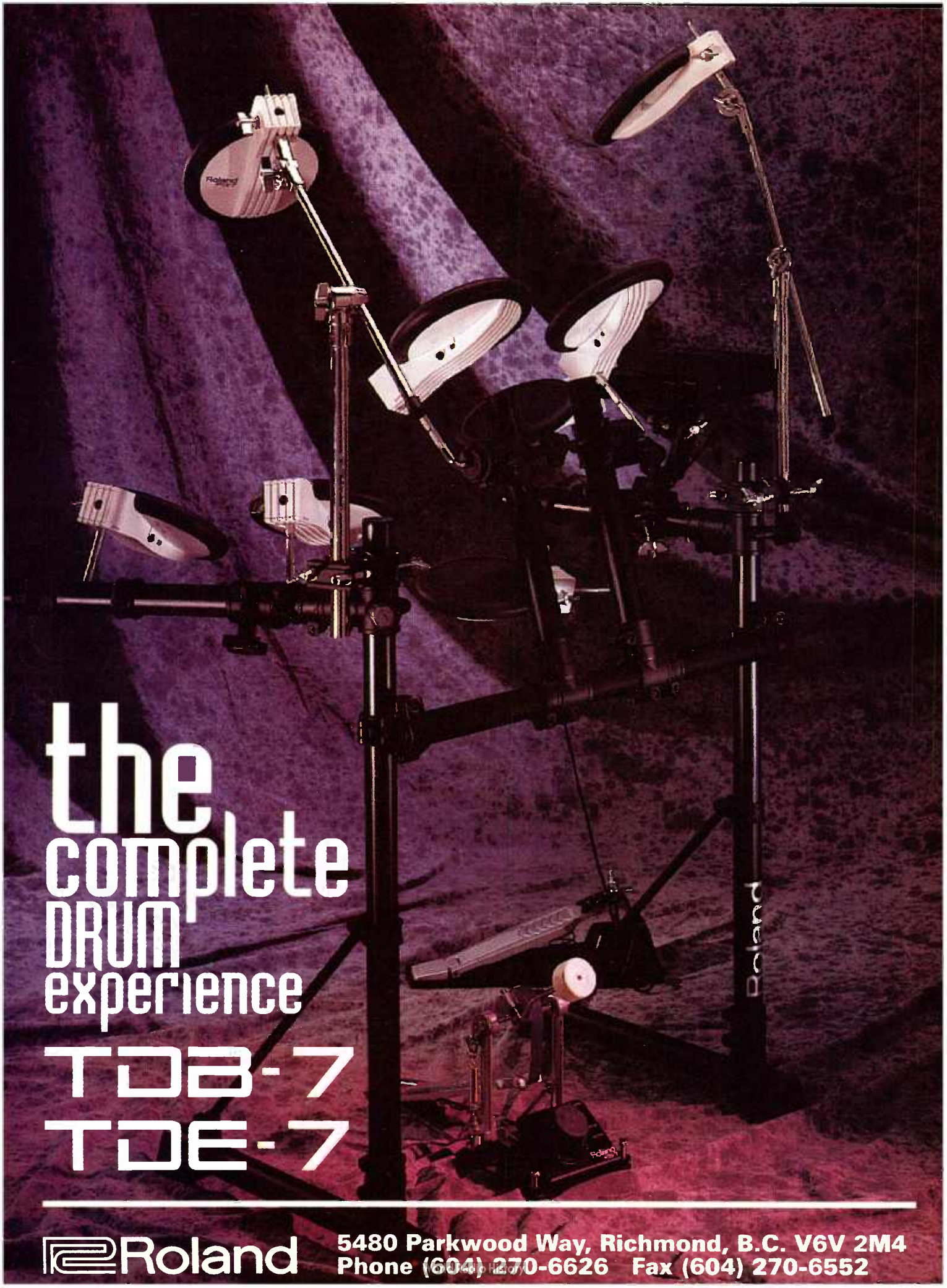
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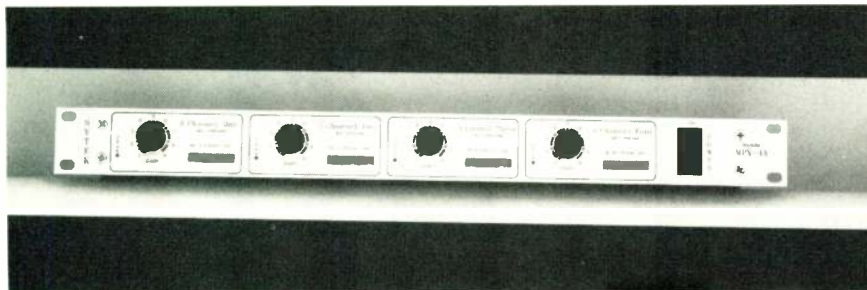
Sytek MPX-4A Quad Microphone Preamplifier

The MPX-4A is a quad microphone preamplifier unit with low noise and low distortion properties.

