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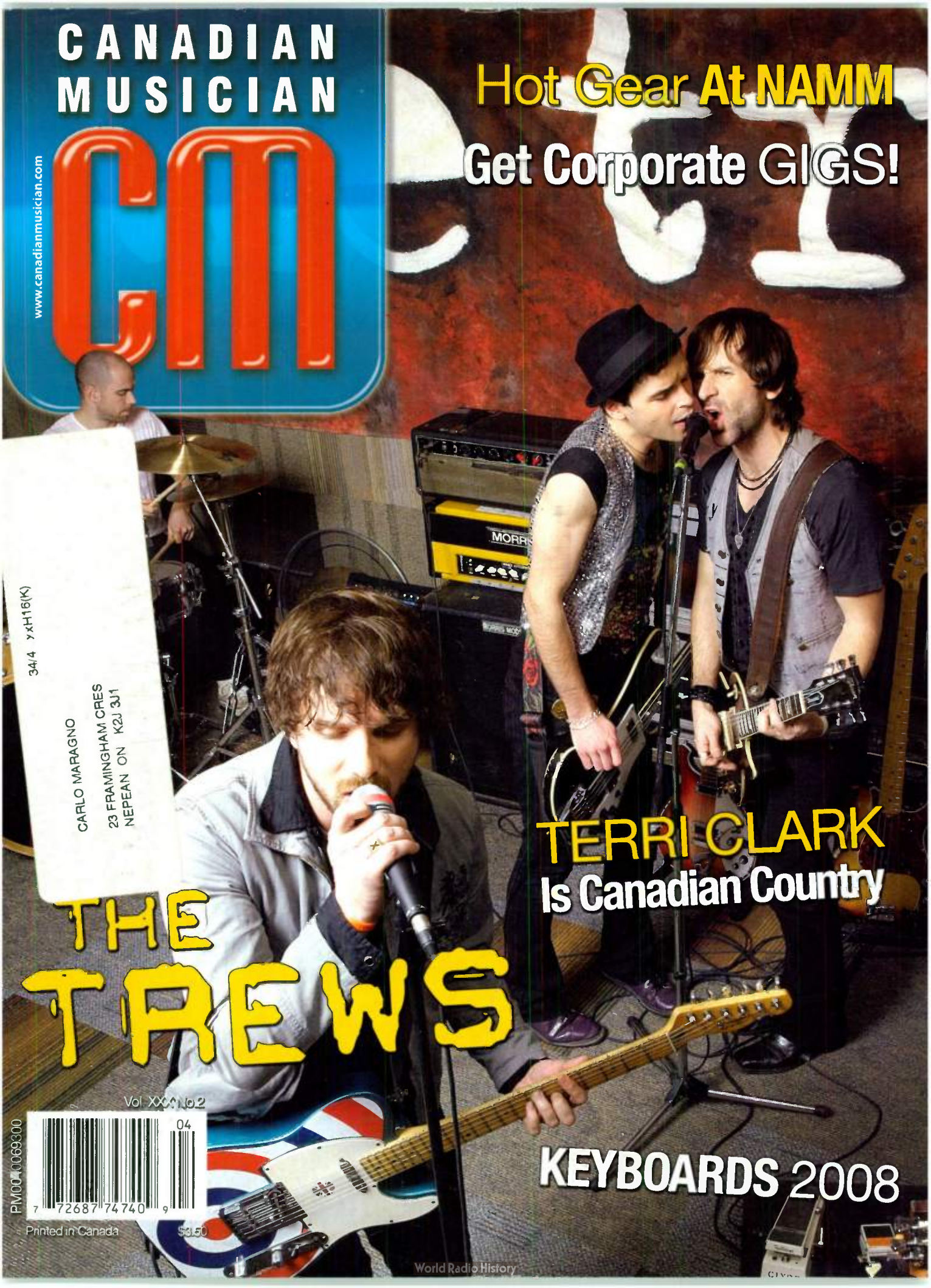
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Unrealistic!

From what I've seen, your magazine, in a time of trouble, seems to be a little unrealistic for an artist or band succeeding in the music industry here in Canada. Please start doing more on the reality of things happening to the majority of the musicians, bands, groups, and artists who still live and work in Canada, promoting themselves.

Nothing is happening in terms of true success except for those who cross the border like Nickelback, which sold over 6 million CD units in 2007 – in a time that no one is really selling, including the US market (in comparison to 10 years ago). With illegal downloading destroying the music industry, I'm wondering what you will be writing on in 10 years? Did you know that there was 1 billion illegal downloads in Canada last year?

I don't expect you to print this in your magazine because it is not "positive" information that you might not want the public to know, even though 85 per cent of Canadians, or more, don't even buy CDs anymore. It isn't even illegal to download for free because we haven't a copyright legislation in effect as of yet. Reality is reality, and when I read articles like the one written by Katie VanSlack about "Street Teams" for younger bands and artists to help them get noticed it makes me think: Why? In a country that doesn't fund the right artists or bands, or maybe I should say, only seems to try to help out rock bands and forgets about the urban scene of things.

Why is that? Huh? Maybe because there has always been an undercurrent of racism that exists towards the whole urban scene here in Canada and why music by minority groups was never able to take off in Canada – even in the '90s when the music scene in Canada was at an all-time high.

Now with over 100,000 rappers coming out and 50,000 so-called singers out there in Canada trying to do the whole urban thing, why lead individuals with the false hope that they'll excel in a country whose music scene, business, industry, and media don't care. Why the fabrication with all of this? Why fool people in a time that involves everyone and every genre of music that is all falling from high expectations of selling music here and making legitimate money? It never made sense to me why the industry here has always seemed to push aside the urban scene and brush it under the table, ignoring that it exists. It is propaganda, like a very talented urban music artist who sold multi-platinum here in Canada once said. And with that it also shows the bigotry and hypocrisy of a music culture that at least has 75 per cent of the nightclubs playing urban music! – An angry black man of 2008 on the music scene in Canada

Ed. Thanks for writing and giving it to us straight. You've touched on a lot of important concerns that we're all facing in the industry right now... and you make me a little nervous when you mention the "right artists or bands." Who are they, exactly? I hope I'm never in charge of making that decision! As for the urban scene, I hope we in this country have come further in terms of our respect for the music of different cultures and genres.



New Talent

I have been receiving your magazine for quite some time now and have found the articles and the bands you choose to report on very intriguing and full of great information. I am in an indie band from here on the West Coast of Canada and love seeing and discovering new and emerging talent in magazines and online.

Your magazine doesn't ever really do any articles on new up-and-coming talent that is not already signed to a major or indie label and I was going to suggest that it would be great to have a section of your magazine always dedicated to discovering new bands/artists from Canada. Matt

Ed. We're all over it! Check out our Showcase page and please submit an EPK to www.sonicbids.com/cmshowcase.

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Getting Your Music Distributed

by Andrew King

industry, while Napster has since spawned several shady file sharing programs that offer the same product – for free.

Regardless of the way consumers use and abuse the system, the fact remains that independent artists need to become part of the digital age if they have any aspirations for their music. Never has it been more vital than now, and more importantly, never has it been easier.

The Game

Let's be clear: I'm talking about getting music available online for sale, not posting shitty MP3s on MySpace. Now, there are a few different ways to get your tracks online for distribution, whether you're on a small independent label or unsigned and producing tracks in your basement. What you need to understand is that it'll take some serious work to promote your tracks online with a DIY attitude, but it's possible – a lot of acts make a solid living that way, and I'm not talking about that Radiohead stunt. If you're already with an independent label, there are ways you can use that to your advantage as well.

Triple A

If you're going to tackle the online market yourself, there are a lot of services that will use their popularity to increase yours. "CD Baby and TuneCore are two of the best options for indie artists to get their music distributed digitally," says Dave Cool, Director of the documentary *What Is INDIE?* "If your CD is already on CDBaby.com, you can simply opt-in to its digital distribution service for no charge. They'll then take nine per cent from each digital sale to cover costs, with no recurring fees." Really, if you own all rights to your own music, what have you really got to lose?

CD Baby can get your tracks available from most online retailers, which essentially puts your material into a pool that includes catalogues from the biggest bands on the planet and offers a level playing field. TuneCore will charge a relatively small fee up front for digital storage, but not take any percentage of sales. A snag here, warns Cool, is that "TuneCore is limited to just a handful of online stores," which doesn't include some heavy hitters like PureTracks, and really, getting online with retailers like iTunes and Puretracks is crucial.

The Big Leagues

Chris Benn, Owner and Founder of Year Of The Sun Records, says: "To think you can sidestep digital distribution is crazy. For an independent label (or artist), it's not only necessary, but it's paramount to success in the future." There are a lot of ways you can make

your catalogue available from retailers like iTunes and Puretracks. As Cool mentioned, CD Baby can offer distribution through a number of big retailers, but a number of other small services can't. Even though you may have to let these retailers take a bigger cut of your sales, it's still a good idea to join the fold.

"It's incredibly important because those are the places where the overwhelming majority of music buyers are shopping for MP3s," notes Cool. "As an artist, you want to tap into that, even if it means a slightly lower percentage from sales you might get from other online retailers." Referring to distribution from major retailers, Benn comments: "The truth is, we can gain massive exposure for our artists. Anyone with a computer can gain access to our records." And they can pay you from that computer.

"Online distribution allows artists... to develop an online presence and carve out their niche in the music world," remarks Cool, "whether that niche is 5,000 fans from around the world or 50,000." This was a much harder prospect back in what Cool calls the "brick-and-mortar distribution days." This online presence is exactly what makes digital distribution essential to all artists in a time of uncertainty and ever-changing trends. Want some numerical proof?

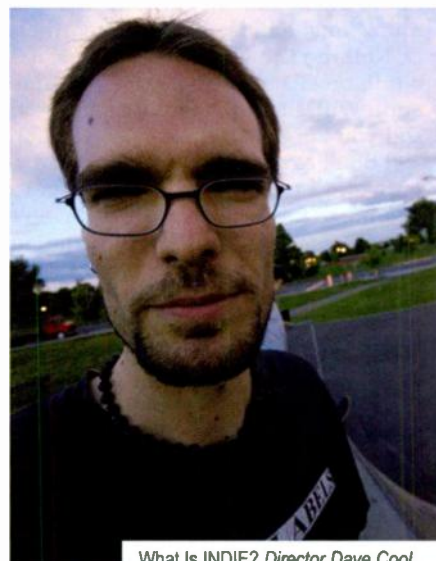
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Pitching Stats

According to Nielsen BDS, sales of digital tracks in Canada increased 73 per cent in 2007 from the previous year, while digital album sales are up 93 per cent. The US showed a 45 per cent growth rate in tracks sold, and 53 per cent increase in album sales, which is substantial despite its comparison to Canada's mammoth figures. Even drummers should be able to calculate that online sales are continually growing; it's not too late to hop onto the bandwagon.

"It's the way of the future," comments Benn. "I know that sounds a little cheesy, but it's the truth. Think of everything else that's evolving around us – the Internet, high-definition, MP3 players..."

Cool adds some stats of his own: "It's absolutely essential, especially for independent labels and artists. Indie labels tend to have a



What Is INDIE? Director Dave Cool.

Photo Credit: Ian Graham



Chris Benn, Owner and Founder of Year Of The Sun Records

Photo Credit: Martin Buzora

higher percentage of digital sales from their releases, many reaching 50-60 per cent of overall sales."

Coaches & Managers

For those that already have, or are looking for, some external help with distribution, labels like Year Of The Sun can certainly aid in getting music available online quickly, efficiently, and with the backing of a catalogue that features other like-minded artists. YOTS signed an online distribution deal with Canada's Sonic Unyon Records back in 2007 and hasn't looked back since. What this means is every act on Benn's roster has its albums, artwork, and information online with every

ONLINE

retailer that carries Sonic Unyon releases.

"A big thing is distribution," says Benn. "As a band, that can be a hard thing to get if you're not on a label." If you're already on a label or working with any type of representation, scout out the possibility of online distribution arrangements. Even a collective group of artists could unite and try to find some online channels as a package deal. "I started Year Of The Sun to help bands that I thought deserved to be heard by more people. There's no reason that anyone reading this article can't do the same thing," encourages Benn. "If you're willing to put in the time and effort, you can make that happen."

Off-Field Exposure

Having your music for sale online is important. This is true, but doesn't mean that sales are the only important aspect of online distribution. The global exposure in itself offers plenty of opportunity and potential for down the road. "The key to gaining new fans and customers for your music is visibility," says Cool. "You have to hit people four, five, maybe even 10 times with your music or image for them to pay attention to you, as there are so many choices for fans these days." What this means is even just getting your name and brand, like album artwork or band photos, out there is exposure in itself you wouldn't have otherwise. Adds Cool, "having that presence is incredibly important."

"[Our entire] roster is filled with bands that we feel are the next great bands. With online components to our distribution system, it's allowed us to make that recognition better." That recognition is really the bottom line, as nobody will buy an album, regardless of how easily it's available, if they've never heard of this artist.

There are many ways you can promote your online catalogue online, like the aforementioned MySpace streams. All YOTS releases have one free MP3 available online to give listeners a taste of the album. "Most of the time, the track is the single from that release, and we hope that people like the track and then want to grab the whole record." Anything that directs fans to your online catalogue is key.

The Plus/Minus

The debate about hard copy releases on CD vs. their digital counterparts could go on forever, but regardless of which side you (or consumers) are on, embracing both in the now will have the biggest payout. Both Benn and Cool agree on advantages of the digital medium; global availability, reduced overhead costs, and the speed of availability are very desirable traits for both the artists and consumers. A dual attack is recommended, but as has already been discussed, get on board with digital distribution if you're serious about your music. Wait too long, and you'll be going down swinging.

Andrew King is the Assistant Editor of Canadian Musician.

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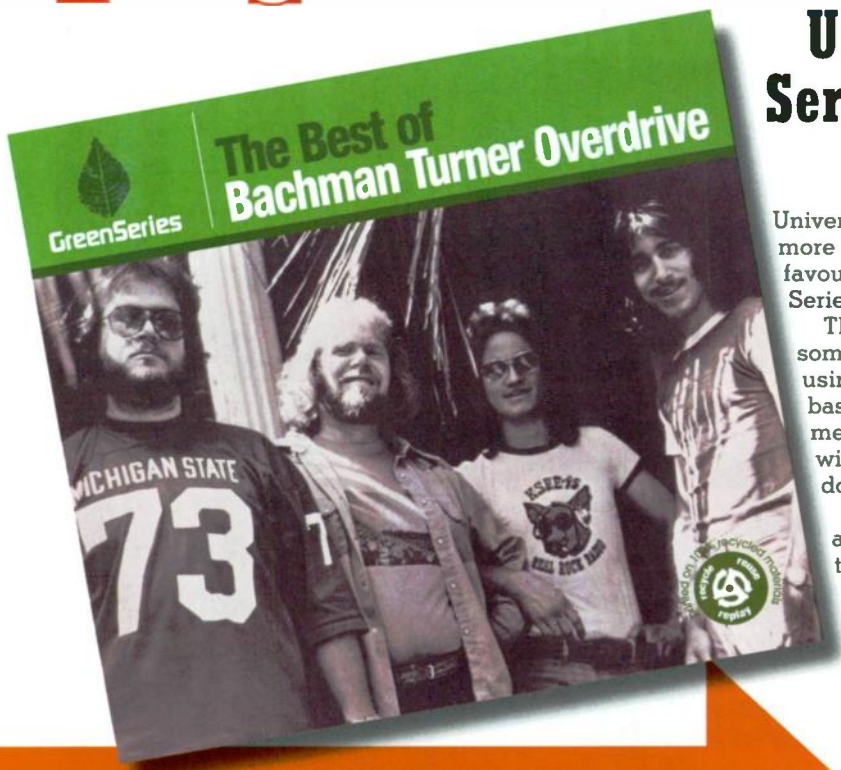
The advertisement features a close-up of a Planet Waves Tru-Strobe Tuner. The device is a grey, tabletop-style tuner with a circular display. The display has a blue background with a large digital 'A' and a double sharp symbol. The display is surrounded by a scale of frequencies from 435 to 445. Below the display are three buttons: a left arrow, a central Planet Waves logo, and a right arrow. The brand name 'PLANET WAVES' is printed at the bottom of the device. To the left of the tuner, the word 'TUNER' is written vertically in large, white, block letters. In the top right corner of the ad, there is a Planet Waves logo and the text 'PLANET WAVES'. At the bottom of the ad, there is a call to action: 'Check out our virtual demo at PLANETWAVESTUNERS.COM'. The background of the ad is dark with some abstract, colorful light patterns.

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Universal Music Green Series Eco-Friendly Album Releases

Universal Music Canada has begun offering music fans a more environmentally conscientious way to access their favourite artists' catalogue with the launch of its Green Series.

The series will feature "Best Of..." collections from some of the label's more successful artists, manufactured using 100 per cent recycled packaging and vegetable-based inks, and without plastic CD trays. The first installment of the series is currently available for purchase, with some proceeds from sales of the collection being donated to The David Suzuki Foundation.

The first installment of the Green Series is currently available, and includes some Canuck collections from the likes of BTO, Terri Clark, and Steppenwolf.

For more information on the GreenSeries, visit Universal Music Canada at www.umusic.ca.

New Music Instruction Website Launches At iVideosongs.com

A new website has launched at www.iVideosongs.com that shows aspiring musicians of all skill levels how to play their favorite songs – as taught by the people that wrote them.



"Aspiring musicians want to play complete songs accurately, and that's exactly what we give them," says Tim Huffman, CEO of iVideosongs. "We've recruited established artists, legendary sidemen, and some of the best instructors on the planet to teach rock, pop, blues and country songs. With iVideosongs, aspiring musicians learn the songs at their pace, when and where they want."

The site has licensed full rights to its songs from several major publishers, and many secondary and tertiary publishers. This allows the company to provide complete and accurate instructional titles, presented exactly as they were originally written and performed. The titles are primarily for electric and acoustic guitarists, but titles for bass, keyboards, and drums are also included in the launch.

iVideosongs customers can choose a skill level and genre, and then download the high-def titles to their PC, iPod, or other device. Each song title is presented in chapter format. Tabs and chord notation are included with each title to aid in learning. While there is a fee for the service, the site features plenty of free tutorials for those low on chicken feed.

Participating artists already include The Doobie Brothers, The Allman Brothers Band, 3 Doors Down, and Rush (a video of Alex Lifeson has already appeared on the homepage). Explore the site at www.ivideosongs.com.



Toronto's Trebas Institute Moves

The Trebas Institute in Toronto has moved to its new location at 2340 Dundas St. West, 2nd Floor, right across the street from the Dundas West TTC station and next to the Bloor GO Station. The school's phone and FAX numbers (below) will remain the same.

Established in 1979, the school offers courses in recording arts, entertainment management, and film and television production, and has campuses in both Toronto and Montreal. For more information, contact the school at: 416-966-3066, FAX 416-966-0030, www.trebas.com.

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Canadian Jazz Hall Of Fame To Be Established In Niagara-On-The-Lake

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Chamber of Commerce & VCB, with its location in the heart of the Heritage District of Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON, will soon be home to the Canadian Jazz Hall of Fame.

Public relations firm OEB Enterprises has teamed up with the Niagara-on-the-lake Chamber of Commerce & VCB and Jazz Festivals Canada to open the Canadian Jazz Hall of Fame in the Chamber's downtown courthouse location. The formal announcement was made at the International Association of Jazz Educators Conference (IAJE) in Toronto during the Canadian Showcase.

The project, in development over the past year, will officially open its doors with its first induction ceremony in January, 2009. Jazz Festivals Canada, the organization representing all of the major jazz festivals across the country has joined the project to administer the induction process and choose inductees.

"For the Canadian Jazz Hall of Fame to be successful, the jazz world has to own it," remarks John Armstrong of OEB. "It has to be the industry of today celebrating the great jazz musicians of the past who've inspired them. If we do that, then the Hall of Fame will be successful."

For more information, contact John Armstrong at: 905-682-7203, jarmstrong@oebenterprises.com.



Niagara-on-the-Lake's courthouse – the future home of the Canadian Jazz Hall of Fame

Sennheiser Launches Major Sound Logo Competition

Canadian musicians have a chance to earn some very serious coin (albeit in another currency) with Sennheiser's Sound Logo Competition. The microphone company, which has a Canadian office, is offering 5,000 euros to the winner of the competition (or 30,000 euros for unlimited rights to the clip), while nine runners-up will receive either Sennheiser's HD 650 headphones or an Evolution wireless 300 G2 microphone system.

An entry is allowed to be up to eight seconds long, and for simplicity, each entry must be submitted as a 128 kb/s MP3 file (no bigger than 10 MB) to www.sennheiser.com/soundlogo.

Sound logos are to the ear what a visual symbol is to the eye. What exactly is the ideal entry? "That's precisely what we'd like to find out with the help of music enthusiasts around the world," says Susanne Seidel, President of Global Marketing at Sennheiser. "Our customers have huge creative potential, and having fun composing and messing about with music and sound lies at the heart of the sound logo competition."

Professional and amateur musicians alike will have six months to play with their entries; contributions have to be uploaded to the website above by July 17, 2008, so you don't need to leap off the couch just yet. "We're really looking forward to receiving entries from all corners of the world," says Seidel. "There'll be an explosion of musical creativity."

For more information, contact Sennheiser Canada: 514-426-3013, FAX 514-426-3953, info@sennheiser.ca, www.sennheiser.ca.

Indie Venue Bible Now Available For Touring Musicians

The Indie Contact Newsletter has had a team of over 20 researchers collecting information for a new live music venue directory, which is now available for purchase online.

The Indie Venue Bible was created with the needs of the touring artist in mind. It features listings for 26,000 venues and 2,000 booking agents in the US and Canada. You'll find venues of all sizes, including clubs, restaurants, lounges, coffee shops, festivals, theatres, halls, churches, book stores, community centres, house concerts, jams, and open mics. *The Bible* also lists the genres of music each location will accept. There are over 1,000 colleges listed for any artist planning a college tour.

In other news, still no word of an *Indie Shower Bible* for those wanting to stay hygienic while on the road.

For more information, visit: www.indievenuebible.com.

Chris Paul Harman Wins 2007 Jules Léger Prize

Chris Paul Harman

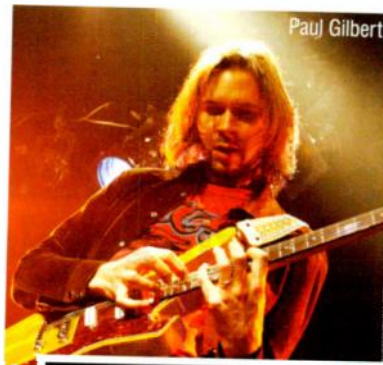


The Canada Council for the Arts has recognized *Postludio a rovescio* by composer Chris Paul Harman as the winner of the 2007 Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music. As part of the award, Harman will receive a prize of \$7,500. *Postludio a rovescio* was commissioned in 2006 by the Nieuw Ensemble, and will receive its Canadian premiere under the baton of Robert Aitken on April 11, 2008 at Glenn Gould Studio in Toronto. It is the second time Harman has won the prize, the first being in 2001 for *Amerika*.

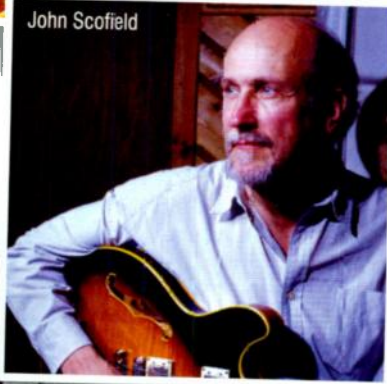
Sue Foley



Stu Hamm



Paul Gilbert



John Scofield

Big Artists Lined Up For Guitar Workshop Plus Summer 2008

Guitar Workshop Plus...Bass, Drums, Keyboards, and Vocals has announced its guest artist line-up for the 2008 summer program. Two sessions have already been announced for the 2008 summer schedule:

Toronto, ON (Session 1) — July 13-18, 2008.