The MPX-4A features fast threshold-of-clipping detection and display overlaid on an LED level display plus mute, phase invert and +48V phantom power capability. All features are available independently for each of the four isolated, transformerless, balanced input preamps that each deliver to a line-level balanced output.

In addition, the MPX-4A is easily upgradable to the MPX-4D, a digitally-controlled version which features the same audio properties but is also remotely accessible by way of its microprocessor interface to a central controlling studio control computer. Software for the digital MPX-4D is written as a Windows-compatible system, allowing up to 256 MPX-4Ds (1024 preamps!) to be controlled from a central site and documented into disk files with true instant session recall capability. Non-Windows software will be made available in the future.

For more information, contact: Sytek Audio Systems Corp., 2424 W. Irving Park Rd., Chicago, IL 60618 (312) 588-4477.



Studiomaster P7 In-Line Console

The Studiomaster P7 is an affordable in-line console with professional features, new ergonomics and styling and precise attention to detail.

The P7 can be used with both analog and digital multitrack machines. Being expandable to 40-8-40-2, the P7 offers a maximum of 88 equalized inputs and 40 track capability, allowing the user to start with a basic 16-8-16 and expand the P7 as needs dictate.

At the heart of the P7 is the comprehensive MIDI muting system which allows MIDI muting of main and tape/line inputs and aux sends 1-4. Any combination of mutes can be written to any of the 99 onboard memories and recalled manually or via MIDI program change. Since the mute status is transmitted every 500 ms using MIDI controllers, mutes can be stored on a MIDI sequencer allowing instant updates from any point in a track.

For more information, contact: White Radio Ltd., 940 Gateway Dr., Burlington, ON L7L 5K7 (416) 632-6894, FAX (416) 632-6981.

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POWER and Speakers



Nany years ago, a reputable sound engineer told me he could tell what type of amplifier was being used just by the way the PA sounded. After accepting his bet and taking his money I realized that power and speakers were only relative to the other components in the system as well as the operator.

When purchasing amplifiers and speaker enclosures we have to ensure that they'll be compatible with each other. It's more important not to under-power than overpower (keeping in mind we don't want to blow anything up either!). As a touring engineer, I work on a lot of different sound systems. The biggest complaint I have with these systems is the lack of bottom end (40-80 Hz). Rock 'n' Roll just isn't the same without the old pant legs moving. Part of this problem is usually the direct result of under-powering. Compounding this problem is the inefficiency of the speaker and enclosure itself.

Efficiency of an enclosure is an industry-developed method of measurement used to determine the sound pressure level (SPL) in decibels when a 1 kHz tone is generated at a power of one watt at a distance of one meter.

This specification is an extremely important one to consider when choosing your enclosures. For every 3dB of increase in the sensitivity, you double your output — so make sure you don't require twice the amount of power to get half as much output. Every manufacturer will provide you with this specification. Along with the specification for sensitivity, the manufacturer will include the impedance of the enclosure (a measurement in ohms that determines the amount of resistance the amplifier will see at the output). This spec is very important when determining the amount of amplification needed. An amplifier will provide a larger amount of output as the load (resistance) goes down (e.g., 250 watts at 8 ohms, 450 watts at 4 ohms and 900 watts at 2 ohms). Before you load down an amplifier to 2 ohms, be sure to check the manufacturer's specifications to make sure this can be

done safely. Most amplifiers manufactured today will allow this.

Many professional series amplifiers will provide you with an option of running the amplifier in bridge mono mode. This configuration joins the two output sections of the amplifier together, changing it from a stereo amplifier with two outputs and inputs to a mono amplifier with channel 1 input driving the joined outputs. Instead of hooking the speakers up to the black and red terminals on the outputs of the amplifier, you connect to the two red terminals. The reasoning behind all of this is to provide a large amount of power at a higher resistance. This comes in handy when powering large sub woofers and bass bins that require a lot of power for optimum output. In bridge mono mode, most amplifiers will only allow a load with a resistance of 4 ohms. This is usually alright, because most speaker enclosure manufacturers will offer a two-speaker cabinet at 4 ohms or a smaller one-speaker enclosure at 8 ohms, giving you the opportunity to pair them up as needed.