Toronto, ON (Session 2) — July 20-25, 2008.

Both Toronto sessions will be held at the Humber College Lakeshore Campus in Etobicoke for the second straight year. Confirmed guest artists for the summer session include guitarist John Scofield (John Scofield Trio, Miles Davis), guitarist Paul Gilbert (solo, Mr. Big, Racer X), bassist Stu Hamm (solo, Joe Satriani, Steve Vai), Canadian blues player Sue Foley, rock guitarist Gary Hoey, drummer Rick Gratton, and others.

Designed for aspiring musicians of all ages, the program offers students or groups a unique setting for musical and personal growth. Participants will have the opportunity to study multiple styles and courses.

Registration has already begun for the 2008 sessions.

For more information on the Guitar Workshop Plus program, contact: 905-567-8000, info@guitarworkshopplus.com, www.guitarworkshopplus.com.

Long & McQuade Customers Offer Help To Music Therapy Programs

Long & McQuade's Jack Long and Sheri Katz recently presented The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) in Toronto with a donation made by the retail chain's customers to the hospital's music therapy program. The two were on hand at the hospital to present the donation to Arlene Manankil of the music therapy program.

Long & McQuade held a nation-wide in-store fundraising drive, starting at the beginning of the Christmas season, where customers were offered the chance to add one dollar to their purchases that would benefit music therapy programs at Canadian hospitals. The money collected, which totaled \$12,000, was donated to BC Children's Hospital (\$4,500), the Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton (\$1,000), and SickKids (\$6,500).

"Seeing the dedication of the people involved and hearing their stories of what music therapy can accomplish made me very happy that we were able to help," comments Long.

When asked about Long & McQuade's decision to get on board with the drive, Katz commented: "I think our customers and staff alike recognize and appreciate the power of music. Long & McQuade as a company is very proud of what we were able to do."

"We're really proud to have the support of Long & McQuade, a company with a long-standing history in the music business," says Manankil. "It's a perfect relationship with a company that truly understands the impact music can have on peoples' lives."

For more information, contact Long & McQuade at: 905-837-9785, FAX 905-837-9786, www.long-mcquade.com.



Long & McQuade's Sheri Katz (left) and Jack Long (right) present SickKids' Arlene Manankil (centre) with a donation to the hospital's music therapy program.

KoSA Eleven Live DVD Now Available

KoSA Eleven/Live contains over three hours of instruction, interviews, and live performance highlights from the eleventh edition of the KoSA International Percussion Workshop and Festival. Produced by KoSA Founder and Artistic Director Aldo Mazza in association with Hudson Music, the DVD offers viewers a participant's perspective of the KoSA experience.

The DVD presents exclusive performance and instructional footage of top drum and percussion artists from around the world taken from the annual festival.

View clips at www.hudsonmusic.com, or for additional information, contact Hudson Music: 888-796-2992, FAX 914-246-5282, HUDSONINFO@AOL.COM.

CCMA Announces Vancouver As Host Of 2009 Country Music Week

The Canadian Country Music Association has announced that Vancouver will play host to Country Music Week and the Canadian Country Music Awards in 2009. This marks the first time the events will take place on the West Coast since 1987.

The announcement was made in Vancouver by the Chair of the CCMA Board of Directors, Heather Ostertag, who presented Stan Hagen, Minister of Tourism, Sports, and the Arts, with a special award to commemorate Vancouver's successful bid for Canada's biggest week in country music.

"We are thrilled to be coming to Vancouver in 2009," says Ostertag. "The support we have received so far, not only from the Bid Committee but also from the Province of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver has been incredible. Vancouver is a beautiful city and we are excited to be bringing Canada's top country artists to the fans."

Country Music Week 2009 will run from September 11-



Canadian country artists Lisa Brokop (left) and Aaron Pritchett (far right) flank BC Minister of Tourism, Sports, & the Arts Stan Hagen & CCMA Board Chair Heather Ostertag in Vancouver.

Photo Credit: Dee Lippingwell

14, with the CCMA Awards to be held September 14. Before heading to the West Coast, the Canadian Country Music Association will celebrate the 2008 Country Music Week on the Prairies from September 5-8, 2008 in Winnipeg, MB.

For more information, contact the CCMA at: 416-947-1331, FAX 416-947-5924, country@ccma.org, www.ccma.org.

Linus Entertainment Takes Over True North Records

Linus Entertainment is taking over True North Records, a label revered for churning out some of the most nationally representative and embraced

acts in Canada. Under the deal, True North Owner and Founder Bernie Finkelstein is selling the Toronto-based label to Linus, and will step down as President, but remain as Chairman.

The True North catalogue boasts releases from Canadian artists like 54-40 and Bruce Cockburn, and currently houses up-and-comers like The Golden Dogs and Hunter Valentine.

Songwriters' Association Of Canada Makes Peer-To-Peer Proposal

The Songwriters' Association of Canada has issued an open proposal on how the Canadian music industry can embrace peer-to-peer file sharing without suing music fans or adding digital locks to files rightfully purchased by consumers.

The SAC proposes a license fee of \$5 per Internet subscription, per month. Payment of the fee would essentially remove illegality from file sharing online, as any participation user will have paid the licensing fee. The Association believes this would present a "major financial improvement for the music industry," as the amount of income generated annually from Internet subscribers could compensate artists for revenue lost at

the hands of file sharing programs like the infamous Napster and its contemporaries.

The full proposal is available online at www.songwriters.ca, and is laid out in detail, including how the proposal could sync with Canadian copyright and legislative issues. The ever-vocal CMCC, which has been searching for a made-in-Canada response to file sharing (as reported in the Jan/Feb 08 issue of *CM*), has publicly applauded the proposal, stating that while the SAC may not have all the answers, it is taking steps in the right direction.

For more information, contact the SAC at: 416-961-1588, FAX 416-961-2040, sacadmin@songwriters.ca, www.songwriters.ca.



A new networking-based website for roadies, techs, and musicians has launched at www.bandandcrew.com, where registrants can create profiles to find and connect with other members of the music industry from both Canada and the US. Any touring bands seeking some help in different parts of the continent should definitely find this service helpful and enjoyable. Those looking to scout potential hook-ups via racy photo albums should stick to Facebook.

■ Canadian Music Week (CMW) 2008

Toronto, ON
March 5-8, 2008
905-858-4747, FAX 905-858-4848
info@cmw.net, www.cmw.net

■ The 7th Annual Billboard Music & Money Symposium

New York, NY
March 6, 2008
646-654-4660
bbevents@billboard.com,
www.billboardevents.com

■ Ontario Country Music Association Showcase

Oshawa, ON
March 16, 2008
905-424-0155
ocma@rogers.com,
www.ontariocountrymusicassociation.ca

■ Niagara Music Awards

Niagara Falls, ON
March 25, 2008
905-835-2345
morgan@capitalm.com,
www.niagaramusicawards.com

■ Billboard Mobile Entertainment Live Spring 2008

Las Vegas, NV
March 31, 2008
646-654-4660
bbevents@billboard.com,
www.billboardevents.com

■ 2008 JUNO Awards

Calgary, AB
April 8, 2008
416-485-3135, FAX 416-485-4978
info@carasonline.ca, www.juno-awards.ca

■ ASCAP "I Create Music" Expo 2008

Los Angeles, CA
April 10-12, 2008
800-278-1287, FAX 212-595-3276
www.ascap.com/eventsawards

■ 2008 Dallas International Guitar Festival

Dallas, TX
April 18-20, 2008
krw@guitarshow.com, www.guitarshow.com

■ Gospel Music Association (GMA) Music Week

Nashville, TN
April 19-23, 2008
615-242-0303, FAX 615-254-9755
www.gospelmusic.org

■ Cape Breton International Drum Fest

Cape Breton, NL
April 26-27, 2008
902-727-2337
b_aitken@yahoo.com, www.cbdrumfest.ca

■ New Music West

Vancouver, BC
May 14-18, 2008
604-689 2910, FAX 604-689 2912
info@29productions.ca,
www.newmusicwest.com

■ Montreal International Musical Competition (MIMC) Piano 2008

Montreal, QC
May 20-30, 2008
514-845-4108, 877-377-7951,
FAX 514-845-8241
info@concoursmontreal.ca,
www.concoursmontreal.ca

■ 2008 COCA National Conference

Ottawa, ON
June 6-10, 2008
519-690-0207, FAX 519-681-4328
cocaoffice@coca.org, www.coca.org

■ Canadian Vintage Guitar Show

Thornhill, ON
June 7-8, 2008
416-222-8222, FAX 416-222-0016
vintage@tundramusic.com,
www.tundramusic.com

■ 14th NXNE Film Festival & Conference

Toronto, ON
June 12-15, 2008
416-863-6963, FAX 416-863-0828
info@nxne.com, www.nxne.com

■ Distillery Blues Festival

Toronto, ON
June 13-15, 2008
416-698-2152, FAX 416-698-2064
info@distilleryblues.com,
www.distilleryblues.com

■ Jazzfest International

Victoria, BC
June 20-29, 2008
250-388-4423, FAX 250-388-4407
info@jazzvictoria.ca, www.jazzvictoria.ca

■ TD Canada Trust Ottawa International Jazz Festival

Ottawa, ON
June 20-July 1, 2008
613-241-2633, 888-226-4495
info@ottawajazzfestival.com,
www.ottawajazzfestival.com

■ 3rd Montreal Musician & Musical Instrument Show (MMMIS)

Montreal, QC
July 3-6, 2008
514-871-1881, 888-515-0515
info_simmm@equipespectra.ca,
www.mmmis.ca

■ The TD Canada Trust Atlantic Jazz Festival Halifax

Halifax, NS
July 11-19, 2008
902-492-2225, 800-567-5277, FAX 902-425-7946
info@jazzeast.com, www.jazzeast.com

■ Guitar Workshop Plus

Toronto, ON
Session 1: July 13-18, 2008
Session 2: July 20-25, 2008
905-567-8000
info@guitarworkshopplus.com,
www.guitarworkshopplus.com

■ 31st Vancouver Folk Music Festival

Vancouver, BC
July 18-20, 2008
604-602-9798, 800-883-3655, FAX 604-602-9790
inquiries@thefestival.bc.ca,
www.thefestival.bc.ca

■ 35th Home County Folk Festival

London, ON
July 18-20, 2008
519-432-4310, FAX 519-432-6299
www.homecounty.ca

■ Beaches International Jazz Festival

Toronto, ON
July 18-27, 2008
416-698-2151, FAX 416-698-2152
info@beachesjazz@rogers.com,
www.beachesjazz.com

■ Hillside Festival 2008

Guelph, ON
July 25-27, 2008
519-763-6396, FAX 519-763-9514
info@hillsidefestival.ca,
www.hillsidefestival.ca

■ KoSA 13 Percussion Workshop Drum Camp

Green Mountains, VT
July 30-August 3, 2008
514-482-5554, FAX 514-483-2226
info@kosamusic.com, www.kosamusic.com

■ 31st Canmore Folk Music Festival

Canmore, AB
August 2-4, 2008
403-678-2524, FAX 403-678-2524
info@canmorefolkfestival.com,
www.canmorefolkfestival.com

■ 7th Midwest Music Summit

Indianapolis, IN
August 7-9, 2008
www.midwestmusicsummit.com

■ 2008 National Flute Association Convention

Kansas City, MO
August 14-17, 2008
661-299-6680, FAX 661-299-6681
nfaconvention@aol.com, www.nfaonline.org

■ Canadian Country Music Week & Awards 2008

Winnipeg, MB
September 5-8, 2008
416-947-1331, FAX 416-947-5924
country@ccma.org, www.ccma.org

■ Pro AV Golf Tournament

Markham, ON
September 9, 2008
905-641-3471
nduncan@nor.com, www.proavgolf.com

■ 11th Atlantis Music Conference & Festival

Atlanta, GA
September 17-20, 2008
770-499-8600
atlantis@atlantismusic.com,
www.atlantismusic.com

■ 22nd Ontario Council of Folk Festivals (OCFF)

Ottawa, ON
October 23-26, 2008
613-560-5997, 866-292-OCFF, 613-560-2001
info@ocff.ca, www.ocff.ca

■ Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC)

Austin, TX
November 5-8, 2008
580-353-1455, FAX 580-353-1456
percarts@pas.org, www.pasic.org

■ CINARS 2008

Montreal, QC
November 17-23, 2008
514-842-5866, 514-843-3168
www.cinars.org

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by Steve Chahley

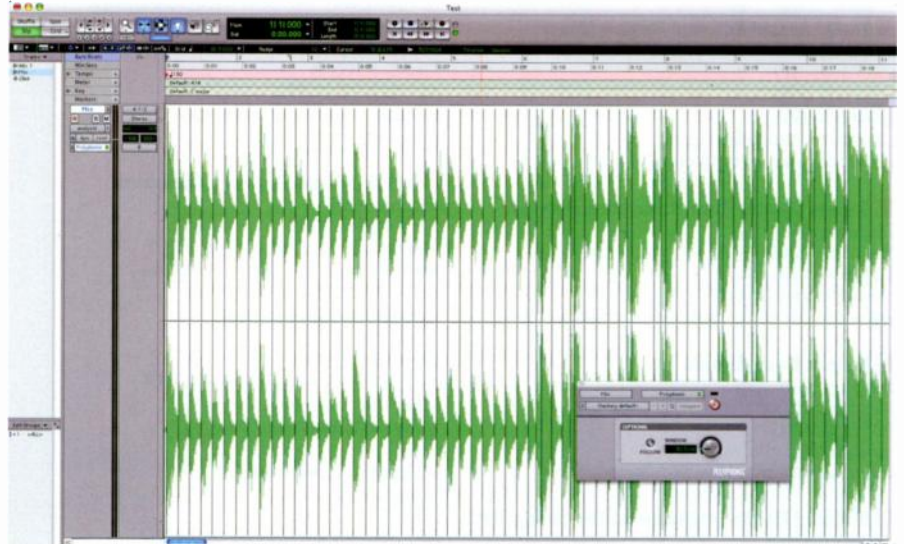
PRO TOOLS LE 7.4

There's an ever-increasing amount of upgrades to operating systems and software... some of which are free, while others involve opening up your wallet. Needless to say, any upgrade that costs money had better have a convincing set of new features to offer, or the software developer might find a lot of customers deciding to hold out for the next release (or jump ship to another program!).

Take Digidesign's Pro Tools, for example. In December of 2006, version 7.3 was introduced as a pay upgrade. In the fall of 2007, version 7.4 was also released as a pay upgrade – was it too soon to ask users to pull out their credit cards again? Well, let's have a look at what the LE version of Pro Tools 7.4 has on offer for potential upgraders, and see if the \$45 US upgrade fee (or \$75 US if you didn't upgrade to version 7.3) is worth the extra wear on your pocket-book.

Although there are other tweaks and enhancements introduced in version 7.4, the biggest news (and the focus of this review) is the introduction of Elastic Audio. Users of programs such as Ableton Live or Sony Acid will be familiar with this concept of real-time tempo manipulation/timestretching of audio files; however, it's a brand new concept for Pro Tools users. Having fiddled around a little on Ableton Live it appears that Digidesign modelled its version after Ableton's example, even borrowing terms such as Elastic Audio and Warp Markers for its implementation. Being a life-long Mac user, I'm not sure how this compares to Acid's technology (a PC-only product), but I'm sure there must be some overlap there too.

All in all, Elastic Audio is a pretty exciting addition to Pro Tools. Anyone who's spent hours chopping up audio files to correct timing issues will appreciate what it can do. And the ability to adjust the tempo of audio files in real-time will be a godsend to producers and artists who may have misjudged the best tempo for a song when the tracks were laid down. All of this is accomplished by placing the affected audio tracks into Elastic Audio mode. The track is automatically analyzed by Pro Tools for timing information, at which point the user can intervene and correct any mistakes in the analysis by moving the Event Markers. Further tweaks and other effects can be added using Warp Markers, with audio being processed using one of three algorithms depending



on the audio content: Rhythmic for files containing mostly drums/percussion or other transient sources; Monophonic for pitched sounds such as vocals or bass that contain only one note sounding at a time; and Polyphonic, for other more complex sounds. In addition to this, processing power can be saved by changing from Real Time to Rendered mode (the files are rewritten to disk) with the addition of another algorithm called X-form – a much higher-quality process that can't be run in real-time.

As you might have guessed, the amount of timestretching a piece of audio can take without noticeable artifacts is variable depending on the audio content. Generally, it works better on simple separately multi-tracked sounds than it does on complex sounds like full mixes. Adjusting your chosen algorithm further using its plug-in settings helps as well. Pushing the limits a bit, I attempted to increase the tempo of a final mix by 10 BPM. In Polyphonic mode (Real Time) there were quite noticeable artifacts all over the place, but doing the same thing with X-Form mode on Maximum setting (Rendered) it was hard to hear any artifacts at all. This is understandable though, as it took Pro Tools about seven minutes to render the file (a five-minute long 24 bit/44.1 kHz interleaved WAV file) on a MacBook Pro (2.16 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo with 2 GB of RAM). Of course, if you don't mind the artifacts, some pretty extreme effects can be achieved... and I can imagine we'll be hearing the results of those experiments on a lot of releases very soon!

The majority of the other features introduced in Pro Tools LE 7.4 seem to

be tweaks to the interface and preferences to accommodate Elastic Audio, with a few notable exceptions. Tab To Transients now has a key command (yay!), and there are some handy enhancements to Zoom functions and to the Digibase browser. Another important functional enhancement is support to receive MIDI over ReWire, allowing the recording of parameter changes made in a ReWire client application (such as Ableton Live or Reason) back into Pro Tools. There are also a host of enhancements in the video-handling side of things, so the upgrade is probably worth the price for those of you using Pro Tools LE with video just for these alone.

So is Pro Tools LE 7.4 worth the upgrade price, after forking out your hard-earned cash for the 7.3 upgrade not all that long ago? For Elastic Audio alone, I say: "You bet!" I think Elastic Audio is probably the most important feature introduced to Pro Tools in a long time. Whether you choose to use it as a tool to fix issues encountered during recording, or as a creative instrument to stretch the bounds of what can be done to recorded sound files, there's no denying this feature is going to be used by the vast majority of Pro Tools users at some point. The other enhancements may seem minimal or inconsequential (unless you use Pro Tools with video), but it's quite likely that Elastic Audio will change the way you approach editing and sound design.

Steve Chahley is the resident engineer at DNA Recording Facilities in Vaughan, ON. He can be reached at steve@dnafacilities.com.



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World Radio History

Line 6 Spider Valve 2x12 Guitar Amp

The imaginative technicians at Line 6 have made a career of innovation, and with the release of the Spider Valve line of modeling tube amplifier the company once again leads the pack.

The amplifier is designed to please fans of amp modeling and those who crave the warmth and response of a real tube amp. The company collaborated with legendary amplification guru Reinhold Bogner, the principal designer at Bogner Amplification, to design the Spider Valve's tube section. The result is an all-in-one solution that combines Line 6's impressive amp modeling and effects, with the warm, guttural sound of Bogner's boutique tube amplifiers.

Looks

The Spider Valve looks badass in black. Covered in black vinyl, and decked out with black grill cloth, black faceplate, black knobs, with chrome logos and toggle switches, the amp exudes a vintage vibe. In fact, the glowing LED lights on the front panel are the only evidence of the amp's intrinsic technology.

The Spider Valve is ready for the road, but like the world's most beloved tube amps – it is much heavier than it looks. Skeptics need only heft the amp to discover that the Spider Valve is a serious piece of gear. Both eye-catching and durable, the Spider Valve would be at home in a first-class recording studio or on the stage of a dingy blues club.

Features

The Spider Valve is essentially a class AB tube amplifier fed by a digital front end, and Bogner configured the amplifier to offer the harmonic richness and the compression of a classic tube amp. The tube component of the 40 W model consists of two 12AX7 preamp tubes and two perfectly matched 5881 power tubes. The power amp drives two vintage Celestion 30 speakers, delivering unprecedented sonic impact and spatial imaging.

Line 6's amp modeling technology feeds the Spider Valve's front end; 12 amp and seven effect models are housed within its digital brain. The amp models are divided into six categories: Clean, Twang, Blues, Crunch, Metal, and Insane. An LED light alternates between glowing amber and blue as you switch between the two amp models in each category. Like having an arsenal of classic amps at your disposal, the Spider Valve deftly reproduces both crystal clear and hi-gain tones based on classic amplifiers such as the 1970s Fender Twin Reverb and modern favourites like Mesa Boogie's Dual Rectifier.

Great tone is only the beginning of a great guitar sound, and Line 6 has included seven common effects to help users create killer tones. The modulation dial on the front panel allows you to dial in lush Chorus/Flange, sweeping Phaser, and cool Tremolo effects. A second knob allows you to dial in a trio of delay effects including a standard delay, an organic

tape echo, and a highly addictive, swirling sweep echo. The final effect knob controls the reverb setting.

Adjusting the effects setting is delightfully simple. Set the timing with the tap tempo button on the face plate and adjust a single knob to elicit aural landscapes ranging from a hint of processing to total effect overkill.

The Spider Valve comes stocked with over 300 artist and song-based presets. The Navigator button allows you to scroll up and down through tones created by legendary artists such as INXS, Albert Lee, and Deftones as well as classic songs such as the Rolling Stones' "Brown Sugar" and AC/DC's "Back In Black." Each preset is fully tweakable, and up to 36 new tones can be saved as user presets.

Another great feature is the balanced direct out located on the back of the amplifier. Plug a cable into the back of the Spider Valve to capture great sounds when recording directly or use it to feed the soundboard at a gig. Using the amp in this way assures that the folks in the audience are hearing exactly what you hear on the stage.

Overall

The Spider Valve is not without flaws. Although simple and intuitive, the single modulation knob does not allow the user total control over the effects; it is impossible to dial in the phaser and the tremolo effects at the same time. When I first set the amp up in my home studio, I was less than impressed with many of the preset tones; the song-based and artist-based presets sounded over-compressed and effected. It wasn't until I took time to experiment with the settings that I fell in love with the Spider Valve. Zeroing all the effects, I dialed in a slightly dirty sound based on a '68 Marshall Plexi 50-watt. I sat down for a minute and didn't stop playing for hours – not playing with the amp, but playing the guitar. Too often we become slaves to our tools, and too often our gadgets get in the way of the creative process. The great response and killer tone of the Spider Valve inspired me to play. For me, that is the true sign of a stellar piece of gear.

Lonny Knapp is a Toronto-based musician and freelance writer.

Distributor's Response

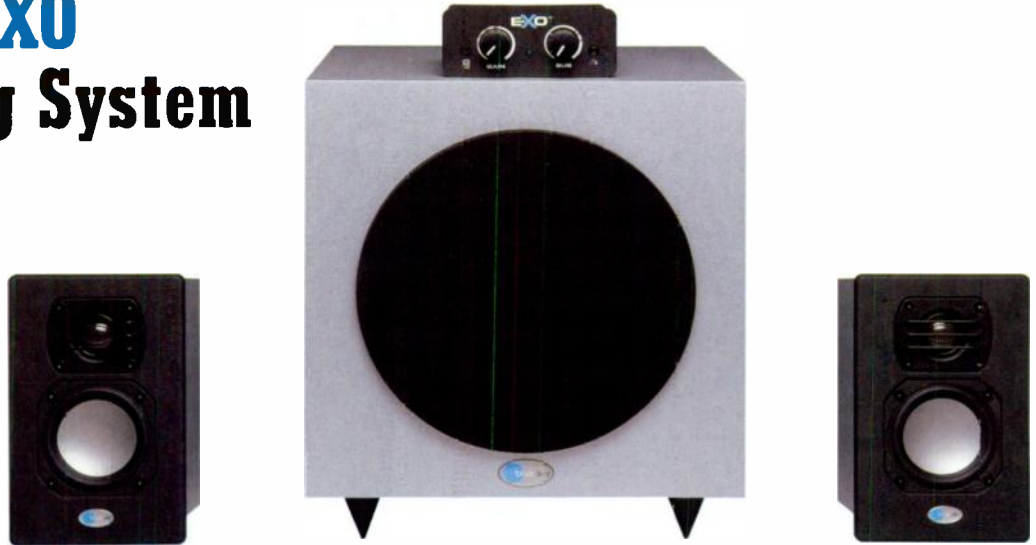
Thanks to Lonny and CM for an excellent review of the Spider Valve 212. Reinhold Bogner's collaboration with Line 6 was instrumental in creating a Spider amplifier that exudes classic tube tone. Bogner was uncompromising in its design, carefully choosing every component down to its original Orange Drop capacitors. With a 100-watt stack and a 1x12 combo to complement the 2x12 reviewed, Line 6 has convinced even the most discerning "tube purists."

Sami Kizilbash,
Musical Instruments Product Manager, SF Marketing



Blue Sky EXO Monitoring System

by Lorne Hounsell



The Blue Sky EXO stereo Monitoring system instantly grabbed my attention after opening the box. With its stylish looks and compact size, these speakers will not only please your ears – they will look great in any room as well. With a likely street price of under \$400, you can have a full range system for a variety of applications from laptop monitoring and gaming to watching your favourite movie.

Blue Sky has been around the entertainment business for quite some time, and it is not a new contender in the speaker making business. Its larger systems are used in professional studios and soundstages such as Skywalker Sound and ESPN.

The Highs And The Lows

The EXO weighs in at 38 lbs. in the shipping box, so you know there are some serious magnets in the backs of those speakers. I personally like it when there is a bit of weight to a product – think heavy bottom end!

The frequency response of this system goes from 35 Hz in the bottom to 20,000 Hz in the top end. The subwoofer handles all the frequencies from 35 Hz to 140 Hz. The mid-high portion of the system, or as Blue Sky calls them, the satellites, handle from 140 Hz to 20,000 Hz. These satellites also have an internal crossover between the mids and the highs at 2,200 Hz. The sub has one 8-inch woofer, vented motor, and a paper cone with foam surround. The satellites have a 3-inch cast-frame midrange driver, hemispherical anodized aluminum cone, and a 1-inch Neodymium tweeter.

There are many different ways to connect your sound source to the EXO. The

system comes with a remote hub that connects to the sub and satellites. This hub allows you to connect your iPod via the 1/8th-inch stereo jack on the front, as well as your DAW or console via the XLR/RCA connectors on the back of the hub. The hub is where you adjust the volume for playback, and you can dial in as much sub as you would like.

Home

Having received the package by courier at home, I wanted to try this system out with my home computer. The speakers on my computer are of the generic no-name brand that so many people have these days. They have a sound, but is it desirable? The instant the EXO replayed the track that I had just heard minutes previously on my no-names, I was blown away. You could really hear the panning and depth in the mix, and the low end was thunderous compared to the no-names.

Studio

The next test for these speakers was at the studio with a personal friend, producer Jon Drew. He was mastering some new material for Toronto band C'mon and was interested in hearing them. Drew was pleased with the clarity in the top end and pleasantly surprised with the smooth mids. On our initial listen, we both thought the bottom end was a little over-exaggerated, but with a little move of the sub in the room and adjusting the sub level on the hub we both noticed a lot more definition in the bottom end.

The last test was a vocal tracking session at the studio. I was recording vocals for Toronto artist Miles Jones. We tracked our vocals in our normal fashion

and began our quick end-of-the-night mix. Upon playback, Jones commented that the speakers sounded like the real world, or what everyone has become accustomed to listening on. They seemed to be a little hyped in the bottom and smooth in the mids, making for a pleasant listening experience at low to mid volumes.

Conclusion

In summary, these speakers are smooth on the ears. You could literally spend hours editing vocals or drums. As an additional pair of reference monitors in the studio, this system is ideal. They look great and sound great.

Lorne Hounsell operates Central Audio Productions in Toronto.

Distributor's Comments

If you can't hear bass, you can't mix it ... it's that simple. People tend to use small speakers in smaller rooms, that's okay, BUT ... from small speakers usually comes small bass or no bass at all, hence the need for the subwoofer, and that's just basic Physics 101. Full range monitoring without a sub is nearly impossible, it simply can't be true. Blue Sky understands this and celebrates it! "2.1 is the NEW STEREO."

Richard Lasnier, Pres.
Audio Distributors International
www.adi-online.net
info@adi-online.net

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Rhythm Method

by Neil Boshart

Over the years of playing rock music, I have learned that playing tight rhythmically was as important as my pinky finger. In most rock bands, old and new, the rhythm guitar is most often overlooked or overshadowed by the lead guitar. A lot of people argue that the bass and drums have the most important duties of keeping rhythm and groove. In a lot of genres of music, this may be true, but in rock music, the rhythm guitar is just as important – if not moreso. The rhythm guitar keeps the time, and fills in the gaps with a lot more. Becoming a tight rhythm guitarist takes practice and concentration. First, you must be in touch with your inner metronome. There are many ways to exercise this.

Rhythm is everywhere you go in daily life. Even the way you walk; the timing of each step is in rhythm. It's funny, because even when walking you can practice your sense of timing, as silly as it sounds. When I am playing live, I sometimes find myself even breathing to rhythms I am playing. Inhaling and exhaling to the music is a good way to keep time and also to help you relax if you are stressed with the performance. Also, tap your damn toes! It's the classic way of keeping time. Some of these methods seem a little unusual to train you inner metronome, but combining all these methods will work wonders for you.

Okay, now lets apply this to actually playing guitar. Lets forget the left hand altogether and talk about the right. Strumming can be tricky business if you don't know the proper techniques. Lets assume that you already know how to hold a pick and that you play rock music like punk or metal. I'm going to come right out and say it: downstrokes are very important! Playing as many downstrokes as possible is key. I feel that if you can master downstroke palm-muting at blistering speeds, you can be a metal rock god! From my personal standpoint, I also feel that downstrokes

help the overall tonality of the chords you play as well. The upstroke/downstroke combo, especially in punk rock music, sounds so weak to me. Don't get me wrong though, I'm not saying everything has to be downstrokes – but it just sounds better.

Time signatures. Get to know them. They are your friends. There are three time signatures that we often use in my band, Silverstein. These are: 4/4, 5/4, and the fabulous 6/8. If time signatures confuse you, I will explain them simply. 4/4 means that one bar is timed as four quarter notes or four beats. 5/4 is also in quarter notes and counted as five beats. 5/4 can get you pretty lost sometimes, so make sure you are concentrating on counting in your head. 6/8 is one of my favourites because it has a swing feel to it. 6/8 put simply, is counted as six eighth-notes in a bar. The easiest way to keep time with this is to count to yourself "1 2 3, 1 2 3" to get a feel for it, and accent the "1" count. Examples of 6/8 can be heard in our songs "Discovering the Waterfront" or "Red Light Pledge."

Okay, so lets take what we've learned and apply it to a session with a drummer. If you know an awesome drummer, great, because they are hard to come by. My band is lucky enough to have an amazing drummer. Paul Koehler has been playing consistently for years and has honed his skills to the max! When we play together in a jamming situation, it's like we have this unspoken communication with each other. It's as if I know exactly which direction he is going in with his beats and he knows where I am going with my riffing. This being said, you and your drummer need to have this unspoken communication between you. First, you need to recog-

nize the accents the drummer is playing. Listen to cymbal crashes or snare hits – those are most likely the accents you should follow. Second, make eye contact with your drummer; he will want to let you know how the groove is going. Third, if you somehow get lost and lose your rhythm, the worst thing you can do is panic or stop playing altogether. Just remain calm, look, and listen closely to the drums and find your way back.

Lastly, if you really want to work hard at being a great rhythm player, learn from heavy metal. Those guitar players can teach copious amounts of different rhythms and playing styles. Even if you aren't too keen on the metal genre, respect the fact that those guitarists pushed the limits of guitar playing. Learn from Hetfield, Dimebag, and Van Halen. Thats all, happy riffing!

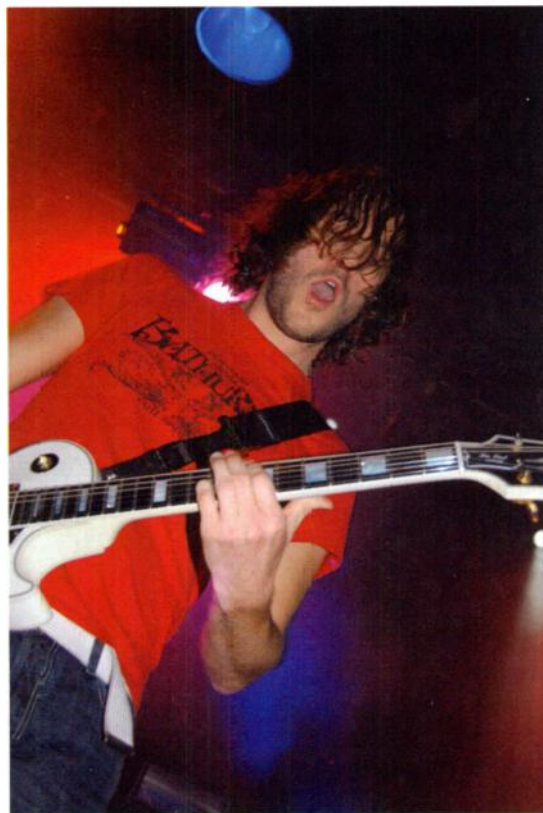


Photo Credit: Andrew King

Neil Boshart plays guitar in Silverstein, currently touring its latest record, Arrivals & Departures. Check out the band at www.silversteinmusic.com.

Keepers Of The Flame

by Gary Gratz

Iborrow my title from the title of a great song by Mark Levine which was recorded by Latin Jazz great Pancho Sanchez (*Bien Sabroso!*, Picante CJP-239). Check it out! It has a great sense of harmony, is really fun to improvise over, and has a ton of rhythmic energy. I must admit that I just love songs that have a strong harmonic structure as a core element. The harmony can be very simple diatonically-derived chords, if it is musically logical. All music is valid but harmony rules! When I hear a song with a well-thought-out-chord progression, it immediately convinces me that the songwriter/composer knew what he or she was doing. It is in the use of harmony that keyboard players are Keepers of the Flame. In any musical situation, the audience, vocalists, and others in the band look to us hold together this important area. Oh sure, many guitar players have a great harmonic sense, and it is, of course, required of orchestral and big band composers/arrangers (most of whom are proficient keyboard players), but harmony is our domain and we need to be masters of it.

I probably don't have to convince you of the importance of the role of the keyboard player in music. I will make the bold statement that I don't think that it takes any special talent to be a proficient keyboard player, just a willingness to practice. One also needs to be constantly refining how we go about practicing. Sure, you hear about special individuals who can remember and perform, without mistakes, an entire Bach piece from listening to it once. You also hear about people with peak motor skills that can sight play virtually any collection of dots that you put in front of them at tempo. But after having taught hundreds of people, I feel confident in saying that most people are remarkably equal in talent when it comes to playing the keyboard – and if one has the drive to play, it doesn't matter what the savants can do. By virtue of the fact that I teach at a music college, everyone takes piano class regardless of what their main instrument is. We made this a requirement because we know that success in music theory, ear training, arranging, songwriting, and composition is contingent on some keyboard ability. When you add the element of MIDI sequencing, this is even truer.

I will relate a story to illustrate my point. A number of years ago, I played guitar in a rock band. We played in clubs in the five state area (Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and North



and South Dakota), danceable tunes primarily: Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, Free, Little Feat, Traffic, and, of course, Steely Dan. So when Steely Dan's *Pretzel Logic* came out, we just had to learn the title song. Both the guitarist and the bass player (who also played organ at church) had really good ears but could not figure out the bridge. I remember hearing the E in the bass and thinking it sounded like two chords stacked on top of each other. This kind of thing is possible on guitar (well, maybe if you are Allan Holdsworth) but it requires a large stretch. I went upstairs to the family piano and played an E minor chord with my left hand and fiddled around until I realized that the upper chord was a D major triad. I proceeded to work out the rest of the chords and within a few minutes could play the bridge (and even had a pretty good idea what the

individual vocal parts were). The others in the band drifted upstairs when they heard the music in somewhat of a state of amazement (I wasn't considered the golden ears guy in this group). As those of us who have played this tune know, the chords are: D/Em, E/A, C/Dm and D/G (spelled in a tertial analysis: Emi9, Ama9, Dmi9 and Gma9). Now I must add this wasn't any kind of major miracle – I would attribute it to the visual nature of the keyboard. I had taken a year of piano lessons, so I could work out vocal parts at the piano. For me it was a moment of revelation – I actually went out that evening and bought a Wurlitzer electric piano and signed up for lessons in jazz and classical piano a few days later. I was completely hooked on harmony. Then I bought a Mini-Moog, Arp Omni, Yamaha Electric Grand ... I'm sure you guys know the story. For me, my shift onto the keyboard bench has enabled me to be gainfully employed in music my whole life. Keep the Flame and keep practicing.

Gary Gratz is the Chair of Music Studies and the Head of the Keyboard Department at McNally Smith College of Music in St. Paul, MN. He has been a professional musician for 30+ years, working throughout the industry as a performer, composer, arranger, and programmer. He studied with Lorna Michelson, Herb Wigley, Manfredo Fest, and Jill Dawe. Gary has performed with Tony Sandler, Marilyn McCoo, Othello Molineaux, Tim Ries, Brian Duncan, and the Minnesota Vikings Band. He continues to perform regularly. As a composer/synthesisist with Herb Pilhofer Music, Gary composed music and designed sounds for numerous national TV ads including spots for Coca Cola, Discover Card, Target, and Porsche. He also performed on the soundtrack for the movie Beautiful Girls and coached the lead actor, Timothy Hutton, in piano technique.

Sight-Reading

by Mike Downes

It isn't a necessity to read music to be a great musician – there are fantastic bassists out there who don't read music at all; however, being able to read music will seriously expand your horizons. It not only provides you with a lot more gigging opportunities, but it opens up a whole world of music. Who wouldn't want to be able to read through the Bach cello suites?

In this column, I want to share a few thoughts that I have on learning to sight-read music. In the bass masterclasses that I teach at Humber College, I have seen and heard both the successful methods and pitfalls in learning to read music. I am going to assume that you have an understanding of basic music notation conventions (clefs, various rhythmic durations, dotted rhythms, pitches on lines and spaces, leger lines, accidentals, time signatures, key signatures, etc.). If you don't, there are countless books, software programs, and online tutorials about music notation available.

Your sight-reading will improve immensely if you learn to play the bass without looking at it. This is an obvious but often overlooked point. By developing tactile memory on the bass, you avoid the trap of continuously moving your eyes from the page to the instrument.

Learn to associate a pitch on the staff with a fret or position on the bass so that they are linked in your mind. Remember, however, that a single pitch on the staff can usually be played on more than one string.

Truly sight-read a piece at first. Use a metronome, and play it from start to finish without stopping, regardless of how many mistakes you make. The idea is to make it from "point A" (the first note) to "point B" (the last note). Play it at the tempo the piece asks for.

Give yourself approximately 30 seconds to "scan" the music before you start playing. A good system is a "left to right" system that I have been using for years – first check the type of clef (usually bass clef), then scan the music to see if there are any clef changes (to treble clef for example). Following that, check the key signature and scan for any key changes in the music. Next, check the time signature and check for any time

signature changes throughout the chart. Then follow the "road map," meaning repeated sections, d.s. al fines, codas, etc. so that you will be able to follow the notated material. Finally, do a quick search for any passages that stick out (a section with a lot of leger lines, for example). With practice, you can do all of this in 30 seconds or less. I have been on many gigs where I have had only 10 or 15 seconds to scan a new chart before playing it, and this method has helped me to avoid unpleasant surprises.



Next, go through these steps:

1. Play all the pitches out of tempo and work out fingerings (be specific as to which finger, which string, etc.). Another helpful idea is to name all of the pitches as you play them. Include any accidentals (don't call a B \flat a B, for example).
2. Tap the rhythms away from the bass or play them on a single note. The point is to concentrate solely on the rhythms without being distracted by pitch content.
3. Play the piece very slowly, but in time, again without stopping, regardless of mistakes. It can be helpful to break a longer piece into small sections; however, work on one section at a time,

following these same procedures, then string the sections together later. You can gradually increase the tempo.

4. Practice reading farther ahead in the music than where you are actually playing. Usually this means a measure or so ahead. By doing this, you create a buffer zone to mentally process the information on the sheet music.

5. If you play another instrument, such as piano, play the piece on it. Singing it will also help to solidify the pitches and rhythms.

6. Return to the original tempo and play the piece again. If you are still making mistakes, isolate problem areas and go over them again using the methods above.

You may be thinking at this point that with all of this work you are no longer sight-reading, and you are correct; however, each time you go through these steps you are better developing the ability to sight-read.

It is a good idea to spend time truly "sight-reading." This means playing a piece to the best of your ability, accepting any mistakes you make, then simply moving on to another piece. Keep in mind that if you do this exclusively, you run the risk of making the same mistakes over and over, but if you never do this you aren't truly sight-reading. Try to balance both approaches.

Because it is important, I will re-iterate – don't stop whenever you make a mistake. This quickly turns into a bad habit. If you are reading with other musicians, this habit will derail the music. If you keep time, and play whatever you can (mistakes included), you at least keep the musical form intact.

I hope these tips help you become a better reader!

Mike Downes is a professional bassist and composer living in Toronto. He has performed on over 40 recordings including Forces and The Winds of Change as a leader. He is also the Bass Department Head at Humber College, the author of The Jazz Bass Line Book published by Advance Music, and co-author of Jazz and Contemporary Music Theory. For more information visit www.mikedownes.com or email mike@mikedownes.com.

Let's Get Funky

Creating Linear Beats

by Jeff Salem



Greetings fellow drummers! In this article, I would like to show you a unique way of creating your own funky grooves using the "linear" concept. Linear beats are patterns played in which no limbs line up; in other words, at no point will you have two or more voices played together. What I have put together for you is what I call the "Linear Alphabet" in 16th notes. The 64 patterns on the right are all the possibilities you can play in four 16th notes between the bass, snare, and hihat with at least one hihat being played in each pattern. A)-F) are some of my own grooves in 4/4 time I created by combining any four of the 64 patterns. Notice on beat F) I have added the bass drum on beat one with the hihat to give a different feel. Also, you can drop out certain 16th notes, creating rests as you see in beats C), E) and F). Try playing the hihat part on the ride cymbal, cowbell, or tom. Many great drummers like Steve Gadd, David Garibaldi, Rick Gratton, and Gary Chaffee (the list can go on) use this concept. Try adopting this idea into your playing – it will add some creativity and variety to a song.

One Bar Linear Beats in 4/4 Time

Jeff Salem operates Jeff Salem's Music Studio. For more information, please visit: www.jsmusicstudio.com, www.salemdrum.com, or e-mail Jeff at jsalem@sympatico.ca.

A Carnatic Approach To Rhythm & Time

by Daniel Schnee

While in training as a Soto Zen Buddhist in Japan, I spent countless hours chanting scripture as part of my study regimen. And thanks to my ability to organize the words rhythmically, I was able to memorize large amounts of text quite rapidly. But this was no coincidence, for I had previously engaged in reciting *solkatu* as a part of my study of South Indian Carnatic with master Sri Kadri Gopalnath.

Solkatu, or *konnakkol*, are syllables that function as vocalized representations of the various rhythmic groupings, and as organizations of the musical / temporal structures. They are different from syllables used in North Indian music in that *bol* are onomatopoeia of the actual sound of the *tabla* drums, while *solkatu* are rhythmic mnemonics only. *Solkatu* is not only a pedagogical aid, but has been and is considered by some to be an art in itself with itself. Though we don't practice this particular art in jazz, the ability to sing rhythmic patterns is an important ability to have, and a basic look at syllabic rhythm and counting may help you advance your own understanding of rhythm as an improvising musician, create your own set of written exercises to help you memorize and internalize long cycles, and help you compose or transcribe cyclic structures with greater ease.

The principles of rhythmic theory in Carnatic music are called the *Dasa Prana*, the 10 vital elements of rhythm. Among the ideas discussed are the various modes of indicating rhythm, subdivision, tempo, classification, and the idea of "time" in general. The meters in South Indian music are considered to have developed over time from Sanskrit poetry, and out of this system five basic lengths of time (*jati*) developed: *chatusra* (4), *tisra* (3), *misra* (7), *khanda* (5), and *sankirna* (9). The groupings (*anga*) of beats (*akshara*) can be arranged quite creatively, and I intend to discuss them in terms of how you can begin to use these particular groupings to your advantage.

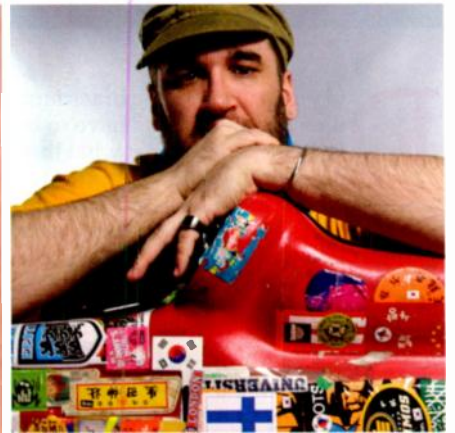
Among the many ways to articulate these groupings, the Carnatic music and dance terms *taka*, *takita*, and *takadimi* work very well, although I tend to use

the word "takida" instead as I find it easier to pronounce at fast tempos. Logically, "taka" is used as a grouping of two, "takida" of three, and "takadimi" of four. Having these groupings as a basic set of building blocks helps one create longer structures without having to count in one's head, and prevents thought in general from interfering with your music making. The idea is to become comfortable with a rhythmic cycle by repeating the syllabic version of it until the rhythm feels completely natural.

So, in order to create a cycle of five beats for example, we can say "taka-takida." We could also say "takida-taka," but most people seem to prefer the former. It seems to flow off the tongue easier. Now that we have chosen a five-syllable phrase, we can add notes to each syllable and experiment with musical phrases and ideas. "Takadimi-takida" is a good seven-syllable structure, as is "taka-taka-takida." Of course, the big fun begins when you start working out long cycles, and begin to memorize and internalize their syllabic flow. Beginning with 13 beats (*takadimi/takida/takadimi/taka*), we can repeat the phrase over again and then add an extra "taka" on the end, thus creating a 28-beat cycle. Suddenly, the idea of memorizing a 32-, 45-, or 63-beat cycle doesn't seem so alien, or out of reach. Then you can take the next step and write out a simple melody utilizing that rhythm either as a further memory aid, or as a full-blown composition to improvise over. In fact, many of my cycles have now become practical tools for teaching or performing in some fashion or the other.

An effective practice (and composing) device is to create several cycles and turn them into concurrent bars of music. It is a great way to train the fingers and mind, practice difficult shifts in rhythm and tempo, and also guarantees you don't fall into the habit of creating only long, single chains of rhythm exclusively. One exercise is to write out and sing additive bars in a sequence: 9/4, 10/4, 11/4, etc. They are fun to sing and play, and create an exciting, complicated sound without actually being complicated at all.