The frequency response of a speaker cabinet (the frequencies that the cabinet is capable of reproducing) is a specification one must pay close attention to. A lot of manufacturers will give this typical type of rating — 60 Hz to 20 kHz +/- 3dB. What this means is that the cabinet will produce all the frequencies from and including 60 Hz right up to and including 20 kHz. The +/- 3dB spec tells us that the total of all frequencies when averaged out give us an amplitude (volume) range of 3dB above and 3dB below the average point. Because this is an average of all frequencies combined, it could also mean that any one or group of frequencies could drop as much as 9dB or more. I'd advise that anyone purchasing speaker cabinets look at the complete spectrum print out.

Purchasing amplifiers can be a pretty frustrating affair as well. Unless you've had a lot of mathematical or technical training, most of the specs will look much like hieroglyphics. The best advice I can offer with respect to power amplifiers, is to see what the big

guys in the industry are using. I myself have had enormous success with the likes of Crown, BGW and OSC, and as of late, have outfitted all of my sound systems with the new Yorkville Sound AP3000 amplifiers. Yorkville has just introduced the AP3400 amplifier. The difference between the two is the AP3400 will deliver the full output power of the amplifier at 4 ohms in stereo instead of 2 ohms. This is especially useful when powering our bass enclosures. As I stated in the beginning of this article, the average listener (and even some of the not-so-average listeners) will be unable to tell what you're using for power as long as you have enough of it. If you can get the kind of power you want without paying much more than \$1.00 per watt RMS (basically the average running power output of the amplifier), you've done pretty well.

With our budget of \$20,000 for enclosures, we should look at a processed 3-way system utilizing a passive network for crossing over the sibs. This way we can look at four top cabinets capable of handling 100 Hz to 20 kHz and four sub cabinets to handle 100 Hz and below. For amplification, we can use two power amps for the subs (bass bins) and one for the mids, leaving one for the horns and subs. If we spend approximately \$2,500 for each top cabinet, \$2,000 for each sub and \$2,000 for each of our four amplifiers, we should be able to purchase our processor(s), rack, patching and speaker cabling and still be within our original budget. Be very careful of systems that come and go. Stick with manufacturers that have been doing this for a long time, and remember that extra gear can be easily cross-rented from other companies in the event of a larger venue. Be sure to catch the next issue of *CM* as we put together our monitor system.

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

HYBRID RECORDING



For the recording of my last album *This Must be the Place*, I decided to use a method that's becoming increasingly popular these days — doing your basic tracks at home on your home 8- or 16-track and then additional tracking and mixing in the studio.

There are pros and cons to this method. On the plus side, tracking at home can save you a lot of money, and what you lose in fidelity with those hissy vocal tracks, you can make up for in musical quality by taking as much time as you want getting a great performance (who knows when you're *on*? It's nice to have a tape recorder ready when you are, without having to book studio time). Later, you can take advantage of some studio benefits: computer-assisted mixdown, better quality EQ and processing and, most importantly, *doing your mix in a room that's designed for listening to music*.

The down side is that tracking at home (as opposed to a full band in a studio) inevitably leads to a smaller sound, and the magic and excitement of band interplay takes a back seat to technique. So it goes (this can be a big consideration, more so with some styles of music than others).

Okay, now that you've decided on this hybrid approach, what are some things to consider? For starters, I would discuss the details of the process with the engineer at the studio where you will be mixing, to avoid any technical problems later. For example, when tracking at home, I would tend to not record totally flat and lean in the direction of too much high end instead of not enough. With many of my home tracks, Jeff Wolpert, engineer and co-producer, had to add top end and, therefore, hiss.

A big thing is organization. The idea is to have things run quickly and smoothly in the studio when you are watching the clock. That means very accurate track sheets for your analog tracks of course, but also for your MIDI tracks, since each one will ideally go through a separate strip on the board for separate processing. One of my time-wasters was not keeping my MIDI output assignments as consistent as possible. It can drive engineers crazy when they find they have to re-patch on the next tune. Also, make sure all of your MIDI stuff is in tune (and dry if you want to use the studio

processing on it).

You may want to consider recording your vocals directly to your multitrack at home, bypassing your board. Personally, I wouldn't bother. Half the vocal tracks on my album were recorded like this and you couldn't tell the difference even when you did the "Pepsi Challenge" on an engineer with great ears.

The original plan was to use my little Fostex R-8 and have the studio's 24-track (on which we would do more tracking since I was fresh out of tracks) slaved to it. In the end, it was much less of a hassle just to bounce all the tracks over to the 24-track. The engineer would only have to deal with his familiar recorder and there would be no sync problems.

Now, suppose your tracks are mostly MIDI. How do you stop those "it sounds like a bunch of sewing machines" comments? Allow me to impart some wisdom — if you put in countless hours of selective de-quantizing, you might approach the feel a good player would give it in a few minutes. Instead of slaving over that hi-hat part, for example, try actually hiring a flesh and blood hi-hatter. One of the instant giveaways of that loathed sewing machine sound is the hi-hat part. It's where most of the feel is in a drum part. Cymbals can be good to replace, especially swells. Set about selectively replacing the MIDI elements that don't cut it, in order of importance. If you're doing a full album, I would spend most of your track replacement money on the first two or three tunes because by that time, most people have decided on what kind of album it is. The MIDI stuff is somehow more forgivable if it occurs later.

Now, lest anyone think that I am knocking the wonderful composer's tool called MIDI, rest assured that I am. I think it's killing music by tending to make everyone's "feel" and "sound" the same. The only way to save it is for people to do less quantizing and to stop using those factory presets and come up with something that is your own! I have two friends with the right idea. One never cooks the same meal twice and the other never uses the same drum sound twice.

What about mixing? Here's something I learned last time: if at all possible, set up the mix one day (all the tracks up and roughly balanced) and then return the next day with

fresh ears to finish the mix. After you're done that day, set up for the next song, etc. This is a great way to work because you always finish a mix with fresh ears.

Also, listen to that final mix on as many different speakers, locations and volume levels as possible. Try making a cassette dub and running out to your car to listen to it or routing the mix through your ghetto blaster. See if there are any nasty surprises when you listen to it in mono. Mixes actually change under different listening conditions (for example, more low end is apparent at higher volumes, no kidding!), so you want something that will sound good in general.

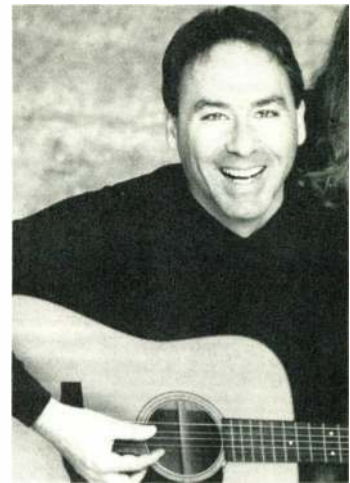
Now here's something that I'm sure many people don't think of. See what the mix is like when you compress the living daylights out of it because (surprise, surprise) that's exactly what most radio stations are going to do to it and, of course, they never tell you! My jaw dropped the first time I listened to my song "Real Time" on the radio and heard that my soft, atmospheric intro was about the same volume as the big, mondo chords at the end of the song. Forget about dynamics. Take dynamics, put them in cement moccasins and throw them off the end of the dock. No kidding. Not that I'm bitter, but I wish they'd leave my mix alone! So prepare yourself because radio only has one volume level — eleven. If your song depends on that long build through volume, you might have to find other ways to make it work.

You might consider following the trend of doing separate mixes for separate radio formats. More guitars for the rock stations, a quieter mix for the AC stations, added pedal steel guitar tracks for the C&W stations, etc. My weak stomach prevents me from doing this sort of thing personally, but to each his own.

I hope that there is food for thought for some of you in this article and that it might help things go smoother in the studio should you opt for the hybrid method. Cheers!

Mark Korven is a Toronto-based recording artist/filmscore composer. As well as having recorded much of his own material, Mark received a Golden Sheaf award nomination at the Yorkton Film Fest for his self-produced video, Madman On A Rooftop.

MERCHANDISING ENDORSEMENTS



Many musicians have asked me about merchandising and endorsing products. In addition to selling recorded material and being paid royalties for your music when it's played on the radio, endorsements and/or merchandising is becoming quickly recognized as a potentially lucrative source of revenue.