In terms of improvisation, I have found that the occasional cycle over a standard time signature is a nice rhythmic effect, and the ability to feel long



cycles helps one organize melodic material even in traditional formats much more effectively. Cycles are also fun to use in both traditional and more contemporary compositional forms, and introducing a cycle section into one of your pieces is a nice way of expanding your music into creative, unexplored territory. Variety is the key, and the more you experiment with this system the more enriched and creative you will become as a musician.

Be careful you don't overdo it, though. Like such activities as circular breathing or playing multiphonics, playing and improvising on cycles should be done with taste. But if practiced and performed with care, there is no limit to what you can achieve musically with hard work, ingenuity, and as always, a metronome.

And just think ... you could be the first person in your town to successfully play a few choruses of a slow blues ... in the time signature of 86/4!

Daniel Schnee is a Toronto-based saxophonist who has performed internationally with a number of Juno and Grammy award winning musicians. He has studied privately with several renowned South Indian and Arabic masters, as well as with legendary saxophonist Ornette Coleman. After composing for theatre and dance in Japan for a number of years,

Daniel became the woodwind and jazz history instructor at the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music in Jerusalem. His work, along with the works of Brian Eno, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Steven Reich will be featured in an upcoming anthology of innovative graphic score composers of the 21st century, published by the American Musicological Society.

The Care And Feeding Of Brass Instruments

by Michael Durocher

Did you know that the brass families of instruments have to be fed differently? That what they feed on is just as important to how they work and feel – just like you and me? Let me help shed some light on information that is not readily known to players of all calibres.

Trumpets

Valve oils and slide greases. Sounds simple doesn't it? Two simple products that will make your instrument perform like the star you are, well ... there is more to this than it sounds. Let me inform you of some of the choices you will need to make.

Valve Oils

Oils have two major functions. The first function is to lubricate the valves to assist in creating a seal between the valves and the valve casing. This also creates a barrier from the body acids introduced by the player. The second function is to use a viscosity that allows the valve to move at the speed and smoothness required by the player. Look for an oil that will last, keep the valve wet, and responds fast enough not to impede playing abilities. When you are successful, there should be no staining on the valves and action should last between three to seven days.

The Choices:

Synthetics or Petroleum-Based – Whatever you choose, you need to ensure it meets the two criteria required by valve oils. Most synthetics are designed to be thin and are meant for tight-fitting valves, while petroleum-based oils are designed for older or student-level instruments.

Whichever oil you choose, you will need to experiment, as the formulas will affect people with different body chemistry differently. The condition of your instrument should also be considered.

Tuning Slide Grease – Trumpets & Trombones

Greases used for tuning slides work on all brass instruments. The purpose



of slide grease is twofold: to allow the slide to move smoothly and at the speed that is required; and to create a barrier between the metal and the moisture to prevent oxidization and corrosion caused by the player's saliva. With these two points in mind, we then must deal with viscosities and make an informed decision with our purchase. Look for a product that creates a proper barrier and allows the slide to work as fast as needed.

As we wade into this subject we must ask ourselves a few questions:

- What do I want the grease to do? Slide fast, protect, or last?
- How much maintenance am I prepared to do? Frequency, ease, or difficulty?
- How tight or loose are the slides? New or old?
- Do I want to use more than one kind? Viscosity, brand, or type? Some brands can be mixed down to create the perfect action needed with the valve oil you are using. The Selmer brand mixes well, for example.

The Choices:

Natural, Synthetic, Thin, or Thick – slide oil, Lanolin, Roche' Thomas, FatCat Crème, Hetman Light or Heavy Slide, Selmer Tuning Slide, Cork Grease, and more are some of your choices.

Knowing the answers to the questions we asked ourselves earlier, we can readily find the solution with a quick search on the Internet for the product we are looking for. Simply type in the product name and search, and you will find all the information and comments you need to make an informed decision.

Trombones

There are many choices of slide oils and slide grease formulas. Firstly, I must say that slide oils are not conducive to the prevention of slide damage and care of the hand-slide. While this product is better than no prevention at all, it is accepted as a necessary evil. Those looking for a better solution for preventing slide damage must consider slide cream and formulas as the answer.

Application process of slide cream to the hand slides is as follows:

1. Pull the inner slide tubes out of the outer slide tubes. Try to pull as straight as possible!
2. Wipe clean the inner slide tubes with a clean, soft cloth.
3. Apply cream to the stocking of the slide tubes (slightly larger part of the tube).
4. Work each slide into the outer slide to spread the cream around and then pull out.
5. Wipe off excess cream and spray slide down with water (mist) bottle.
6. Put slide back together again and test. Noisy – add more cream; slow – wipe off and mist.

Michael Durocher is the program designer and Program Head of Musical Instrument Repair studies at Keyano College. Located in Fort McMurray, AB, Keyano College offers Canada's only Musical Instrument Repair program and is considered one of the leaders in the industry. Michael has been repairing for over 22 years and has been involved in music for over 32 years. Michael can be contacted at michael.durocher@keyano.ca or by visiting www.keyano.ca. Michael belongs to the National Association of Professional Band Instrument Repair Technicians and is currently serving as the Canadian (Region 8) Director. Visit NABPRT at www.nabpirt.net.

Internet Radio Part II

How To Start An Internet Radio Station

by Paul Lau

Last time, we interviewed Mike Caseley, VP of Slakrz.com, to get a feel for how a real Canadian independent Internet radio station is started and run. As promised, we'll now give you a primer giving an overview of the components that make up an Internet radio station. But before we delve into this, I should at least mention that broadcasting music that is not yours has some legal issues ... such as, you're not allowed! Caseley has agreements for play with up-and-coming Canadian bands, so he has permission to broadcast their songs on his Internet radio station. In having your own Internet station, one should be respectful of using music that is not yours to broadcast, hence the words "royalties," and "licensing fees." Perhaps our music legal beagles would write on this in more depth for an upcoming issue?

Anyway, the basics about Internet radio can be divided into five parts or components: computer hardware, PA (audio hardware – mixer, mics, speaker/monitor), multiple audio software packages, Internet Service Provider (ISP), and musical content.

All you really need is one good computer. Let's call it the Production Studio Computer, i.e. a computer that can record, burn CDs, edit audio, create playlists, and do voice tracking. As the entire music and playlist can be done with this computer, it can also be the On-Air Studio Computer, but please note that it also has to have the capabilities and resources to multi-task listening events. What does this mean? For example: one would need an audio playback device/card for the audio output for the playlist; then you would also need a sub-out for pre-listening/cueing; and, last but not least, the input audio for Windows Media Encoder. Some may suggest that having a home studio computer is all you need, but according to Caseley at Slakrz, they are sporting a laptop for the convenience of mobility to do the live broadcast, and they do the production/editing at a home studio with a different computer.

Please note that the bit-rate is very important – the higher the quality, the more bandwidth needed. As a note of interest, Windows Media Streaming (WMA), which is a stereo stream at 64 kbps, has almost the same quality as FM radio. If you double this to 128 kbps, we're hearing near CD quality. As Caseley said last time, they were losing some listener volume because of the higher bit rate cutting into their bandwidth of listeners, but they were not willing to go to a lower quality to allow more listeners. They were more about the quality of the music when listeners actually tuned in. Which means that they would get a higher quality sound.

I would agree with this choice; if I was listening to bad or intermittent-static sound, I'd probably just turn it to another station until I found something clear! For those looking for Internet radio software, playlist creation, etc., some brands such as Pirate Radio, Radio Automation, and SAM Broadcaster come to mind.

For most, just using your home Internet connection would suffice, but for Slakrz, having a wireless and mobile Inter-



net set-up is perfect for the on-air live broadcast in different locations. All you need is a power source and to plug in the Internet modem and hook up the wireless router, and presto: "Live-to-Internet-Air." It would be handy having a 4- to 8-channel mixer, into which you could plug a mic for the announcer and have another one or two mics for the musicians being interviewed, and maybe a few other mics for the instruments if you are doing live performance.

Slakrz used pre-recorded CDs of the artist interviewed and just played/streamed them via with a CD player hooked up via the mixer into the laptop during the breaks of the interviews. In the end, to have the ability to reach many listeners you would need an Internet Service Provider (ISP). There are many services that want your monthly dollar that specialize in streaming audio for this purpose. They are also called audio streaming providers. Usually, this is a nominal cost – but not cheap, so do shop around.

For me, the most important part of having an Internet radio station is the content. The thing that I like about what Caseley is doing at Slakrz is that the content is from up-and-coming Canadian bands that don't get exposure in the mainstream (no pun intended). Why do you want to start your own station? For me, it's simply to share and enjoy music!

Paul Lau B.Sc. – Musician/Producer/MIDI/Digital Audio Specialist, Director of PowerMusic5Records (www.powermusic5.com), Manages/Produces and Promotes – John Boswell, Dean Morrison, Tomorrow's Excuse, Celeb, 68pornomags, Ghetto2Ghetto, Jason Storfer, Mark Battenberg, Wendy Zheng, Anne Bonsignore ... just to name a few.

The Singer's Warm-Up

by Tammy Frederick

The number one thing you can do to make an immediate impact in your singing is to start warming up your voice before you sing. Rehearsing and performing with no warm-up is like a runner choosing not to stretch before hitting the pavement. Developing a warm-up routine can benefit you for more than physical reasons; by taking the time to connect to your voice and prepare, you will set yourself up mentally for a great performance, practice, or recording session.

The length of your warm-up can vary based on the demands of the performance. A minimum 15 minutes should be spent on your warm-up. If you are going to be performing all night, I would suggest upwards of 45 minutes or an hour including a physical warm-up, vocalizing, and running through your songs, or a few of them. For long recording sessions or multi-set performances, vocalize during your breaks to keep your vocal cords working efficiently. This is not the time to over-exert yourself. Take this time to slow it down and do some gentle exercises like liprolls, tongue trills, or "m's" as explained below.

Physical Warm-up

A physical warm-up could involve any number of activities including taking a yoga class, going for a walk, boxing, jumping on a mini-trampoline, swimming, etc... Ultimately, you want to get the blood pumping and the air flowing. If you don't have time for any of the above, you can achieve similar results in the confines of your own space.

Start by walking around your space and bring attention to your breathing. Place a hand on your stomach just above the belly button and make sure you are allowing your diaphragm to drop. As you continue walking start to roll your shoulders backwards and forwards. Loosen up any tension. Keep breathing. Stop walking and find a spot in the room that will give you space to move freely. Plant your feet hip-width apart, both feet pointing forward and parallel to one another. Imagine a string attached to the top of your head pulling upward.

This will help bring your body into proper alignment. Don't push yourself



into any position that feels uncomfortable. Do some easy stretching and movements. Be sure to target all major muscle groups. Don't be afraid to warm up as you would if you were going for a run or about to play a sport. Stretch your arms, shoulders, hamstrings, calves, quads, etc...

Vocalizing

Simply singing through your songs is not sufficient for warming up the voice. When you sing through your songs, you are only warming up your vocal cords to the range of your pieces. You want to vocalize beyond and below the range of your songs.

Keep the scales simple and short. Although there exists a number of "vocal gymnastic" type exercises that go backwards and forwards and all over the place, it is not necessary, and in a number of cases, is detrimental. A warm-up should be gentle and effective, hence the term "warm-up." Use a simple 5-note or one-octave scale. Start in your chest register and move up by semitones. Do not go further than is comfortable. (If you are not able to play an instrument, you can hire a pianist to record you some scales for warming up or begin seeing a voice teacher.)

Always start your warm-up with a lip-roll (this is air moving through slightly puckered lips – imitating a "motorboat") or tongue trill (air rolling over your tongue creating an "r" sound), which acts as a gentle massage for the vocal

chords. Then move onto words such as mum, moom, noo, no, nuh, woof, etc... You can also sing through the scales on an "m" sound.

Songwork

Once you have warmed up your instrument, sing through your songs in a similar order. Start singing through your songs with liprolls or tongue trills to get the air moving through your piece. Then sing through it on "m's", mum's, noo's, etc... Singing through your songs on one word manages the airflow making it easier for the vocal cords to stay connected. Once you are done this, start to practice with the words while maintaining the muscle memory from the vocalizing.

Warm Down

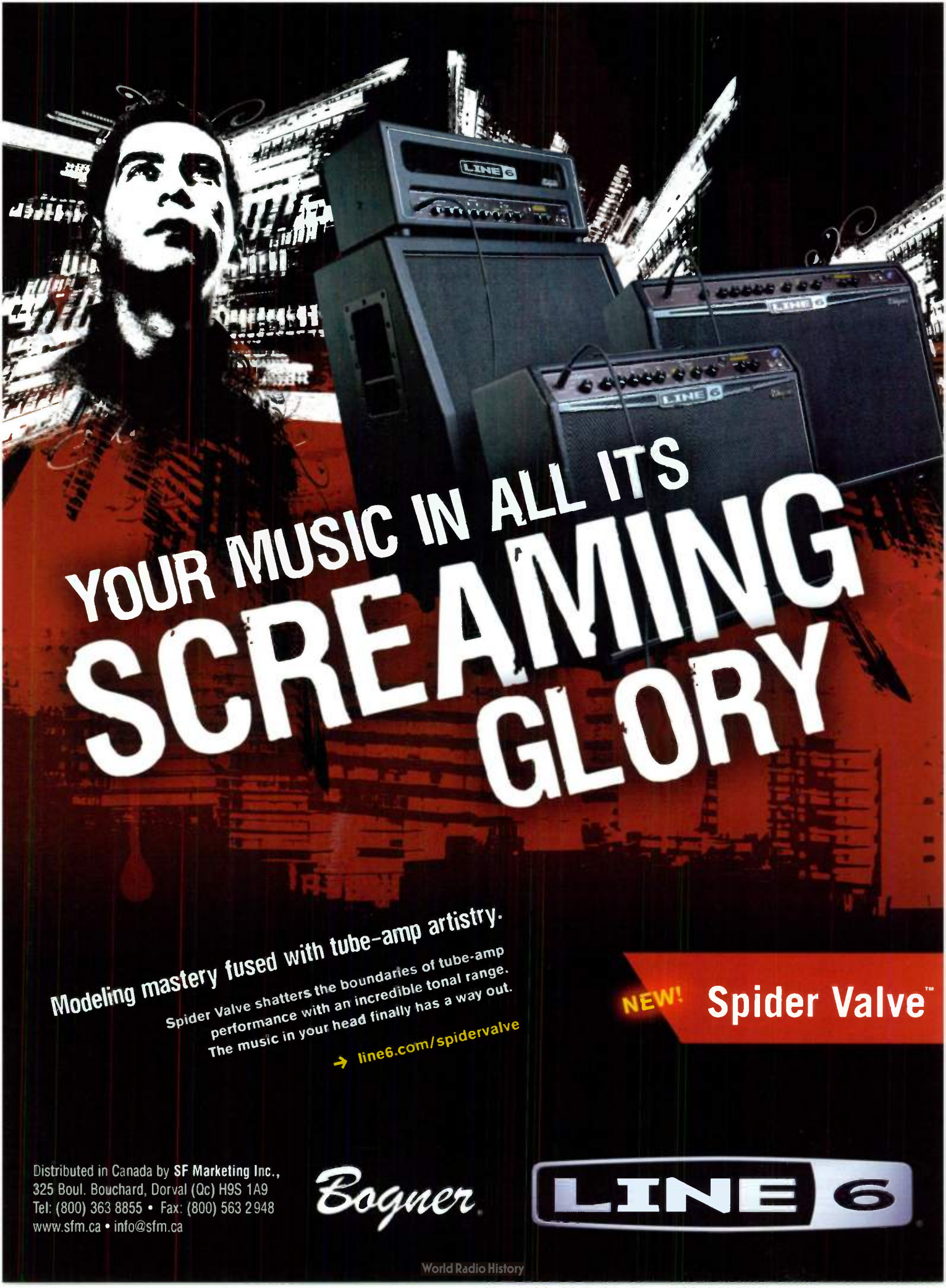
After a performance, practice, or recording session, always warm down for a few minutes. Simply do some liprolls or tongue trills for a few minutes. This will help re-connect the vocal cords and will help to alleviate any hoarseness that may creep in if you pushed too hard.

Taking the time to incorporate good practice habits will go along way in setting you up for vocal success.

A warm-up CD is available through the studio for the male and female voices. For more information please contact the studio via e-mail at voice@tammyfrederick.com.

Tammy Frederick began training with Bill Vincent in 1998 and became an associate teacher in 2002, at which time she opened her own voice studio. Tammy has been developing voices ever since with a vocal technique designed to connect the voice from top to bottom, increase range, endurance, and flexibility, and to develop a sound that is effortless to produce.

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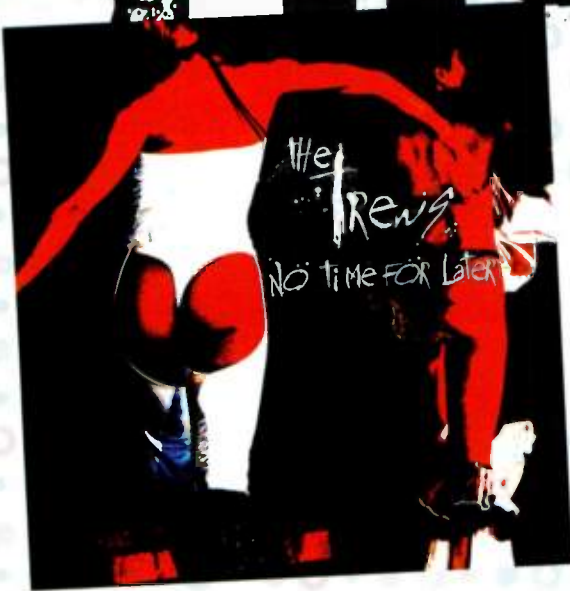
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LINE 6

THE

TREWS



GROWING INTO IT

BY LONNY KNAPP

It's a blustery night in late November, and The Trews crew is holed up in a boutique studio in the heart of Toronto's entertainment district taping a session for MSN's *Live At The Orange Lounge*. Decked out with tapestries, silks, and candles, the trendy studio has a far-out-far-east vibe. Inside the control room, a handful of record label types are sprawled out on the patterned sofa chatting about release dates and marketing plans, or typing furiously into Blackberries and laptops. A small rectangular window above the soundboard frames The Trews like fish in an aquarium. A camera on a boom swings into position inches in front of guitarist John Angus McDonald's face as he absent-mindedly noodles on his jet-black Les Paul. The engineer depresses the talkback button and announces dryly that the tape is rolling. The band stops fidgeting; the label types stop chatting in the control room. Singer Colin McDonald approaches the microphone, and after a pregnant pause, he says: "This is our new single, 'Hold Me in Your Arms.'"

PHOTO BY ROY TIMM



The Trews is no longer that young band from Antigonish. They have played more gigs than most bands will play in a career and have shared the stage with rock royalty such as Guns n' Roses, Robert Plant, and the Rolling Stones. Through diligent touring, the band has built a reputation as a hard working rock-and-roll group and is considered one of Canada's top live acts.

But this reputation sometimes overshadows the fact that the members of The Trews write great songs. Their two previous albums, *House of Ill Fame* (2003), and *Den of Thieves* (2005), reached gold status in Canada and the band reports an impressive six top-ten singles at rock radio.

They have momentum, and if they wanted to, they could turn on the cruise control. But The Trews is not slowing down; on the contrary, the band is finding its stride.

With the release of the band's third album, *No Time for Later*, we find a tighter, more confident band; The Trews has never sounded more vital. *Canadian Musician* tracked down singer Colin McDonald, guitarist John Angus McDonald, drummer Sean Dalton, and bassist Jack Syperak to talk over pints of stout about making the new album, taking a stance, and growing up.

THE ALBUM

CM: The new record, *No Time for Later*, contains bigger sounds, heavier songs, and slicker production. What inspired this progression?

Colin: We wanted to make an album full of heavy and impactful songs. The last couple of shows we did last year were opening for Guns n' Roses. We got fired up watching them every night. It inspired us to make a big, heavy-sounding album that has a lot of energy and really translates well live.

John Angus: It was also a reaction to our last record. On *Den of Thieves*, we made a 15



song record and only played seven of them live. We decided that on this record, every track had to translate live. Also, it is the product of changing producers. This time out we went with the production team of Gus Van Go and Warner F, who did Priestess. We loved that record. It still sounds like the band to me, it's just the production is heavier.

CM: The band has recorded three albums and worked with three different producers. Is there a method to the madness?

Colin: Change. Change. Change. It's always been about pushing forward and a function of that is hiring new people to work with. As much as I like the two previous albums, there was a prevailing notion that we never got it right. As much as

we are proud of those records, there was always something lingering in the back of our minds that we didn't nail it. We want to leave behind really great records, not that the last two are not good, but I think we share the notion that each record gets better and better. We think this is the best one.

CM: How was the recording process different this time around?

Sean: We usually do everything live off the floor. This time we did everything separately. We did drums and bass in Toronto at Orange Lounge Studios and the other boys went to Brooklyn and tracked the vocals and guitars at The Boiler Room.

THE TREWS

John Angus: This is the way the producer wanted to work. We had done two records of live performance, and we thought it would be an interesting experiment. We rehearsed the arrangements and then isolated everybody and really focused our attention on each performance. It is the most attention we ever paid to detail on a record. The producers were really particular, and they had this vision as to how they could bring our sound up to date. We were willing to run with it.

CM: The sounds on the record are massive. How were these sounds achieved?

Sean: I used SABIAN cymbals, Regal Tip sticks, and the drums were Ludwig Vista Lights from the '70s. We tuned all the drums very low and we used the same snare drum through the whole session, even when it became completely warped. The wetter the snare drum sounded, the happier Gus and Werner were. Nothing was finely tuned; we wanted big, dead, heavy-sounding drums.

Jack: I used a rented Fender bass and played with a pick. That's not how I normally play. The amp was a Wizard through an SVT cabinet. I just did whatever Gus and Werner told me to do.

Colin: I played guitar through an Orange amplifier, and used a Telecaster. I sang through a vocal preamp that was a copy of the ones used by the Beatles on *Abbey Road*.

John Angus: For the most part I used a '59 reissue Gibson Les Paul. The guitar is a historic reissue that our producer Werner F actually helped design. He is really involved with the Gibson people down in New York. That is the guitar sound on the record.

CM: This record features a few guest musicians.

Colin: We got a great keyboard player from a band called The Stills. His name is Liam (O'Neil). He played a lot of the keyboard parts on the record. A lot of it was one-take stuff. He came in for one night, and just threw some tracks down.

John Angus: We opened a bottle of Johnnie Walker Black and three hours later half the songs on the record had keys on them.

Sean: That happens every time we drink a bottle of Johnnie Walker. (Laughs)

CM: Did I hear bagpipes on 'Can't Stop Laughing'?

John Angus: The chops of one Darius Kaufmann. We just decided we needed bagpipes, but we didn't know where to find a piper in New York City. If we were in our home town, Antigonish, NS, we would have endless options, but we were in Brooklyn. So we Googled 'Brooklyn Bagpipe Player' and found this guy's website. We brought him in and taught him the line.

Colin: It's a real East Coast sounding tune.

John Angus: There is also bodhran on it, another Irish instrument.

Sean: Actually, I think it originated in Greece. It's made out of goat skin; you hold it sideways and you have a little stick in your hand called a tipper. It's used in most traditional Irish music. It's a powerful-sounding drum you can tune using your left palm, applying pressure to create a higher pitch, and of course it sounds lower when you release the pressure. Or you can wet it, so it sounds like a doormat.

CM: Many songs on the record are inspired by life on the road, and there are also a few songs about relationships. Both of these subjects have been visited on your previous albums, but there are some songs that seem to be political in nature. The song 'Gun Control,' in particular, tackles a very serious issue.

Colin: I think you only get a few chances in your career to make records that people are actually going to hear. I felt like I really had something to say this time around. On our past records the lyrics were either ambiguous or about girls. With getting a bit older, bigger things upset me, things more important than a break-up. This time there are some blatant statements. I guess I found influence from Neil Young, in that if you are going to write a political song — make it count. As a result, it is a more political album. And I can only hope that people give a shit about it enough to challenge me on it.

CM: Is there a process to songwriting for The Trews?

Sean: It's just always been really hard work. When we are writing for a record, we spend eight hours a day jamming. Colin will come in with a bunch of really good ideas, and then John Angus will come up with a riff to back it up, and then Jack and I will start throwing some ideas around. We have always just sat in a room and slugged it out; some days are magic and other days are terrible.

CM: The last record, *Den of Thieves*, featured collaborations with Gordie Johnson, and a cover of a song written by Tracy Bonham. Who did you collaborate with this time around and why?

Colin: We are a really good band, and we play really well together, so we don't want to mess that vibe up, but it doesn't always translate into actual songwriting. We spend a lot of time writing and working together, and sometimes things get a little stale in our songwriting. It's really important for inspiration to work with other writers. It helps you get out of those ruts, when you are experiencing creative stagnation. It's not like the label is forcing us to write with some *Canadian Idol* writer; we work with real, true artists. We have an extended network of musicians who are on the same musical page as us. We write with great friends and artists like Dave Rave, Gordie Johnson, and Simon Wilcox. If I could have all three of these guys in the band with us, we would be happy. We all love them and have a lot of respect.

John Angus: It wasn't like a Nashville thing where we were just co-writing with anyone and churning out songs. These are people that we hang out with and drink with. They are friends of ours. It's like a big collective: The Trews Collective.

CM: What songs on *No Time for Later* are collaborations?

Colin: 'Man of Two Minds,' 'No Time for Later,' and 'Paranoid Freak.'

THE BAND

CM: John Angus and Colin are fraternal brothers, but practically you are all brothers. You have been friends long before the band started and you guys spend a lot of time together. How do you get along?

Colin: That is something that takes some finesse. You have to make an effort to get a long after so many years. It's like a marriage. Everyone is growing as individuals and you have to let people do that. We try to get along, but it does take effort. Some days are easier than others.

CM: How has the relationship changed?

Sean: When we first got together, anytime anyone was doing something wrong, everybody took it personally. None of us were feeling all that great about ourselves anyway. We didn't have a lot of confidence, and we were always questioning what we were doing. We all feel a lot better now. We are a better band than we were six years ago, and we all are better at expressing ourselves. We have enough complexities in our daily lives; we don't need to be at each other's throats anymore.

John Angus: It's just a general maturity level. There are less screaming matches.

IS PRACTICING IN THE BASEMENT A PAIN?

Many musos have a tough time finding decent rehearsal space, especially in urban areas. We caught up with The Trews for our photo shoot at one of Toronto's better-known facilities: the Rehearsal Factory.

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Colin: I'm a little against the whole maturity thing, but I'm willing to go along with it. (Laughs)

CM: Jack's contribution to *No Time for Later* can be experienced both aurally and visually. Why was he selected to design the album's artwork?

Colin: We had been working with art directors our whole time in the business, and we have always been told who to work with. But the most creative and cool artist in all of Canada is in the band. As far as I am concerned, this is the best artwork we have ever had. It keeps it even more organic to have a guy in the band design the cover.

CM: Jack, how did you design the cover?

Jack: I was playing around with cameras, and taking different pictures of weird looking things. I uploaded the pictures on my computer and played around with textures and the contrast. You can make an image look like something completely different. I worked on hundreds of pictures, and a few of them looked really cool. Before we started recording the record I started showing everybody. And a few of them stood out.

CM: The Trews is considered a great live band. How did you cultivate your reputation?

John Angus: We told ourselves that we would sell a gold record if we had to play a show per record. We booked any show we could get.

Sean: We played with everybody.

Colin: Literally, we were the only band in Canada that went from opening for Nickleback and the next night opened for the Dears. We were just taking everything. We were young, hungry guys that wanted to do it. We would never turn down a gig. One year we played the most gigs of all bands on The Agency Group's roster for the least amount of money.

Sean: We never wanted to work day jobs. That's not how we wanted to spend our time. If it meant gigging twice in one night, that was fine. We would rather do that than work at Pizza Hut.

CM: Touring is a practical way for a band to promote an album. Other venues for promotion are largely out of your control. You have been treated well by rock radio in Canada thus far;

do you expect support for the new record?

Colin: In the past we have been treated well, in Canada. We have had six top tens at rock radio – that is no easy feat. We can only hope for more of the same, but there are no guarantees. We have got our fingers crossed.

CM: 'Hold Me in Your Arms' received a huge launch when it debut live on the CBC's 2007 CFL Grey Cup Pre-Game Show. How did your music come to be associated with the CFL?

John Angus: For a bunch of guys who are not great athletes, we get lumped in with a lot of sporting events.

Sean: Hey man, I jog. (Laughs)

John Angus: A lot of our fans are hockey fans or football fans. The Grey Cup thing was great promo because a lot of people were tuned in. It was cool because it was in Toronto and we got to take part in some of the festivities. It was an appropriate launch for our new single.

Colin: What's a hockey game without Queen's 'We Will Rock You'? Queen is one of our favourite bands and I love the fact that you can play their music at a sporting event and everybody will go nuts. We aspire to the same thing. It's amazing that this cool artistic band has these over the top tunes that sound really good at a Leafs game.

Sean: Also, I think people consider us a Canadian band, even though we don't sing about Canada. There are a lot of bands that are plugging their cities and we've never done that.

CM: What rhymes with Antigonish?

John Angus and Sean: Potatoes and fish. (Laughing)

Colin: I always liked Antigonish, but it's not a really an appealing-sounding city name for a song. No offence to Antigonish.

CM: The Trews has landed dream gigs opening for huge international artists. Can you describe a moment where you had to pinch yourself to see if you were dreaming?

Colin: There was a year that was pretty dreamy.

John Angus: When we opened for the Rolling Stones. We caught a glimpse of Mick Jagger and Charlie Watts watching our set. That was pretty special, but also nerve-wracking. Another time we went to an after party with Axl Rose after we opened for Guns 'n' Roses.

CM: Did you actually get to meet Axl Rose? I've heard he is quite reclusive.

John Angus: We were told that if we approached him we would be thrown off the tour. But then we ended up at a party hosted by Bubbles from the *Trailer Park Boys*. Axl was coof and we got to talk a little bit. Axl took a real shining to Bubbles and the whole *Trailer Park Boys* thing.

CM: Neil Young says there are two kinds of bands: bands like the Beatles and bands like the Stones. What kind of band are you?

Colin: We always thought we were like the Beatles, but Jack always forces us to be more like the Stones. On all of our recordings, we start trying to make a record that sounds like the Beatles but in the end it sounds like the Stones.

CM: Will The Trews, like the Rolling Stones, still be performing when you are all 65 years old?

John Angus: If we are lucky. You can't really plan for that kind of longevity. It is unfathomable to me.

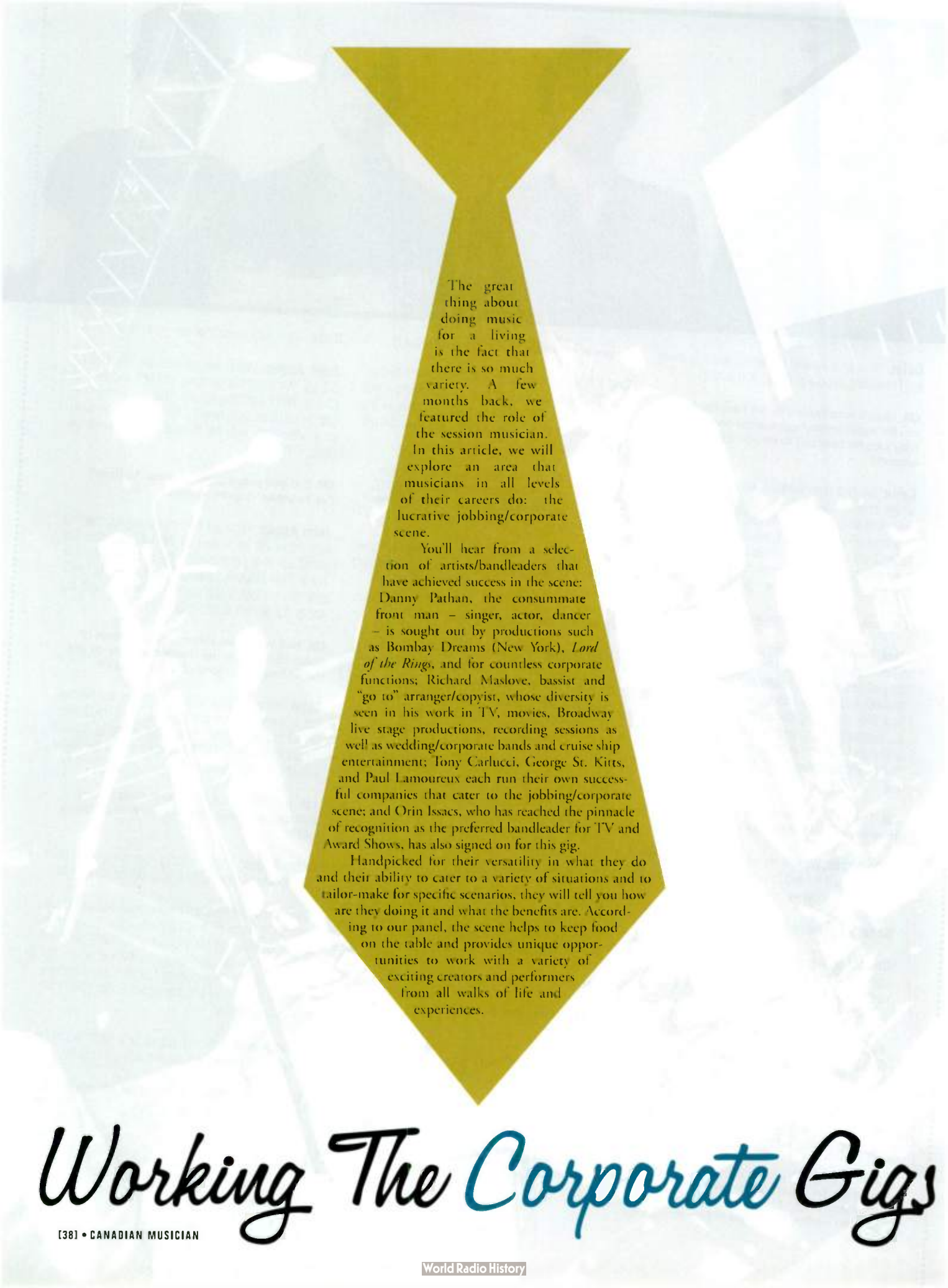
Sean: We just finished touring with Status Quo in Europe. It was very inspirational. These guys are in their late 50s and early 60s and are still up there rockin' it. These guys could be businessmen, but they are up on stage putting 101 per cent into every show. It is the only life they know. So far, this is the only life we know.

John Angus: I think it would be a fun thing to be doing at 60. I hope we are still doing this at 30.

Colin: Right now, though, we are just hoping our new single does well. ■



Lonny Knapp is a Toronto-based musician and freelance writer.



The great thing about doing music for a living is the fact that there is so much variety. A few months back, we featured the role of the session musician. In this article, we will explore an area that musicians in all levels of their careers do: the lucrative jobbing/corporate scene.

You'll hear from a selection of artists/bandleaders that have achieved success in the scene: Danny Pathan, the consummate front man – singer, actor, dancer – is sought out by productions such as *Bombay Dreams* (New York), *Lord of the Rings*, and for countless corporate functions; Richard Maslove, bassist and “go to” arranger/copyist, whose diversity is seen in his work in TV, movies, Broadway live stage productions, recording sessions as well as wedding/corporate bands and cruise ship entertainment; Tony Carlucci, George St. Kitts, and Paul Lamoureux each run their own successful companies that cater to the jobbing/corporate scene; and Orin Issacs, who has reached the pinnacle of recognition as the preferred bandleader for TV and Award Shows, has also signed on for this gig.

Handpicked for their versatility in what they do and their ability to cater to a variety of situations and to tailor-make for specific scenarios, they will tell you how are they doing it and what the benefits are. According to our panel, the scene helps to keep food on the table and provides unique opportunities to work with a variety of exciting creators and performers from all walks of life and experiences.

Working The Corporate Gigs

How did you land your first corporate gig?

TC: Truthfully, I don't remember. It surely must have been through another gig like a wedding or bar gig, like virtually all gigs come around. It wasn't through a cold call or something like that, because I have never done that.

GSK: I work with several party planners and consultants and they recommended me for my first corporate gig. It was 1,200 people and the client was Canadian Tire.

DP: I auditioned for my first corporate gig having no idea what to expect. I was somewhat nervous. It didn't help that when I walked in the waiting room every performer knew one another with the exception of me. Of course! I was the only one selected and fortunate enough to land my very first corporate gig.

OI: My first TV show was a show called *Catwalk*. I was shooting a video for an artist named Devon and *Catwalk* was shooting right beside us. Our crews and people kept getting mixed up, so the producers of *Catwalk* came over to us to tell us to get our signs straight because with the confusion it was holding up their production. While they were yelling at us they heard my music, liked what they heard, and asked who did it. Everyone pointed at me and they asked for a meeting the following Monday – the rest is history.

PL: My wife knew people in business that needed background jazz music for various company functions. Also, people whose private parties I had played for decided to use my services for their company events as well.

What are all the hats that you wear?

TC: Negotiator, event planner, musical director/arranger, road manager, accountant, musician/conductor, and above all, psychologist.

GSK: My company, St. Kitts Music Inc., offers various bands such as the George St. Kitts Band, Midnite Starr, Sound Machine, and Sounds of Motown. I don't perform in all of the bands, but I do all the bookings and management. I guess you can say I wear the hat of a performer, agent, manager, and bandleader.

DP: As a performer I am an actor, singer, songwriter, and dancer. On a strictly human level, I like to think of myself as a normal dude who is friendly and family-oriented. I also have a passion for educating our young leaders of tomorrow, and am a Certified Teacher of Dramatic Arts, Dance and Physical Education (ECMS).

OI: Well, with a show like *Canadian Idol*, I'm the Musical Director, so I'm responsible for organizing the team that's responsible for everything pertaining to the kids' performance numbers as well as some of the guests that perform on the show. I'm the Bandleader, so I run the band. I'm also the show's Music Producer & Composer. On most shows like *Hockey Night in Canada* I'm just a Music Producer & Composer. On a show like *Open Mike with Mike Bullard*, I was an onscreen personality – so it changes from show to show.

PL: ALL OF THEM! Administrator, bookkeeper, marketing guy, negotiator, bandleader/contractor, performing musician.

RM: I wear a lot of hats: copyist/arranger/orchestrator/bass player.

What are the behind-the-scenes events that take place before and after signing the contract?

TC: Before signing a contract, usually it starts with having the client come out to an event that we are already playing. Having a good website only peaks the clients' curiosity. They will always want to see the band live; therefore, making arrangements for them to come out is the first major event. If the client then wants the band, we then negotiate a price according to the parameters of the gig, i.e. hours needed, day of the week, travel, event theme, etc. After signing the contract, it's usually about keeping up with the changes of the evening, musical styles, and generally keeping the clients happy by answering all of their questions. Many clients are first-timers, and are a bit nervous about their event and all the details, understandably. Keeping them assured at all times is very important.



FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: GEORGE ST. KITTS, ORIN ISSACS, TONY CARLUCCI, DAMNY PATHAN.

Working The Corporate Gigs

GSK: I guess the first thing that takes place is booking the gig. The first thing I try to find out is what the client needs are, and if I can't do it, I will be honest and let them know. Once I know what their needs are, I will try my best to make it happen. You have to meet the clients and let them know how you fit in with their program. Sometimes they may want to hear you before they book you, and after that audition you can then meet and do a contract. After signing the contract, you may have to meet to discuss details with other trades once or twice, such as lighting and staging.

OI: Funny, most of the clients and I have a great relationship, so half of the time I don't even do a contract until after the product is delivered. I just ask when it's due and what my budget is. There's rarely ever a money issue, so contract negotiations are never a problem.

DP: When I begin preparations for a gig, I practice as often as possible so as to almost stay ahead of the material handed down to me. Much of it for me is also a mindset – I go into rehearsals ready to work.

How do you go about choosing musicians and repertoire?

TC: I choose the best musicians available, period. To me, that is a musician/singer who can cover all styles well because your repertoire will for sure have to cover all styles. Audiences always range widely in age, and, needless to say, the dance floor is your feedback to success.

GSK: I'm very fortunate to have some of the best musicians in the world right here in Toronto. I hire guys who can read charted music because clients are always requesting new songs, and it's very difficult to get together every Thursday to rehearse a song. Once you have the sheet music, you do it at a sound check in 20 minutes. I also like to hire young musicians who are at school and need a chance to break into the scene; this way they can go to school and get a chance to perform in the jobbing scene.

OI: For me, that depends on what kind of show I'm doing. For live TV like *Idol*, I have to use musicians that A) can read really well because we don't have much time to get the music together – there is really no time to learn music; B) understand that this is a TV production and that the music is just one element of the show – there are lighting moves, camera angles, direction notes that must be learned for the overall production, and that has nothing to do with music; C) have a certain stage

presence. On *Idol*, the competitors dictate the repertoire. The production just dictates whatever theme we are doing that week.

PL: I tailor the choice of musicians to each individual gig. From experience, I know what certain players' strengths and weaknesses are. I try to make sure that the musicians are always operating within their musical 'comfort zone,' so that they are not having to do anything they haven't already done many times. For a keyboard player, playing left-hand bass is one example; I keep track of the players who do it well and LIKE doing it. Their attitude is very important to me.

What do you offer to your clients that sets you apart from others?

TC: Three singers up front and quality. Even though music is highly subjective, people can usually tell if it's good or not. Also, excellent service!

GSK: I offer my clients great entertainment by giving them what they want. I would never say to a client that I don't do that song because I don't like it. I always say that it's not about me. If you hire me to get you to dance, and you are not dancing to the choice of music I'm playing, I have to find whatever it takes to get you on the dance floor.

OI: What sets me apart is that I'm pretty much a big-picture thinker and when it comes to a TV production, that is crucial. Too many musicians make the mistake of thinking it's about them. WRONG! It's about the production – you're just a part of it. When I'm hired, I truly take all the worry away from the clients. Over time, I have gained so much experience when it comes to producing music for TV and live shows that I have it down to a science. Over the years, I have amassed such an arsenal, I have so many tools at my disposal, that there really is no situation that I can't get my clients out of, and they appreciate that. I'd love to elaborate, but that

would be giving away my secrets! (Laughs)

PL: Services in both French and English. Also, an elaborate website where clients can not only choose the group they want to hire by listening to an example of a particular instrumentation, but also see a picture of the group at a gig so that they can see how much space we take up and generally how we present ourselves.

What was the most interesting or unusual event that you have performed at?

TC: New Year's Eve in Bangkok at the Oriental Hotel (one of the few six-star hotels in the world) for the last three years. It was an outside event with approximately 500 guests and the longest buffet in the world ... fireworks, lights like you have never seen, and guests like Jackie Chan. Pretty electrifying.

GSK: The most interesting event for me was the opening of the Royal Ontario Museum. Everyone was there, from politicians to sports heavyweights.

OI: Back when Bullard was on the air the band was asked to play at one of the owners of Roots' son's Bar Mitzvah. It was pretty over the top; no expense was spared. The best part was that the entertainment portion of the show was set up like a talk show, and all we had to do was play guest speakers on and off. We just used the same book of cues we used on *Open Mike* and we played maybe 15 minutes of music in total.

DP: One special night in New York City, after one of my live performances on Broadway in the musical *Bombay Dreams*, I was approached backstage and invited by three-time World Music Award Winner Philip Kirkorov to fly to Russia with him and perform as a solo artist on his tour. I had the great fortune to perform for live audiences in historical venues in Russia, Latvia, Sochi, and at various concert halls located along the attractive Baltic and Black



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PL: A debutante's ball in Ft. Worth, TX, where an entire country club was decorated with a "Route 66" theme with food from different States in each room – and the main entertainment was James Brown. Also, playing on the beach in the Caribbean for the Boston Red Sox.

RM: My job is really interesting. Every job is different and you never know what they're going to throw at you or who is going to end up reading your charts. And I get to work with a wide variety of musical styles.

I worked on the Joni Mitchell tribute for last year's Song Writer's Hall of Fame and Joni was in the audience, which was cool.

How do you expand your business?

TC: By doing the best job possible and keeping the dance floor packed! The rest works itself, from what I have noticed. I'm still expanding.

GSK: My business is expanding every day because more people are booking live entertainment, and I provide a great service and hire a lot of great musicians. I try to change it up by giving clients different combinations of great talent. Some nights I might have five singers when the client only hired four, and it takes the event to another level.

OI: Well, in the TV game you're only as good as your last production, so I just keep doing quality work. It's funny how word gets around when you make your clients happy.

DP: Not a lot, really. At present, I have an agent in Toronto, and I book auditions and gigs according to my schedule. All in all, I like to think that I am only as good as my last job and hope that my reputation as a strong performer, hard worker, and team player play some role as well in creating opportunities for myself.

PL: I use the available technology (websites, e-mail) to reduce mailing costs, but I never stop trying to expand my circle of potential clients. I call companies that might be using live music and I introduce my company to them. I also try to maintain friendships with the people I've worked with in the past. If they leave the companies that I've worked for, then I need to find out who their replacement is. It's a never-ending process. I also keep adding services (new bands, musical themes) to our website so the client can almost certainly find what he or she is looking for in the area of live music entertainment.

How has technology impacted your work?

TC: For me, e-mail has had the biggest impact. It is far easier and cheaper to do business now, given how global our business has become.

Other than that, not much. It still boils down to old fashioned live entertainment.

GSK: It has impacted my business in many ways. For instance, when I need to get details to 20 musicians I can e-mail everyone at the same time and get a response quickly. If you don't have a website, you are not in the game. I remember when someone needed a video or CD of the band and you had to mail it out; now, you just go to the web and you listen to and view the band immediately.

OI: Technology is at the heart of what I do. It has made my life so much easier. I have six Apple Logic rigs that I use at any given time. I have two laptop rigs that I dedicate to doing live shows and they power my backline and monitors, as well as help me record and produce all rehearsals and show music, and organize charts and my FTP site. Funny, two days ago I was in Edmonton on the *Idol* audition tour and one of CTV's online producers came to me in a panic saying they were editing a piece they had shot that day and they were unable to access CTV's music library. It was about 9 p.m. and their deadline was first thing in the morning. I popped open my laptop, which had about half of my own personal music library in it. The vibe of the cue was very specific: they wanted a country vibe with a Benny Hill flavour to it. We searched and found a cue that matched what they were looking for. I popped out my 2 GB memory stick, they went to their hotel room, edited the cue into their piece, and I saved the day. Remember me saying that I have tools and there's no situation I can't handle? That is a perfect example of what I was talking about.

DP: Technology is in every part of the business nowadays. I communicate mostly through e-mail with agents, producers, choreographers, performers, and friends. I also have a website, www.dannypathan.com, which allows me to promote myself to prospective clients.

PL: My website, www.lamchops.com, has greatly reduced the need to send out paper packages and demo CDs. This saves time, energy, AND money. It's great! Also, I correspond with clients mostly by e-mail now. Even contracts are done by e-mail now, not FAX like before. Also, sending out an e-mail to 100 clients is the same amount of work as sending to one – I like that! I only have so much time in the day that I can devote to running my business, so I want it to be used efficiently.