It is not uncommon for many bands to make most of their touring income from sell-

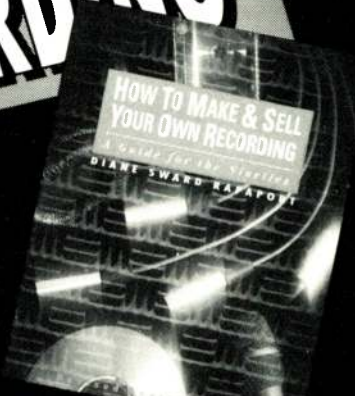
ing merchandised products on the road.

The other benefit is promotion of the band or the artists. Ask yourself how many people would see a T-shirt of your band on a busy street and make a subconscious note about your band name? What could that mean in "spin-off" sales? One band I know sends a free quality T-shirt with submission of its product to record companies and publishers. The record companies and publish-

ers may not like the music, but someone is bound to adopt and wear the T-shirt, and perhaps wear it to the office.

The difference between merchandising and endorsements is that merchandising is the selling of products such as T-shirts. Some artists sell different products. Rita MacNeil, for example, sells tea. Endorsements are using one's personality in association with a product in such a way as to

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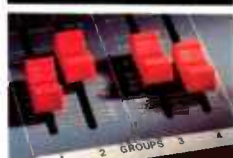
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BUSINESS

suggest approval of the product. Rita MacNeil provides the best example of both. Not only does she market her tea, she places her personality stamp all over it with her signature, but trademark stamped on each tea

A modern development in law is the recognition that personality forms a type of property. Those who become well known in their work can sell or trade on their personality. It is this personality that is used to endorse products.

This brings to light the offence of "pass-

persation to Midler.

Other artists may refuse permission to anyone to use their personality for commercial trade. The Beatles brought a court action to stop *Beatlemania* on Broadway. The Beatles claimed that the use of their image was "passing off" their goodwill for com-

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Mapex percussion has added a new set configuration to their Mars Series. The Mars M4 is the first set in the Mars Series equipped with a single 12" mounted tom and a bass drum ride cymbal mount.

Also new to the M4 and all Mars Series drums are non-penetrating tom holders and Mapex's resounding headliner heads. The set consists of a 22" x 16" bass drum, a 12" x 10" mounted tom, a 16" x 16" floor tom and a 14" x 6½" chrome snare. Hardware includes a C300M cymbal stand, an H300M hi-hat stand, an S300M snare stand and a P300M pedal. All hardware is single braced and features the original Pro-lok system of adjustment for maximum tightening.

Shells are made of eight-ply hardwood and have a maple inner ply for extra projection. Full-length tubular lugs touch only two points on the shell, providing optimum resonance.

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Stephi Gig Bags

Stephi Straps has introduced a new line of gig bags for acoustic and electric guitars and also basses to complement their full line of quality guitar straps.

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Vox AC30/6TB Amplifier

The Vox AC30/6 Top Boost is a faithful reproduction in sound and style of those pioneering classic British Vox amps of the early '60s.

Designed after the classic AC30 1963 Top Boost, the amplifier features five ECC83 and one ECC82 pre amp tubes, four EI.84 output tubes and one GZ34 rectifier tube. The transformers used are made by the original manufacturer to the original specifications. Authentic cabinet styling includes the original covering, "trademark" diamond fretcloth and birch ply construction.

The AC30/6TB is available in two formats: the AC30TB 33 watt 2x12 combo with special G12M-25 Celestion loudspeaker; or the AC-30TBX, a 33 watt 2x12 combo with original design G12-15 Alnico Vox "Blue" Celestion loudspeaker.

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P R O D U C T N E W S

Casio Intros New Stereo Keyboards

Casio Canada has introduced two new additions to its extensive line of musical keyboards.

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The 16-note polyphonic keyboard has 100 rhythm patterns plus 10 user-programmable locations. Features include Casio Chord for the novice player (ability to play chords not required); the Fingered Chord, auto-accompaniment for the more advanced player; plus Super Accompaniment, automatic background patterns over which any white melody can be played. The CTK-1000 also stores five demo songs.

The CT-648, also a 61-note full-size stereo keyboard, is 16-note polyphonic and has 40 PCM rhythms plus the Casio/Fingered Chord auto-accompaniment.

Among its innovative features is a "Juke Box" with 40 built-in demonstration songs; an "Ad Lib Musician" which recognizes the patterns of the



user's play and compensates for them accordingly — this makes every note on the keyboard correct for the song the user is playing; and a sound enhancement device that adds a spacious, "large room" effect to sounds and rhythms.