RM: I was reluctant to move from pen and ink to computer. I was known for writing with a very clean hand and received a lot of compliments about my handwritten charts, so I worried that my clients would see the move to computer as a loss of value. Boy, was I wrong. Once I decided to move to computer, it didn't take me long to make the transition and now



my clients find a lot of benefit to it. The whole pickup/delivery aspect is eliminated. People get their charts by e-mail. It's quick and easy to make changes or transpose. Also, there is a playback feature, which I quite enjoy and helps with accuracy.

What advice do you have for someone that wants to break into the Jobbing/Corporate scene?

TC: Learn all styles of music, first and foremost. Then, start calling other jobbing musicians/singers and ask to be put on a subbing list. Offer to come out to a gig for free for a set so the people in question can hear what you're all about; this works fantastically if you're talented!

GSK: First thing is understanding your business and be open-minded. If you are a singer, you must have a great repertoire, and if you are a musician, you must learn to read music.

OI: Be liked! People only help people they like. Always remember: talent doesn't get you there; it keeps you there.

DP: Network, promote yourself, believe in yourself, strive to be the best you can be, work tirelessly, be good to yourself and the people around you.

PL: Be versatile, professional, and friendly. Check your attitude at the door.

RM: I've played bass on the jobbing scene for 30-plus years. Being a sideman in this niche is harder than it looks... you have to have a repertoire that includes hits from every decade of music. A good combination of ear and reading will get you through. Don't forget a black tux. ■



Levon Ichkhanian is a multi-instrumentalist and freelance writer. He plays guitars, oud, bouzouki, and banjitar. Contact: www.levonmusic.com.

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I've just watched Terri Clark take the CCMA fan-choice award for the 7th time. Clark has had no shortage of awards or popular success — the Montreal-born, Alberta-bred singer's talking points read like a fairy tale: sales over 4 million records in North America; four #1 singles and a mess of top-ten radio hits; CCMA, CMA, ACM, and Juno awards; and she is the first Canadian to be inducted into the Grand Ole Opry. Quite a journey and a change from the girl who once tied her guitar to her wrist to keep it from getting ripped off while playing Lower Broadway's Tootsie's Orchard Lounge. It's not all roses and wine, however. It never is, and for Clark, recent times have been some of the most trying in her life and career — as if fate has laboured over her in recent times, grindy determined to teach some hard lessons.

There's still a lot of good-time party girl in Clark, but when you listen to her latest record you'll hear another, more somber, side. If it was only in the song choices you might not buy it, but it's entrenched in her delivery, a product of her experiences over the past year or so.

After well over 10 years in the spotlight, she still embraces the good-time vibe, but she's spent also a good deal of time considering what sets her apart beyond that. It's not always easy, mind you: "Sometimes, if you're so inside, living it every day, you don't realize it. I really stepped back and took some time to look at my career over the past 12 years, 'cause I was forced to stop for a while." Now she finds she's at home with how people see her — that unique brand that's made her so successful. "You know, I've done pretty good and I'm going to embrace what I've done and make it better."

Being at home, though, is relative...

Clark's tour schedule is relentless, and erratic, she says. "It's been like that for many years." And the time she's spent living out of a suitcase comes across loud and clear on the new record. Though she'd like to make the schedule a little more concise, she's built a solid fan base, brick by brick, by coming to them again and again. "That's why I stay on the road as much as I do, and I really love it."

When we last spoke that's exactly where she was, in Calgary, kicking off the Stampede, playing the closing night at Cowboy's. It was jammed, no doubt. "They're going to shove about 2,000 very drunk people into a tent." Cowboy's is the last stop on her latest tour. "I need a rest," she says, but "last stop" is a relative term — the tour isn't exactly over. "I don't tour just for a record. I'm constantly on the road," she says — eight dates here, 10 there, month to month, scattered across the year. This time tour is "over" for a week, but then Clark will hit the road again, and again, and again, promoting *My Next Life*, to be released late April 2008.

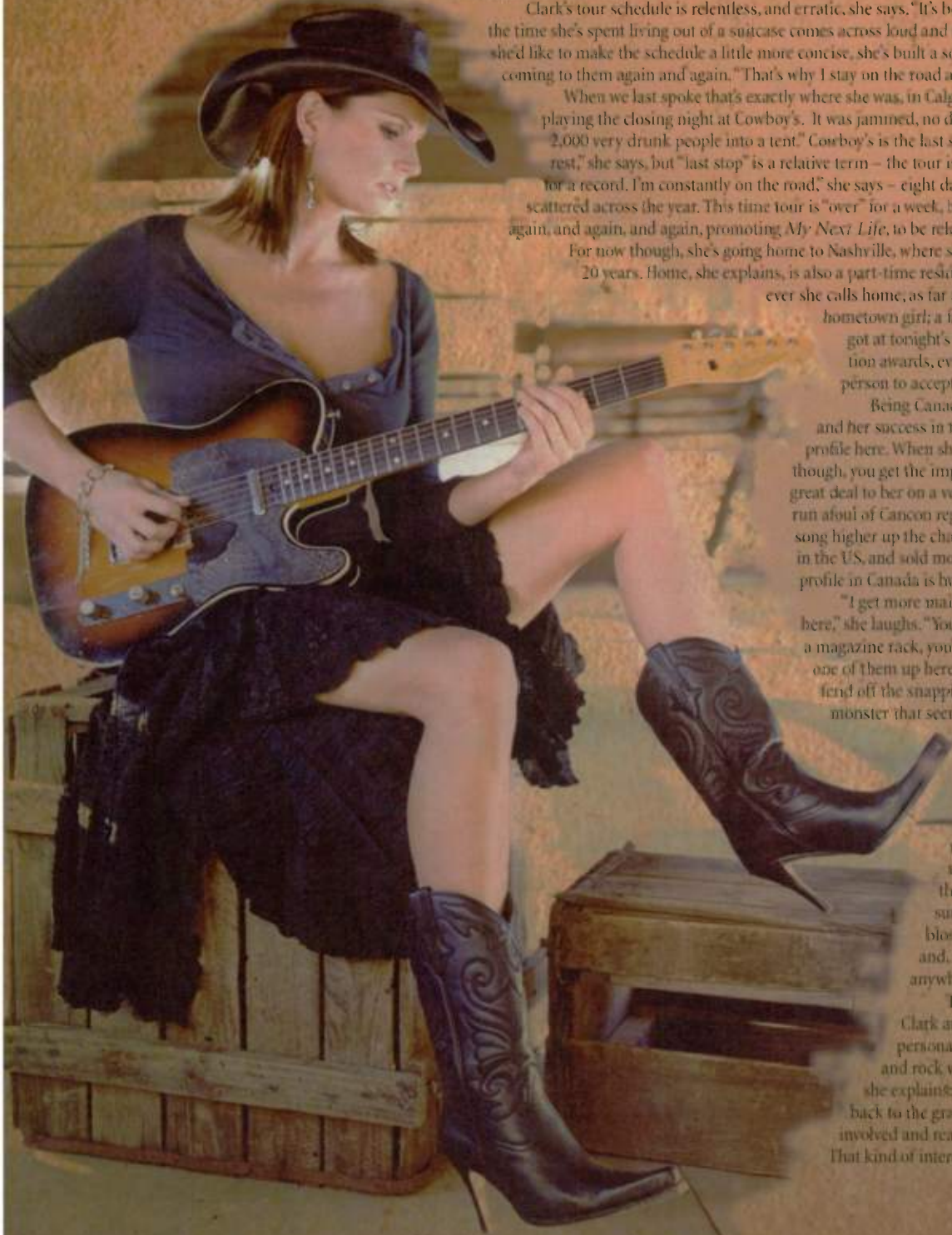
For now though, she's going home to Nashville, where she's been for pretty much the last 20 years. Home, she explains, is also a part-time residence on Vancouver Island. Wherever she calls home, as far as the fans are concerned, she's a

hometown girl; a fact proven by the reception she got at tonight's Canadian Country Music Association awards, even though she couldn't be there in person to accept the award.

Being Canadian hasn't hurt in Nashville either, and her success in the US certainly doesn't hurt her profile here. When she talks about Canadian fans, though, you get the impression that recognition means a great deal to her on a very basic level. Occasionally, she's run afoul of Cancon regulations when trying to push a song higher up the chart and hit #1. She's had more #1's in the US, and sold more records there, obviously, but her profile in Canada is huge.

"I get more mainstream press and television here," she laughs. "You go into a bathroom and there's a magazine rack, you're more likely to see my face on one of them up here." American success also tends to fend off the snapping jaws of the distinctly Canadian monster that seems to thrive in eating its own — an added benefit, but the superstar machinery in the country world does seem more likely to offer an artist a lengthy career than, say, the pop world. Even now, when record sales are down, the country market seems to be weathering the storm somewhat. It has seen a surge of interest from new fans. A blossoming roots scene doesn't hurt and, naturally, older fans aren't going anywhere either.

There's a real connection between Clark and her fan base — perhaps a more personal one than what exists in the pop and rock world, as well. It's a country thing, she explains: "It started a long time ago, it goes back to the grass roots following. They get more involved and really latch onto artists as people." That kind of interest requires cultivation — develop-



Terri Clark

ing a niche and filling it, by telegraphing, genuinely, who you are. "If you can take how you feel, how you live your life, your characteristics, and blend them with the music you make, people will latch on to that." It's part and parcel of making fans feel like you're getting in the car with them, as Clark puts it. The danger, of course, is that the niche you fill might feel a bit constricting after a while, so it had better be a place you can embrace fully. "I guess I'm the fun, party cowgirl, you know?" You can almost hear the shrug.

Clark's good time cowgirl persona is pretty captivating... you don't have to be a fan of hers or a fan of country music to get it: her performances are high energy, and the lyrics and subjects of her songs are clever, universal, and, at times, hilarious. Clark's persona and performances have set her apart from the crowd of female country singers. It's all there in the songs. Just listen to "Girls Lie Too" and it soaks in. It's the same on new tracks like "Dirty Girl" and "Happy Yet." She spins a good yarn, and, whether you're a fan or not, you have to appreciate a good story, well told. There are a few of those on *My Next Life*. Some that more than qualify – good stories, exceptionally well-told. Not all of them with happy endings...

Not surprising, Clark's life this past year or so has been shot through with some very trying times. First, her marriage disintegrated, then, while laying down the vocals for one of those exceptionally well-told stories, "Never Say No," she discovered her mother had been diagnosed with cancer. "It didn't look good at the time." I think I put more into singing that than I have any other ballad. "Touring schedule or not, pivotal point in her career or not, that put the brakes on.

She took some time off, but uncertainty lingered. Normally the studio provides a bit of break from yellow lines and hotel rooms, the routine and rhythm of making a record, but less so this time. During the recording, her mother's condition was being assessed and she was undergoing cancer treatments. "I was in the studio a lot in between radiation appointments and chemotherapy." But that helped, she says. Recording was a refuge for her: "If something's going on in my life I'd always get my guitar out – I was able to do that in a big way this time."

If the past year or so have been pivotal in her personal life, the next year and a half, she says, will be pivotal for her career. With the new record, her first on BNA Records (Sony BMG), she's getting "a second shot," as she calls it. "It's a turning point. A lot is going to be told in the next 18 months as to which direction my career is going to go in." That in mind, Clark and producer Garth Fundis wanted to make sure *My Next Life* was loaded for bear, making it a priority to translate Clark's live ethic to record. After seeing the live show, Fundis' comment, Clark says, was: "I thought I got you, but now I really get you – let's put that on record."



With the connection to the audience that's so close, Clark bases her song choices on songs that "hit you at the core." It's a committee thing – choices having to make it past A&R, the label President, the producer, and Clark. Sometimes they're looking for the hit, and others, to fill a hole in the record. Though there's nothing that steps too far away from the mould; on *My Next Life*, there's ebb and flow, and a depth to the her performances on more reflective songs that's clearly informed by the recent turmoil in her personal life.

There's also a fair bit of horsepower when it comes to the band's performances and guest appearances – "Dirty Girl" is vintage, good-time Terri, so is "Nashville Girls," the latter featuring performances by Reba MacIntyre and Martina McBride. "The first time I heard the song there was no doubt in my mind I needed to get some girls to sing on it." She asked MacIntyre first. "We have a friendship," she says. "I hate to ask my friends to do things, but I knew if I could get Reba we could get anyone else." One of the more traditional-sounding tracks on the record, it's signature Terri Clark – a tongue-in-cheek, good-time celebration of big-haired Nashville girls that exhorts them to "tease them curls, jack 'em up to Jesus" and takes a good-natured pot shot at Madonna. Of course, when you have that much star power on a track it probably isn't that hard to nail in the studio. Some tracks, however, didn't go quietly...

"There are times when I really like the demo, but we want to do our own thing with it. So we start to veer away from it," she says, not mincing words at all. "It sucks." It may not be as creative as going your own way, but sometimes, Clark says, you have to step back and listen to what made the song so compelling as a choice in the first place. And, at others, it's about sticking to your guns. Ultimately, Clark and Fundis had the kind of working relationship that allowed them to do just that, and allowed her to make the album she really felt she wanted and needed to.

The title track, for instance, wouldn't seem out of place at any point in her career. It's the kind of song you'd think she could record in her sleep by now. It took some thought, however. There was no demo, she says. She just sat with her guitar and played it live on an acoustic guitar for the band. They went after it, took it up a notch or two, and recorded, but it lacked the same organic feel Clark had tapped into by playing alone. Fundis called a halt, and they started over from scratch. "You gotta let the musicians have their rein on things," Clark explains. "They're artists in their own right, and they make such a difference to the record."

She's mining a familiar vein musically here, but going deeper. That can't hurt when it comes to reaching a wider audience and speaking to existing fans, but it also reflects changes in country radio. "I think a lot of the crowd that grew up with '70s rock gravitates toward it." Radio's changed; there's more of a classic rock vibe, "with more country lifestyle lyrics," she adds.

And sometimes, just as she did with the song, "In My Next Life," "you go absolutely full circle crazy and get back to the way it's intended." Going full circle is something Terri Clark has spent some hard time doing...

Over the past two years, she's focused personally on what's important, but if her perspective has changed, her approach and her ample sense of humour hasn't. Going full circle takes time, thought, and effort – getting back to something, or somewhere is process, not always easy, not always clear. "You know what," she sums up, "I've really just embraced what's kept me around so long." Like she says, it's about getting in the car with the audience, but it's also about being comfortable in that seat, and honest about who you are. That's why capturing the live show was so important, and why, after going through some serious self-examination and the personal upheavals of the last year, reflecting them on record was so key – in private, in the studio, and rolling down the road with her fans. ■

For more info on Terri Clark go to www.terriclark.com.



Kevin Young is a Toronto-based musician and freelance writer.



Keyboard



Keys 2008

BY KEVIN YOUNG

This was intended to be a primer for recording acoustic pianos, and other traditional keyboards in a variety of studio situations. It was prompted by listening to some of producer Julius "Juice" Butty's work with Alexisonfire, City and Colour, and Hunter Valentine. Keys aren't exactly central to their sound, but Butty has a way of positioning piano in a mix that I personally find really satisfying.

Butty isn't out to reinvent the wheel when it comes to keys on a record. He avoids the temptation to throw everything at a mix, but isn't immune to it entirely. "You get one new thing and go wild. There are certain things that work. If you've got too much stuff, you can lose yourself."

And that's what refreshing about his use of keys, and his mix style – capturing the excitement and inspiration that fuel the song, rather than covering it in goo. Admittedly, much of his work has involved digital pianos. "It's not a preference," he says bluntly. "It's what works." At his place, digital works; at Metalworks, making the Hunter Valentine record with engineer Nick Blagona, the real thing does.

That listening session prompted a friendly conversation about whys, wherefores, dos, and don'ts of recording acoustic pianos. A conversation that somehow grew into a larger discussion about how we approach both traditional, as well as new instruments and interfaces, and how we've barely scratched the surface of the possibilities of the latest wave of tech to become

Keyboards 2008

board. "I'll use an AKG C24 stereo tube mic – the one God used to lay down the Ten Commandments," he jokes. "Throw that under the hood and it starts to sound good almost immediately."

Friesen's approach varies project to project, and according to whether the setting is a live or studio environment. His preferred signal path in the studio... "the AKG C 24, into two Neve 1073s, through either a Manley Vari-Mu or Neve 2254s. It's an incredibly expensive signal path, and it works," he says. Live, he uses two Audio-Technica 4050s. "If you only have one microphone to mic a piano with, try putting it over the harp, over the second hole and facing down at the soundboard, about three inches up – you'll catch the full range of the piano. Typically I prefer a 7' to 9' grand," he adds. "You just end up carving the bottom off anyways."

For an upright he suggests two options: "Remove the panel above the keyboard and put a mic out just over the head of the player, angled down, pointing at the piano, so you're recording it as he's hearing it"; or "my favourite way is miking the back – pulling the piano out from the wall, put out your best mic with a wide pattern in the centre of the piano."

A popular stereo miking approach, he says, is putting up two mics, panning hard left and right to get a full-width stereo picture of the instrument, similar to the stereo output of an electronic piano. "I question the value of that," he says. "Sometimes that works beautifully, but if the piano is only one voice in a much larger arrangement, it's better to have it in mono and localize it in the sound field." If you do go stereo, don't fear the pan pots. "If you've placed the microphones properly and both mics are in phase, when you bring the pans into 9 and 3, or 10 and 2, you find you still

get the image of the stereo width, but the image of the piano is much stronger."

OTHER CONCERNS...

"It's tough to get it so you're hearing an even distribution of notes. If you're trying to close mic a piano, you have to get the mic far enough away to catch the whole thing."

Beyond that, there are tuning issues: environmental factors like temperature and humidity, and the piano's ability to hold its tune – not usually an issue in the most controlled and, often, more expensive recording environments with a newly-tuned piano in good repair, but a problem when you're recording in your bedroom, kitchen, or bathroom.

Speaking of rooms, says Friesen, "Packing blankets are your friends. For me, in a track with a lot of instrumentation, I don't want room sound. I want the sound of the piano, straight, clean, and in your face. That means close miking – get under the hood, throw the mic in, cover it and take the room out of the equation completely."

"Getting an acoustic piano that's worth recording is an expensive proposition," he says. Sometimes, even with the chops and gear Friesen has on hand, using the real thing invites diminishing returns. Bottom line: record a bad-sounding piano, get a bad-sounding piano track that's going to be a pig in the mix. If that's what you're left with, he adds: "Believe it or not, rolling the mids out of a piano sound makes it sound a lot more expensive. Try pulling some 700 out and see what you get."

So why use the real thing? Well, maybe you don't give a rat's ass about signal path and tuning issues. Maybe you like the sound of the beat up old apartment-sized piano in your parents' living room and recording your masterpiece in a space infused with the personalities of people who think you



KEN FRIESEN

could make wiser career choices. Maybe that's the key to getting the magic of your performance in the can.

OR MAYBE NOT...

For many, it's the winning formula of a great player, a great piano, and a great engineer recording it. "There's a random factor in a real piano that's very difficult to simulate," says Friesen. Without trying to define that factor too finely: "Nothing inspires a great player like a great piano." Friesen admits he's not a player, but "there's some pianos I've met in my life where I hit the left hand and you can feel it run up the rope, come back, and it barks at you. It's exciting." There it is. Excitement. Inspiration – the raw fuel for curiosity.

Vintage electro-acoustic gear inspires similar excitement, particularly the Hammond. "You watch guys like the late Richard Bell or Doug Riley, or Ken Pearson playing a Hammond, much of the time only one hand is playing the keyboard. The other hand is working the machine." There's the depth and subtlety of performances that outstrip what most of us – particularly players who've rarely, or never, played the real thing – can accomplish regardless of how sophisticated the simulation or interface. Those boards provide similar options to guitar – playing with a physical chain of effects as part of a process of innovation that treats the original as only the starting point for finding unique and iconic sounds.

"Don't know how to break it to you all, but the guy playing has as much or more effect than all the other stuff," says Friesen. And it's not just people with monster

BEST OF INTENTIONS

So, you've gone and recorded acoustic piano, but no matter what you do it still sounds like crap. What then?

"If you don't know what you're doing, put up a few mics wherever you think they ought to go and minimize your impact," says Friesen. "If you're trying everything under the sun and it's still not happening, stop trying to do everything and leave it for the next guy. If you haven't completely hacked it..." Let's say you got at least a reasonable sound – it might be salvageable down the line.

Sometimes it works the other way around, Friesen adds. Once faced with a great part, played using a dubiously sampled grand, he used a decidedly analog solution: "I took an Auratone speaker, got a cylinder of cardboard around six inches around, laid it on the soundboard of a great-sounding grand piano where I was mixing. I put the speaker face down on that, facing down toward the soundboard. I put a weight on the damper pedal so all the strings would resonate. I miked up the piano, pressed play, and got all the resonance and random quality of the piano and mixed that in with the sample... and it wowed the kids. If you got the great part, there's always a way to make it go."



chops, but the right player for the gig. Great performances, great songs, and great stories are about more than just hitting the notes on a Hammond, a piano, or any instrument. And the same argument holds true for players with deep chops on new tech, whether it's hardware or software simulators, sequencers, or the digital studio as a whole.

No traditional studio, large or small, reminds me of a single instrument in the way Byron Wong's Homework Studios does. Chronically busy, Wong is juggling multiple film and album projects running the gamut from progressive techno to alt. country and folk.

His small project studio contains an impressive array of vintage and cutting edge keyboards and recording gear. As projects come and go, the space is reconfigured accordingly, not unlike reconfiguring a virtual recording environment.

"The place is the combination of multiple processes over years." It's evolution. It isn't set up as the ultimate workspace, he explains. It is what it is. The amount of gear is an effect of space issues, budgets, and the sheer number of projects coming through the doors, and, undoubtedly, a heaping dose of professional curiosity. "It's not so much that I have an ideal situation, as much as I have a situation that allows me to work."

"Anyone with 500 dollars has a lot of options for recording keys well." He may have more in one spot than most people reading this, but the gear, his workflow, and his ability to get great keys recorded are as much a product of limitations as any other person's set-up.

One of Wong's key pieces of gear is a Yamaha U3 Upright. "My general mic choice is to drop two solid state DPAs through the top. Given time and

consideration, I'd put a condenser on the soundboard." He's not opposed to more off-the-cuff methods. "Recently, it's funny, my favourite piano sound comes from using this Sony digital recorder that has a built-in microphone. I place it on the upper end of the piano facing the player and it picks up key noise and a real natural ambience. I take that and fly it into Pro Tools. It's yielding me some of the nicest, natural sounds."

"My only concerns when recording acoustic piano is that it's in tune enough for the song – some can be out of tune and still work for the story," he adds. "And bleed – specifically from headphones – click in the track. I love creaks of the stool, pedal noise, but the click ... unacceptable."

Wong's love of the sounds from the Yamaha, and acoustic instruments in general, stems from "the warmth and tactility of the sound. I can hear the sustain pedal bringing the damper off the strings, the creaking of the bench. That's just as much a part of the sound."

His passion extends to electro-acoustic classics. "When you want low/mid punch, I find going direct works nicely on a Rhodes. On Wurlitzers, you have options on the direct out, the auxiliary output, and the headphone out – and running the headphone out into a DI yields a completely different sound than the auxiliary out. On a Wurlly, I almost exclusively want to run direct out, but it depends on the track. With a Rhodes, if you have a proper Rhodes cabinet, looping the tape delay through the Rhodes and using that and then miking the cabinet I find unbelievable. The warmth in the mids is shocking," he says.

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new Rhodes Mark 7 for example – all the original character, but completely modernized and MIDI compatible.

It's often the project that imposes limitations. The swift turnaround necessary in broadcast, for example. "You're kind of at the mercy of sample libraries. I've been lucky because I've co-created and processed a number of libraries. I have a really extensive collection of custom-made sounds to draw from."