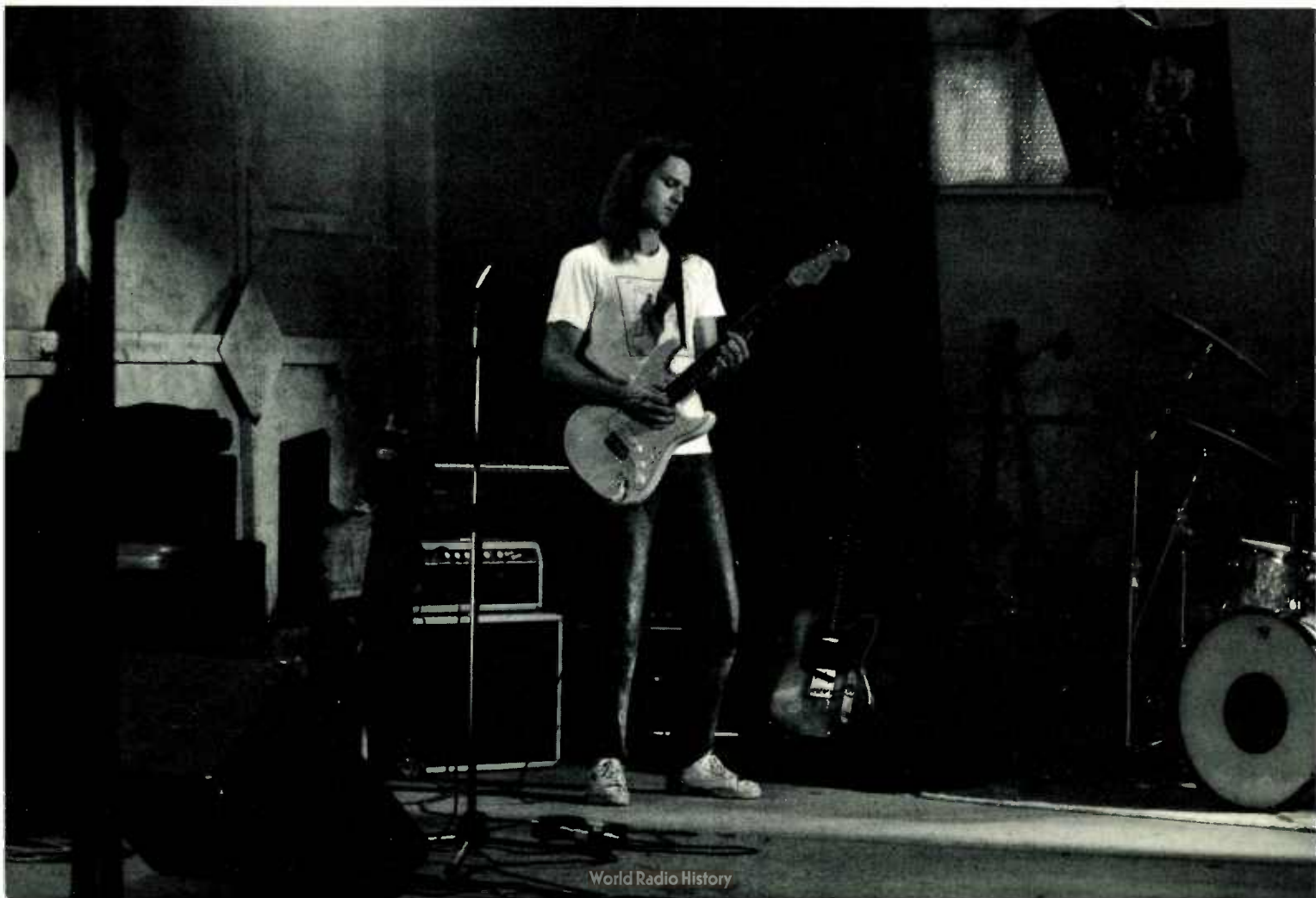
For more information, contact: Casio Canada Ltd., 2100 Ellesmere Rd., #240, Scarborough, ON M1H 3B7 (416) 431-3747, FAX (416) 431-3664.

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Vega Subminiature Lavalier Microphones

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The new mics are condenser, back-electret types with an omnidirectional polar pattern and a frequency range of 50-20,000 Hz. Both include a lavalier clip and foam windscreen/pop filter.