With film he prefers using real instruments. "I think if we don't inject as much air and life as possible, and capture that, somehow the process suffers for it. I try to mic as many things as I can, even soft synths; I have a tendency to run them out of the computer, into preamps, or to an amplifier. It's a matter of time," he says. "When you take a Rhodes piano and run it out seven or eight random guitar pedals, especially when you don't know what the settings are, you're going to get something no one else has heard."

"Running an old ARP 2600 into a tape delay and this and that, that's a remarkable sound. That will inspire you." It might inspire you to shut off the keyboard, or it might inspire animals to scream, but it evokes a response. Working under time constraints, in the box, doesn't mean that kind of happy accident doesn't happen. "It's a different kind of happy accident, working in the box." And fair enough – we love vintage gear, the warm distortion of tube amps,



JULIUS BUTTY (RIGHT)

air being pushed through big cabs. "A lot of keyboardists have forgotten the benefits of running their keyboards out into the air," says Wong.

Far from being Luddites, Wong and Friesen know what they like, but recognize the value, the limitations, and necessity of the character vs. time vs. space vs. budget equation. Both subscribe to the same philosophy of maintaining effectiveness in recording. When you start to have diminishing returns, whether, as Butty mentions, in infinite sounds, or owing to a feel or timing, it's time to recalculate the character vs. time vs. space vs. budget equation. "If I get an artist who's a killer songwriter, and writes on piano, but the timing is off," says Wong, "I'm going digital. I also have the



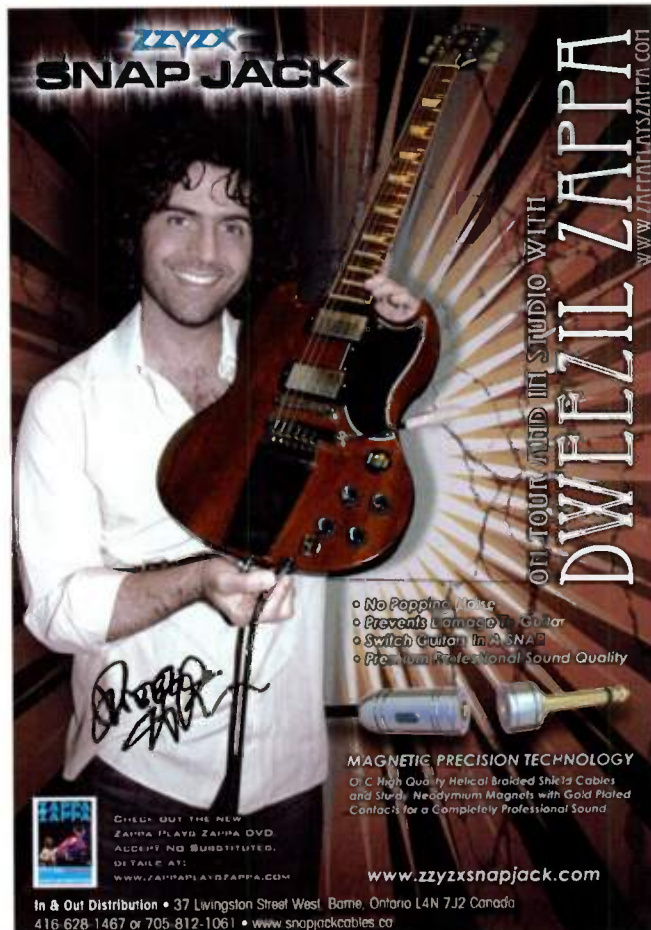
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Moog Piano Bar, that converts the performance to MIDI information.”

So, we can romanticize it. We can talk about how big someone's eyes get when you bring out a mess of cool old synths. The thing is, the way Wong sometimes talks about his studio sounds similar to the way some players talk about their keyboard set-up. And that's interesting. Working in the box may not be as tactile, but, he says, “It's uninspiring to have to make sure something's in tune, all the keys are working, find the right cable, MIDI is working, what preamp to use.” Speed and efficient workflow in the box can be just as inspiring.

So, are the purists missing out? Yes... and no.

They are if they refuse to incorporate modern tech into their workflow. It's a matter of outlook, and perspective. An instrument is an instrument, be it an acoustic piano, or a digital sequencer, or a Kazoo. Wong references the Casio SK 1 – is it a ten-dollar toy, or a valuable tool? Again, it's a matter of outlook and perspective. He gets something out of it more immediately than what exponentially more expensive hardware/software samplers provide. “More than at any other time we are at an incredible place. We still have access to boards from the '60s, '70s and '80s and, literally, these infinite possibilities digitally that cost,



BYRON WONG

literally, 50 dollars. To not take advantage of that is foolish.”

Your role as a player is changing. The old muso argument about who is better-suited to create music, technically proficient players or a programmer inputting notes from a computer keyboard with one finger, is pointless. Who gets the job done?

Wong references records by artists like the Crystal Method, Chemical Brothers, and Public Enemy, released in the '90s that depended heavily on '80s technology. “So why weren't those records made in the '80s?” He wonders. Because it took time for people to see all the possibilities and concepts drum machines, samplers, and the like offered, once they were no longer threatened by it. “It took time to get past the musos and into the hands of conceptualists.”

The pace of change can be overwhelming. Be well-versed in industry standard platforms. Compile your own unique mix of gear. The main thing is that your system works for you. See the limitations if you must, you have options that ten years ago wouldn't have been imaginable. Earlier this evening, I walked into a studio in Montreal roughly the size of one that, 10 years ago, I did overdubs in for a fairly large-budget record. We did the drums at a far more sophisticated, far more expensive studio north of the city. The studio I was in tonight is where we did our drums – in less than two days.

“Anyone who openly and actively doesn't want to explore these sounds and processes, that's like saying I hate hip hop or country,” Wong says. We've just scratched the surface of what's possible virtually and the surface of what will be possible when



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hardware and the way in which hardware and software communicate catch up to our growing expectations.

Simply put, times have changed, and are changing...

Marc Pierre Verge, President of Applied Acoustics Systems is well-acquainted with that change. When he and AAS co-founder Philippe Derogis met at IRCAM in Paris while doing their PhDs in sound synthesis, PCs were just becoming powerful enough to run some of applications they'd been exploring in their academic work. "Previously, the only way to run them was on huge systems. You would start the calculation when you left in the evening. In the morning you'd have a few seconds of sound," Verge says. The possibilities gave the two the idea of creating new instruments for consumers.

At IRCAM, says Verge, "There were a lot of composers, classical and contemporary, a focus on new playing techniques. For us, sound synthesis was a way to invent new instruments, new sounds." When they started actually selling their software, however, they quickly found emulations of traditional instruments were in vogue.

"Relatively few people like to really play with the sound. More and more, our work has been ensuring we supply presets right out of the box – more than creating entire new sounds." That, and their initial

concerns have resulted in virtual instruments that satisfy both players looking for out-of-the-box usability and a powerful interface for designing unique sounds. Simplification became a primary focus. The market demand for replications or look/soundlike software iterations of hardware synths and electro-acoustic instruments surprised him at first, "rather than taking advantage of the possibilities software can bring us," he says. "I think it's changing, though. The tech is getting more mature and musicians are finding new ways to use the instruments."

Expectations are changing. Musicians are looking for new sounds, heightened compatibility between different interfaces and platforms – products that match expectations raised not only by the software, but also by recent advancements in how the user interacts with that software through the hardware interface. "We've reached a level where you expect to play and access any kind of known instrument or processing tools."

As people came to expect software to adequately replace their hardware gear, they are now asking for increasing innovation. Developers of hardware and software have reacted to any hint of consumers' fears of unnecessary complexity by simplifying products, a process made less demand-



MARC PIERRE VERGE

ing by ever-increasing comfort on the part of musician's with recent innovations in virtual interfaces.

The better the controller, the more transparent the interface, the more refined the scale with which to adjust parameters, the greater the ability to mimic and enhance the kind of interface traditional acoustic instruments provide. A bow for example – imagine being able to incorporate all the aspects of the physical experience – inertia, friction, subtle physical adjustments and techniques that accomplished players have learned and forgotten. Verge won't be surprised to see these types of interfaces become more common in a few years and become more important in the lives of musicians. As fast as the pace of tech innovation is moving, there is some increasing consolidation in response to consumers attempting to grasp the vast amount of gear out there. "Sequencers," for example, says Verge. "There are different options, but if you learn one you can easily use another one."

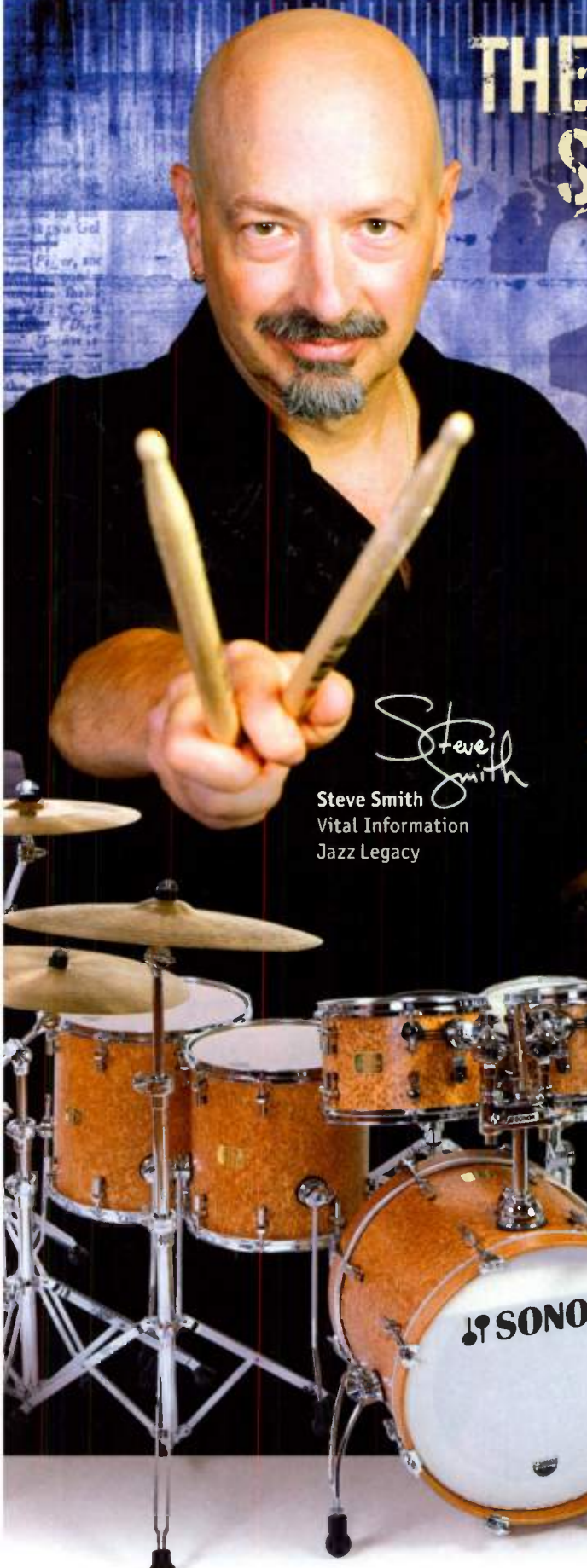
Disciplines and the technologies and tools associated with them are colliding, with spectacular effect. Advancements in operating systems, and interfaces that allow users to manipulate sound and images, are breaking the boundaries down between various media and their creators and users. Increasingly people are seeing the whole system as an instrument unto itself.

The next step is to ask, and answer, the question, what else can we do? We've never had the ability to address that question like we can now. We have more powerful and compact digital studios, more control over parameters, always better recreations of existing instruments, and more fluent integration between hardware and software. What else Verge hopes to see is more flexibility in terms of integrating and imitating the technique players apply to the real instruments in the virtual arena – better customization to capture the natural flavour that minute adjustments in technique provide – that random quality that Friesen and Wong mention.

"More and more these things will be integrated in the instrument and the work-

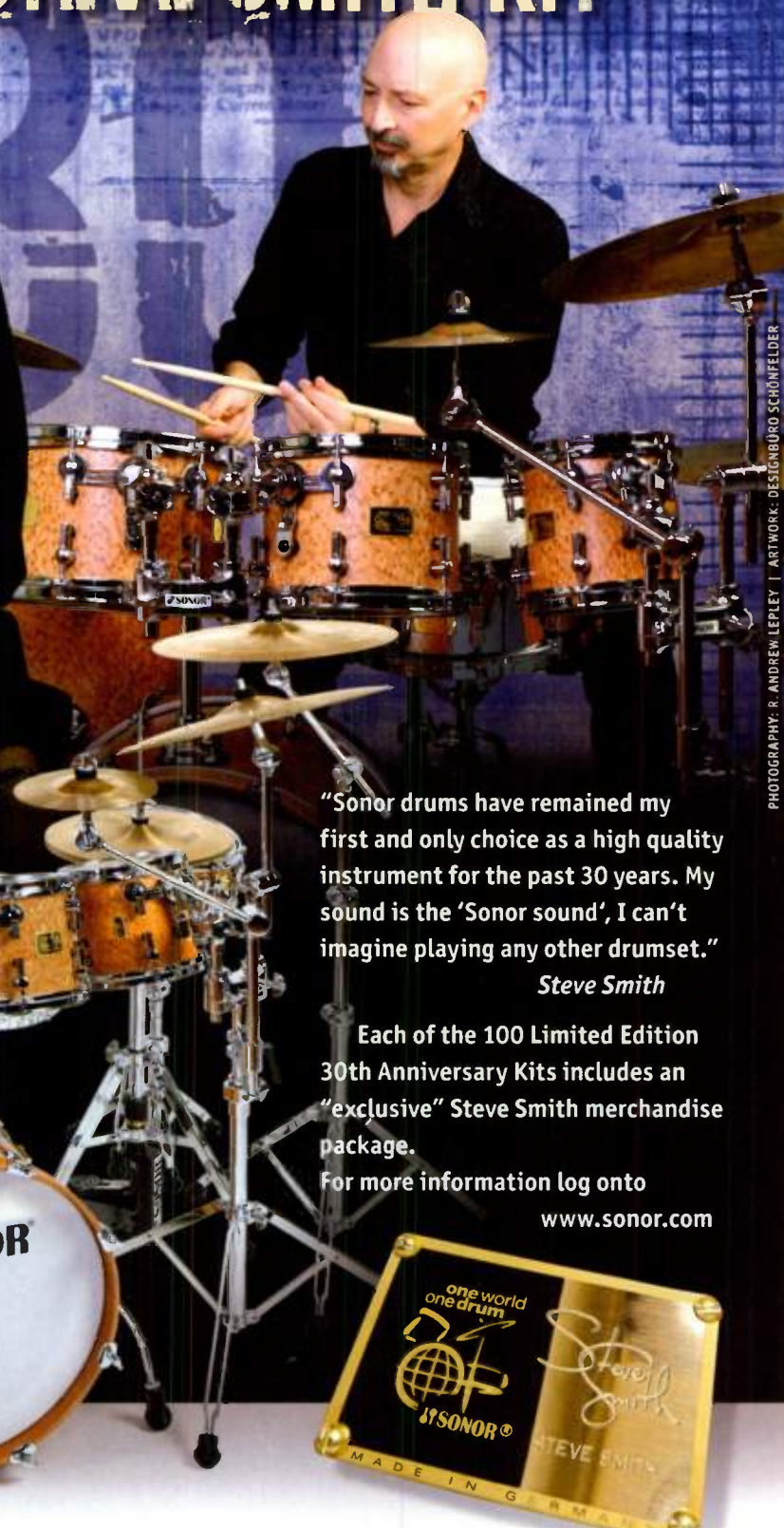


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station," says Verge. Currently, there's a gap between what can be achieved in the real world and virtual one. Increasingly, however, that gap is being addressed, not only by developers of instruments – by an army of armchair techies, gamers, and corporations across the spectrum of tech apps. Never mind the touchpad on your 200-dollar plastic controller – just look at the capabilities of the iPhone. So much for consumer-grade tech; now check out www.jazzmutant.com/lemur_overview.php and <http://opensoundcontrol.org/about> and <http://archive.cnmat.berkeley.edu/OpenSoundControl/application-areas.html>.

Our expectations are deeply affected by products like the iPhone. Developers recognize musicians' desires for simplicity, transparency, and the ability to transfer their skills across product lines and platforms – part of the appeal of accurate digital

recreations, both software and hardware – in the first place; however, the technology evolves, to whatever degree it departs from the type of controller keyboard players are used to, regardless of how much the digital studio/sequencer becomes an instrument in itself – one we use to play with other musicians in the same way we use traditional instruments. The pleasure of playing together, says Verge, will remain.

Eventually of course, that too will change, though, and we'll find ourselves making music in ways, and with instruments that were unimaginable 10 years ago. "The challenge is to forget as much as possible that you are using a computer and make it feel like you are using an instrument," Verge sums up. Bottom line, the future belongs to the professionally curious. The job of a player, a producer, a songwriter is to tell stories, as Wong puts it. Whatever your tools, it's the player and



the outlook that make the difference – the ability to tell a story that is both inspired and inspirational. Ultimately, a mix of old and new school skills, learned in response to a healthy dose of professional curiosity, will serve you well. ■



Kevin Young is Toronto-based musician and freelance writer.





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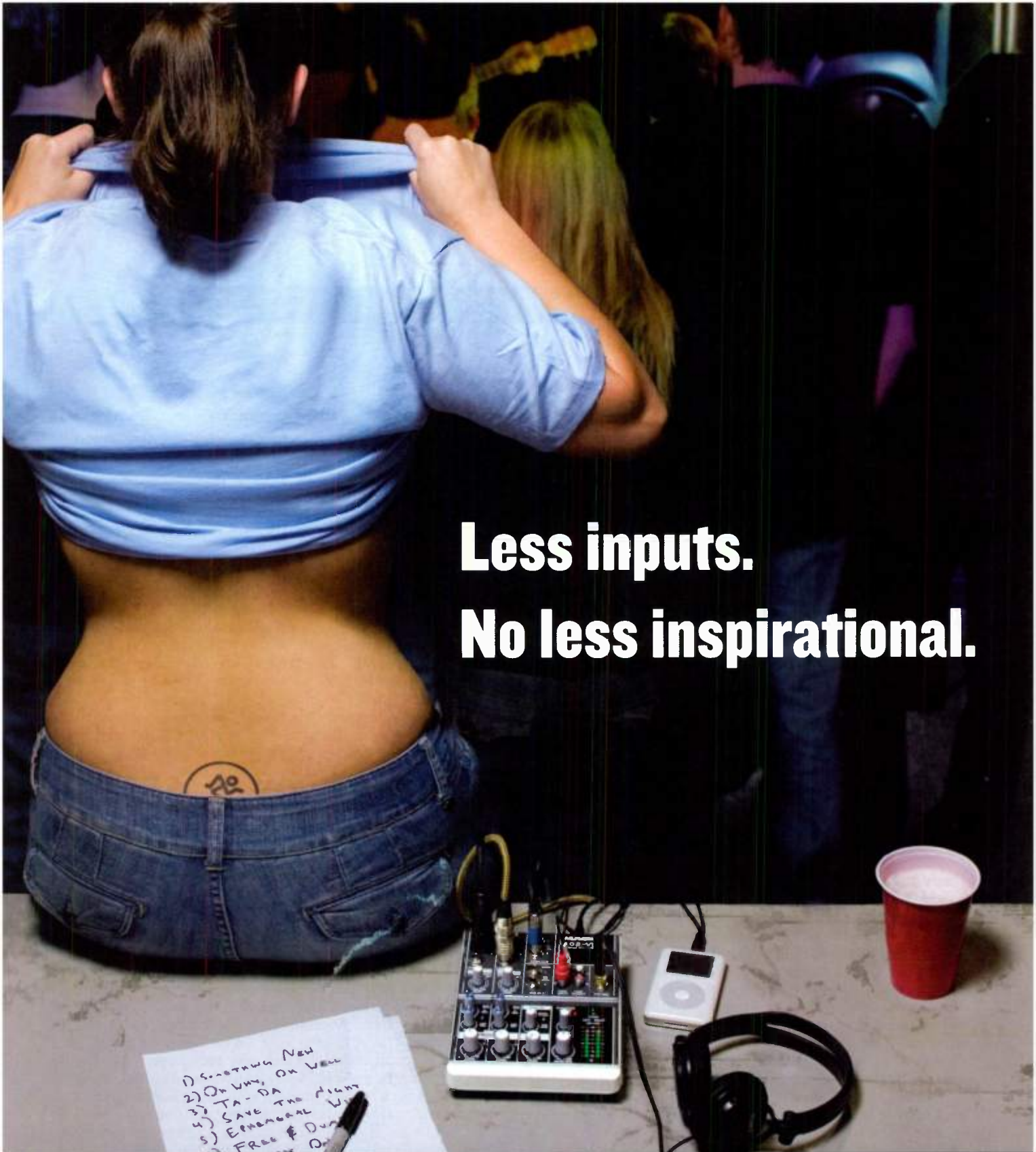
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STEELY DAN: Jazz Harmony In Pop Songwriting

by Don Breithaupt

In popular music, prosody is almost always melodic (“But Beautiful” puts the word “funny” on a cheery major ninth a whole tone above the implied destination pitch, and the word “sad” below it on a flattened seventh) or rhythmic (the “lonely winter” in “All the Things You Are” feels positively interminable when the phrase-ending word “long” lands on a note with two bars to itself). One of Steely Dan’s lasting innovations was the use of harmonic prosody. From the beginning, Fagen and Becker insisted pop harmony should not simply be wallpaper on which melody notes are hung, but a distinct real-time stream with meaning of its own.

On *Aja*, listen to the way “Black Cow”’s $E\flat maj^7$, a chord related only tangentially to the verse key of C Major and related not at all to the chorus key of A Major, adds to the sense of alienation in the line “Where are you,” and the way the subsequent transition chord, an E^9_{sus4} that lasts for two measures, gives way to a fresh tonic $A maj^9$, emphasizing the narrator’s coincident change of mind (if not heart). Listen to the downward pull of the harmony in the chorus of “Deacon Blues”: not by accident do its nine consecutive descending chord changes underscore the sax-toting antihero’s death wish. Listen to the open fourths and fifths spelled out in the guitar and horn figures in “Home at Last”: they recall pre-Christian music appropriate to the song’s Homeric – ancient Greek – conceit.

“I would always be studying pieces, looking in harmony books,” says Steely Dan co-founder Donald Fagen, “so sometimes [the harmonic constructs] would be something I’d seen in a book. Or a couple of chords I liked the sound of together. If I was writing something at the time, I’d try it. If Walter and I were working on a lyric, and we needed a certain effect, I’d try something that I thought would enhance the lyric. Or sometimes go counter to the lyric, just to keep ourselves from getting bored.” In the counter-to-the-lyric category, the line “Can’t you see our love will grow” in “I Got the News” not only descends melodically and diminishes dynamically – it also walks down a rickety staircase of quirky quarter-note chord changes that return the song to its C^6 vamp. So much for love’s growth (yes – it’s a bit of a boner joke, too).

Becker and Fagen give their audience credit for being able to hear, if not analyze, their subtly shifting colours. Even in an area of harmonic tranquility, like the eight measures of $B maj^9$ that make up the intro of “Aja,” there are sharp elevenths floating around, hinting at the less stable (and more exotic) Lydian mode. At the top of the double verse in “Deacon Blues,” we hear G^6 and F^6 , two relatively neutral chords. Halfway through, when the moment comes around again, the two chords recur as a G^{13} and an F^{13} by virtue of the flattened sevenths in the horn voicings. The difference

is hard to quantify, but let’s say the second pair of changes is 33 per cent bluer.

Steely Dan records contain harmonic motifs, the way other records contain melodic, rhythmic, or lyrical motifs. *The Royal Scam* (1976) had been conspicuously packed with minor vamps; *Aja* (1977), by contrast, was Becker and Fagen’s half-step record. “I had always thought chords going down in half-steps were corny-sounding,” says Fagen. “But I think I just decided I was going to do it anyway.” “Deacon Blues” begins with this downgrade sequence – $C maj^7 G^2/B | B\flat maj^7 F^2/A$ – then repeats it up a whole tone before pausing on the deceptive cadence that sets up the verse. “Peg” begins in a similar fashion – $G^{6/9} F\sharp^{7(\#9)} | F^{6/9} E^{7(\#9)} | E\flat^{6/9} D^{7(\#9)}$ – but introduces dominant function to every second chord. “Aja” includes a similar, but strictly parallel pattern near the end of its repeated solo form – $Fm^{11} Em^{11} | Ebm^{11} Dm^{11}$ – and concludes its chorus with another half-step move: $Db maj^{7(65)} to C maj^{7(65)}$. Related but ascending fragments include the set-up to Fagen’s synthesizer solo in “Home at Last” ($D\flat^9 to D^9$), and this juicy intro-ending flourish in “Josie”: $E\flat maj^7 E^{7(\#9)} | C/F G\flat maj^{7(65)}$.

All these chord progressions flouted prevailing mid-70s pop trends. Steely Dan wasn’t the only exception – Michael Franks’s 1977 bossa-manqué “Down in Brazil” was built on a 24-bar descending cycle with six tonal centres, and Gino Vannelli’s 1975 prog-jazz epic “Where Am I Going” had enough chromaticism for a Debussy tone poem – but Steely Dan was surely the best-known. Even more than its stunning production values, photographically specific lyrics, and unconventional instrumentation, the harmonic content was what set Dan apart. In the Dan canon, and especially on *Aja*, harmony isn’t mere framework: it’s the thing itself.

Excerpted from Steely Dan’s Aja, volume 46 of Continuum Publishing’s long-running “33-1/3” series.

SOCAN Award winner Don Breithaupt is a studio musician and songwriter based in Toronto. He has written extensively on music and film for the National Post and other publications.

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Legal Aspects Of Independent Recordings Part II

by Paul Sanderson

LABELING, CREDIT, AND NOTICE ON RECORDINGS

a) NOTICES

i) Copyright

It is advisable to place copyright notices on recordings, which consists of the following: the copyright notice, i.e. ©, the copyright proprietor's name, and date of publication. This constitutes copyright notice for copyright in the lyrics, artwork, and music. The symbol ©, the copyright proprietor's name and the year of publication, constitutes notice of copyright in a sound recording.

Neither of the above notices is required under the Copyright Act in Canada; however, it is a useful practice. The effect of these notices is to give notice to the world that copyright is being claimed.

ii) Trademark

A number of valuable trademarks may be credited and be identified as follows: "TM" and "®". The ® stands for registration of a trademark in the United States. The "TM" symbol gives the world notice that you intend to claim rights in a trademark.

Neither of the above notices is required under the Trade-marks Act in Canada; however, they are advisable for the reason offered above, concerning copyright.

iii) Business Name

Also, the business name under which the group is releasing a recording should be registered with the appropriate provincial Ministry of government office.

iv) Labeling

Under the Consumer Packaging and Labeling Act, the principal place of business of the person for whom the product is manufactured should be identified on the label: on the CD insert material, for example.

The minimum height for type size under this statute for upper case letters (whether these are used alone or with lower case letter; or where both upper and lower case letters are used on the principle display service of the contain-

er) is at least 1/16th of an inch, or 1.76 mm in height. The type must be legible. It also makes sense to have the telephone number and mailing address indicated for purpose of selling recordings by mail order. One should also consider the use of French language recordings distributed in Quebec. Contravention of this statute may result in fines.

v) Credit

Also, false accreditation can result in legal action being taken. Credit in this regard is recognized by contract or by statute, by case law or custom in the industry. Credits can be extensive and usually include producer, musician, record company, etc.

vi) Other Notices

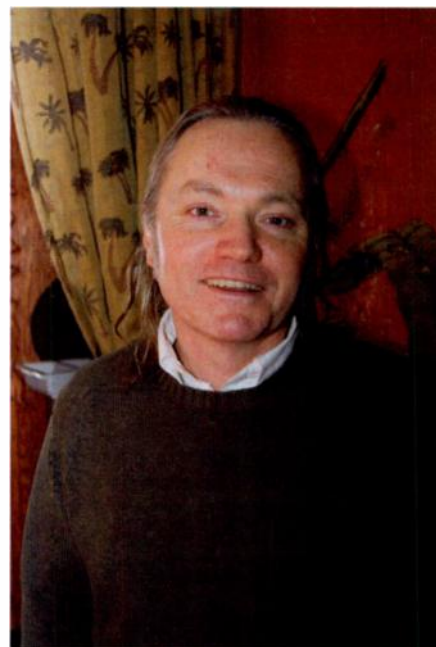
Other industry notices are given by custom and practice, for example the MAPL logo, which consists of the circle of letters "MAPL" in four sectors. M = music composed by a Canadian. A = the musical lyrics were principally performed by a Canadian Artist. P = (1) production consists of a live performance of music that is wholly recorded in Canada, or (2) performed wholly in Canada and broadcast live in Canada. L = the lyrics were written by a Canadian. The notice is particularly relevant to radio for purposes of complying with CANCON requirements.

Other industry credits and labeling could include digital coding and other designations such as whether or not the recording was originally recorded in mono or stereo, and bar coding, which is used in inventory and sales control.

The use of warning stickers may also be advisable, for example, as an explicit lyric advisory.

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Independent recordings must be deposited with The Library and Archives Canada. One copy of any sound recording that includes Canadian content published in Canada for public distribution or sale, must be deposited. Contact 1-866-578-7777 or legal deposit at www.lac-bac.gc.ca for more information.



TAX: RETAIL SALES, GST

The sales of independent recordings have tax implications not only with respect to income tax, but also retail tax statutes. The purchaser of any such recordings must pay retail sales tax on the fair value of such recordings at the time of purchase. In most provinces, vendors must be licensed prior to making such a sale and if they are not, they may be liable to a fine; however, distribution of promotional recordings is exempt from retail sales tax. Books and records should be kept and returns made periodically in accordance with the applicable statutes. Also in applicable cases, GST should be charged, collected, and remitted.

Paul Sanderson is an entertainment lawyer who entered private practice after having spent several years as a professional musician. He has practical experience as a songwriter, guitarist, keyboard player, and is a publisher and writer member of SOCAN. He is also the author of Musicians and the Law in Canada, now in its third revised edition.

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Being genuine SansAmps, each Character Series pedal can be used as a stand-alone preamp to drive a power amp, a studio mixer, or a PA system, or used as a stompbox with an amp. Other features include: built-in speaker simulation, which is individually tuned to match each of the speaker/cabinet configurations associated with each type of amplifier; 3-band active EQ, drive, and level controls; and complete analog circuitry. Each is operable with a 9 V battery or optional DC power supply.

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Evans HQ has released a new universal model of SoundOff bass drum mutes for any size of kick drum. The product promotes realistic practice sessions by allowing drummers to use their own drumsets without the noise. SoundOffs mount efficiently to playing surfaces and reduce volume by up to 95 per cent.

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The mutes also come in newly designed boxed sets. In addition to the stock tom and snare mutes, each set features the new bass drum mute, a crash cymbal mute, and the new 20" ride cymbal and 14" hi-hat mutes. Box sets are available in fusion (10", 12", 14", 14") and standard (12", 13", 14", 16") configurations.

For more information on the mutes, contact D'Addario Canada: 905-889-0116, FAX 905-889-8998, orders@daddariocanada.com, www.daddariocanada.com.

Martin Releases FX Flexible Core Acoustic Strings



C.F. Martin & Co. has announced a new addition to its family of acoustic guitar strings in FX Flexible Core sets.

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The Elle C delivers an accurate, detailed, and natural sound modeled on preferences collected by research studies. The AKG Elle C features a frequency range of 60-20,000 Hz, an XLR connector module with 24-carat gold plated pins for optimized connectivity, and offers resistance to corrosion and humidity.

Additionally, the Elle C features a spring steel wire-mesh grill for durability and provides reliable control of pops and wind noise while an artist is on stage. Offering users a microphone with a slender silhouette, the unit is available in a high-gloss metallic or white pearlescent finish.

For more information, contact Soundcraft Canada: 514-595-3966, FAX 514-595-3970, information@soundcraft-canada.com, www.soundcraft-canada.com.



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New Sonic-Art Gig Bags From Levy's

Levy's has added three new designs to its series of printed polyester guitar gig bags with its Sonic-Art line. Each bag comes with 3/4" internal foam padding, headliner lining, a manuscript sleeve, an accessory pocket on the back, and dual rubber padded backpack shoulder straps.

Pictured are items EMPA7-013, -014, and -015.

For more information, contact Levy's Leathers Ltd.: 204-957-5139, FAX 204-943-6655, levys@levysleathers.com, www.levysleathers.com.



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Applied Acoustics Strum Acoustic GS-1 For Mac Os X And Windows

■ Strum Acoustic GS-1 from Applied Acoustics Systems is an acoustic guitar software synthesizer based on the latest AAS physical modeling

technology. Strum provides a wide collection of steel and nylon acoustic guitars, and includes elaborate voicing and strumming modules for the realistic reproduction of a guitarist's playing techniques.

Chords played on the keyboard are automatically voiced for the guitar while strumming and picking actions are reproduced by an auto-strum function, special strumming keys, or MIDI loops. EQ, multi-effect, and reverb modules complete the package.

Strum Acoustic GS-1 runs on both Mac OS X and Windows as a stand-alone application as well as in host sequencers supporting the VST, Audio Units, and RTAS plug-in formats.

For more information, contact Applied Acoustics Systems DVM Inc.: 514-871-8100, FAX 514-845-1875, info@applied-acoustics.com, www.applied-acoustics.com.



Mackie Goes Guitar Amps With The Hotwire VT12 Combo

■ Mackie has released the Hotwire VT12, a tube guitar amplifier that combines tube amp guitar tone and voicing with sonic flexibility and customization features in a unit that weighs less than 25 lbs.

The Hotwire VT12 has a fully reconfigurable analog tube circuit path, enabled by Mackie's Mode Switching technology, which allows players to switch between Class A and Class AB-style amp circuits. Through this instant alteration, the tube preamp profiles 12 different classic tube amps, from '60s-era classic tube combos to dynamic crunch tones of American amps.

The Mode Switching technology changes the character of the Hotwire preamp and power amp sections and re-voices the speaker to actualize the recreation of classic amplification.

The amp boasts a multi-way speaker system, consisting of a single 12" neodymium speaker and a 1" compression driver that can be reconfigured so the Hotwire can also act as an acoustic and vocal amplifier.

Thirty-two-bit onboard digital effects are available, including several modulation, delay, and reverb effects. A pedal jack, for connecting optional PB-1 pedal board or PB-4 four-function channel selector switch comes standard, as well as a USB jack for streaming cabinet-emulated audio to computers for recording or live sound manipulation.

For more information, contact LOUD Technologies: 425-892-6500, FAX 508-234-8251, www.loudtechinc.com.

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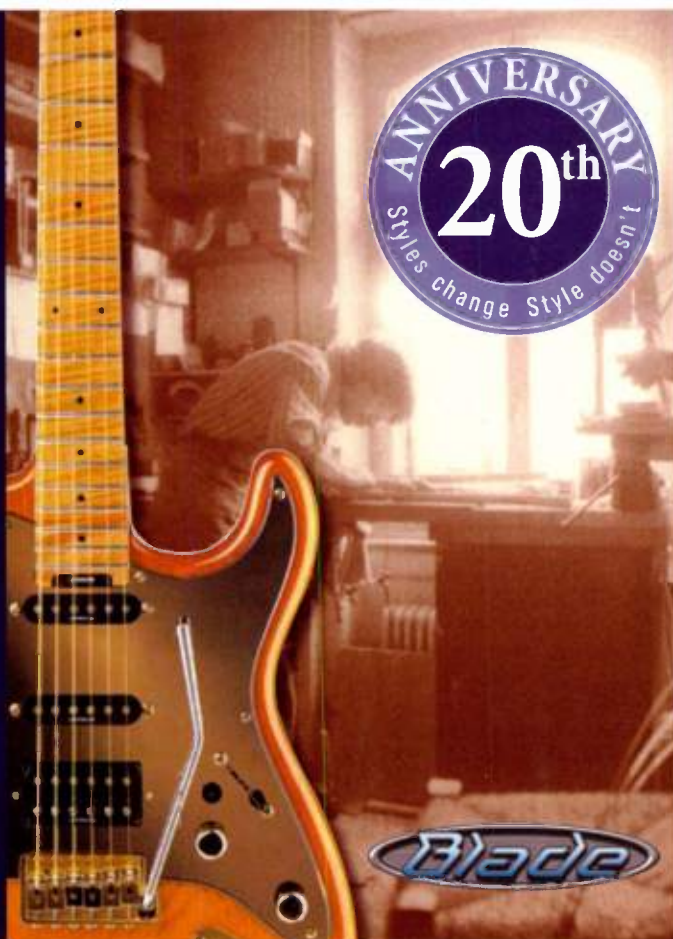
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Warwick Releases 6-String Corvette \$\$

Warwick has recently introduced the 6-string version of the Corvette \$\$ bass series.

To create a 6-string version of the company's pre-existing Corvette \$\$ model, Warwick asked MEC to make them an open-pole piece humbucker that would fit a 6-string bass. This means you can now play a 6-string Warwick Corvette bass that has two passive MEC humbuckers, with each pickup having a 3-way coil tap, offering a wide variety of tonal possibilities.

Like the rest of the basses in the Corvette \$\$ series, the 6-string version comes with a swamp ash body, an ovankol neck, and a wenge fingerboard. To back up the passive MEC humbuckers, Warwick employs an active MEC 2-band preamp.

For more information, contact EfKay Music Instruments Ltd.: 514-633-8877, FAX 514-633-8872, www.efkaymusic.com.

Leblanc Cadenza B \flat Clarinet Ideal For Students

Leblanc is now offering its Cadenza B \flat clarinet (LB130), ideal for student musicians. The instrument shares a similar acoustical design with the more advanced Legacy and Symphonie models from Leblanc.

This grenadilla instrument features two Backun Ringless barrels in cocobolo and grenadilla. The balanced key work offers fewer adjustment points, while the custom tapered pivot screws provide excellent stability to the mechanism. The outfit includes a compact backpack case and a Leblanc Cadenza hard rubber mouthpiece with a Bonade inverted silver ligature and cap.

For more information, contact Conn-Selmer Inc.: 574-458-0980, FAX 574-522-0334, www.conn-selmer.com.

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PHOTO BY CHRIS SMITH



THOM SWIFT

Contact: Jeff Liberty, The MAS Creative Agency, 506-658-8639, MASmusicman@aol.com, www.thomswift.com.

As a member of the popular Fredericton-based roots/blues trio Hot Toddy, Thom Swift has endeared himself to audiences across this country and on stages as far a field as the Newport Folk Festival and the Vienna Jazz Festival with his impressive guitar work and soulful bass/baritone voice.

That voice and those nimble fingers are now front and centre on *Into The Dirt*, Swift's remarkable first solo venture.

A joyous exploration of the diversity of the blues and the diversity of this artist, *Into The Dirt* features 10 Swift originals that embrace everything from Doc Watson-esque country blues and the folksy, gospel-influenced Delta blues exemplified by Mississippi John Hurt to groove-driven electric blues and spirited stride piano blues à la Fats Waller.

He moves effortlessly from one style to another here, switching track as easily as he changes instruments, something he does several times, moving from acoustic guitar to resonator guitar, banjo, and mandolin.

Swift, who co-produced this record with Charles Austin (Buck 65, Matt Mays, Joel Plaskett) is accompanied on this journey through the blues by a solid supporting cast of first-call East Coast players that includes Brian Bourne on bass and Chapman Stick; Geoff Arsenault on drums; Chris Corrigan on electric guitar; and Bill Stevenson on piano and Hammond B3.

Also guesting here are rising P.E.I. singer-songwriter Rose Cousins, who adds vocals, and American bluesman Guy Davis, who contributes harmonica and didgeridoo.

Already, this record has earned Swift the 2008 Canadian Maple Blues Award for New Artist Of The Year and a nomination for 2008 East Coast Music Award for Blues Recording Of The Year.

Choice tracks include "Into the Dirt," "Healer Man," "Mother's Arms," "Crying Shame," and "My Sweet Baby You."

TROLE

Contact: George Taylor, info@trole.org, www.trole.org.

The classic pose struck on the cover of Trole's latest album would lead you to believe there's a rock'n'roll party waiting to happen inside.

That's not far from the truth.

The St. Thomas, ON band, now in its eighth year, really knows how to crank up the heat. You learn to do that after more than 750 live shows together.

Recorded live off the floor at Liquid Toronto with Alec Fraser serving as producer – as well as playing bass – this self-titled set offers equal portions of rockabilly, cranky-ass rock'n'roll, blues, and roots rock, tempered here and there with a ballad of sorts. The energy level here is pretty high at times, but not so high as to wear you out.

There's some very edgy, very tasty guitar work in places from J.H. Taylor, alias the Fiddlybit Kid, and J. Trole Taylor's vocals have a rawness to them that screams, "Put me in the soundtrack for a biker flick!"

I can only imagine how over-the-top some of the live shows must be given what's served up on this 12-song set. Trole's shared billing with acts as diverse as The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, D.O.A., Theory of a Deadman, and Three Days Grace.

The Trole crew's had enough exposure in central and western Canada to help them sell out their independent demo, *The Illegal Bootleg Demos*.

Prime cuts here include "Courtin' Time," "Drug Money," "Lone On The Killing Floor," and "Dirty Betty."



SICK CITY

Contact: Jason Smith, Smallman Artist Management, jason@smallmanrecords.com, 204-452-5627, www.sickcitymusic.com.

The members of Winnipeg's Sick City spent three years together before releasing *Nightlife*, their first full-length album. To the band's growing legion of fans, I'm sure that seemed like a long time – but it was time well spent.

Nightlife, recorded in Atlanta with Jimmy Eat World producer Zach Odom and Kenneth Mount at the console, comes across as the work of a band that has long since worked out whatever kinks there might have been at the beginning of this creative partnership and evolved into a very cohesive unit.

They write well together and deliver what they write with equal measures of passion, conviction, energy, and enthusiasm. And what they write is a gritty, hard-assed brand of rock that is as melodic as it is in-yer-face.

And they are nothing if not adventurous.

Big riffs give way to lush strings and soft piano, which is in turn broadsided by big guitars, big bass, and big drums.

As strong as they are musically, they are even stronger vocally. Lead singer Josh Youngson pushes his voice so hard at times on this album that one wonders how he has any voice left at all. They've also got great vocal harmonies, used to good effect.

Youngson paid his dues with the Novella while bass player T.J. Stevenson logged time with The Recovery. Drummer Joel Neufeld and both guitarists, Dorian Paszkowski and Dave Grabowski, came from Fast Track, described in their bio as local skate punk heroes.

They seemed to gel almost from the beginning – within a year they were belting em' out on the Warped Tour.

By the Fall of 2005 they'd already produced their first EP, a well-received effort that hinted favourably of what was to come.

Among the better offerings on this set: "XX & XY," "Smiles & Cries," "Tora, Tora My Dear Tora," and the title track.



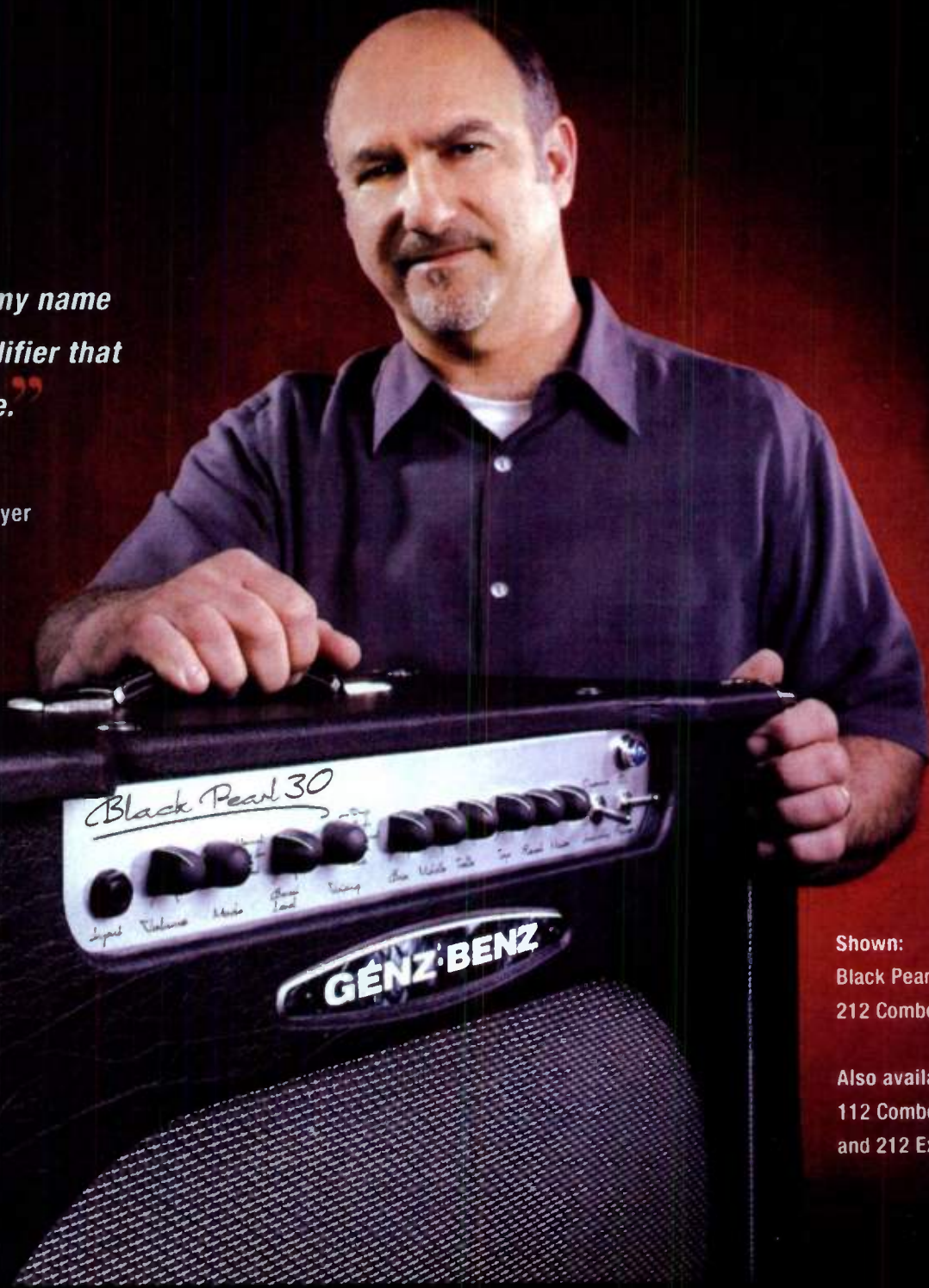
Doug Gallant has been a reporter and entertainment writer with *The Guardian* since 1975. In a career spanning four decades he has developed, researched, and written profiles on more than 3,000 artists from every conceivable musical genre. Gallant produces a weekly entertainment column for *The Guardian* and is a regular contributor to CBC Radio's *Mainstreet*. He has sat on juries for *The Juno Awards*, *The East Coast Music Awards*, *the Maple Blues Awards*, *FAC-TOR*, *CBC's The Great Canadian Music Dream*, and *the Polaris Music Prize*.

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