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Showcase

by Penny Campbell

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SWEET JONES

STYLE: Rock

CONTACT: B.G. Enterprises (Canada), 300 Richmond St. W., Toronto, ON M5V 1X2 (416) 345-9277.

I first heard about this Toronto-based band two years ago and have followed their evolution with interest, waiting for them to put something on tape and send it in. Two years, a couple of personnel changes and a publishing deal later comes *So Live*, the first CD from Sweet Jones. Recorded live at Toronto's Rivoli by Comfort Sound, the record is a real winner. Sweet Jones transcends trends and gives the listener a straight-up shot of well-crafted songs, excellent musicianship and powerful delivery. Keeping a solid R&B-influenced beat are drummer Jason Kravice and bassist Steve McMinn, providing the framework around which guitarist Mark Crissinger is able to build a sonic wall of riff-laden melodies, heavy on the '70s distortion. But the key to the unmistakable sound of Sweet Jones is the mesmerizing vocal stylings of lead singer Charles (one name only, please). Imagine the Hip's Gord Downie and U2's Bono together in one package. An enigmatic frontman live, as reflected on this CD, Charles' delivery is simultaneously passionate and cool. He's seemingly disinterested in all that surrounds him, yet able to hypnotize a listener with his words and his voice. Success should prove to be very sweet for Sweet Jones.



RICASSO

STYLE: Rock

CONTACT: Northwind Entertainment, 1418 College Dr., Saskatoon, SK (306) 643-0901.



It was a case of *deja vu*, working through the press notes in the promo package as I listened to the debut full-length release *Disgraceland* by Saskatchewan artist Ricasso, a.k.a. Greg Hargarten. Coming across the name of a band, Love Empire, I remembered I reviewed them in *Showcase* a while ago. Hargarten, a principal in that band, now records under the new moniker, and this release is all original tunes, full of hooks and commercially accessible with just a touch of quirkiness to satisfy the "alternatively-oriented". Rounding out the core band on this record are guitarist Dale Swiston, bassist Corey Hildebrand and drummer Lou Fontaine, along with guest keyboardist Ross Nikiforik. Highlights on this cassette include the title track, "Maureen" (primarily for the Rush-like bass lines) and the in-your-face "Slidin Home". Hippest interlude masquerading as a song: "Hurry", the lyrics to which consist of one word (you guessed it!). Ricasso has made some great press for themselves in their home province, and *Disgraceland* is a solid step in the direction of more national exposure.

FAT MAN WAVING

STYLE: Acoustic Rock

CONTACT: Canal Records, PO Box 57029, 797 Somerset St. W., Ottawa, ON K1R 1A1.

Radio programmers usually shudder at bands like this. Bands that defy categorization. Funk/folk/zydeco/reggae/country/jazz . . . you name it, you will find it on *Parade*, the full-length CD release from this Ottawa-based quintet. The credit for the unique, infectious sound of the band goes to three members: songwriters and multi-instrumentalists Peter Kiesewalter (keys, saxophone, accordion) and James Stephens (bass, fiddle, cittern, guitar); and the incredibly versatile vocal stylings of lead singer Rebecca Campbell. Rounding out the 'fat' sound are guitarist Fred Guignon and drummer Ross Murphy. Lead-off track "Train To Ride" illustrates perfectly the melting pot of styles that characterize the 'Fat' sound — fiddles and funky bass lines and a highly danceable chorus in 7/4 time! Other key tracks include the Louisiana zydeco flavour of "Duped Again"; the jazzy "One By One", which really showcases Rebecca Campbell's vocal acrobatics; and the unanimous crowd favourite "Reputation", which can bring even the most jaded listener to their feet like a gospel revival meeting. As the saying goes, it ain't over 'til the FAT MAN WAVES!

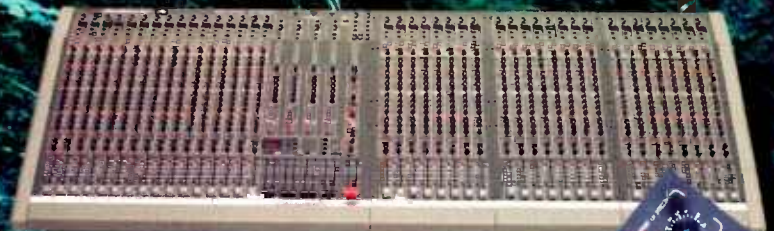


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