

GUITARMANIA!

INTERVIEWS WITH :

Colin James • Danny Gatton • Steve Morse
Phil X • David Gogo • Sil Simone
Gary Hoey • Kevin Briggs • Roy Ashen

CANADIAN

MUSICIAN



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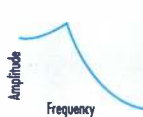
The Future. Plane and Simple.

Does the world of electronic musical instruments seem like it's stuck in an endless rut? New bells. New whistles. Same old sound...

Well, if so, take E-mu's new Morpheus[®] Z-Plane[™] Synthesizer for a test drive. Sure, it's got bells and whistles in abundance. But it's got something else that sets it apart from the digital crowd: new sounds and expressive control that you've never experienced in a MIDI instrument.

At the heart of Morpheus is E-mu's new Z-Plane Synthesis technology. Unlike the simple 2- or 4-pole filters of traditional synthesizers, Morpheus' 14-pole Z-Plane filters are capable of modeling virtually any resonant characteristics and then interpolating (or "morphing") between them in real time.

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Traditional Synthesis

Single, 4-pole lowpass filter with resonance.



Z-Plane Synthesis

Allows you to "morph" sounds through multi-dimensional, 14-pole filters.

that result from picking an acoustic guitar at different distances from the bridge. These are just hints of what Morpheus is all about.

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Best of all, you won't have to wait for the next century. Check Morpheus out today at your local E-mu dealer. Where the future is now.



MORPHEUS
Z-PLANE SYNTHESIZER

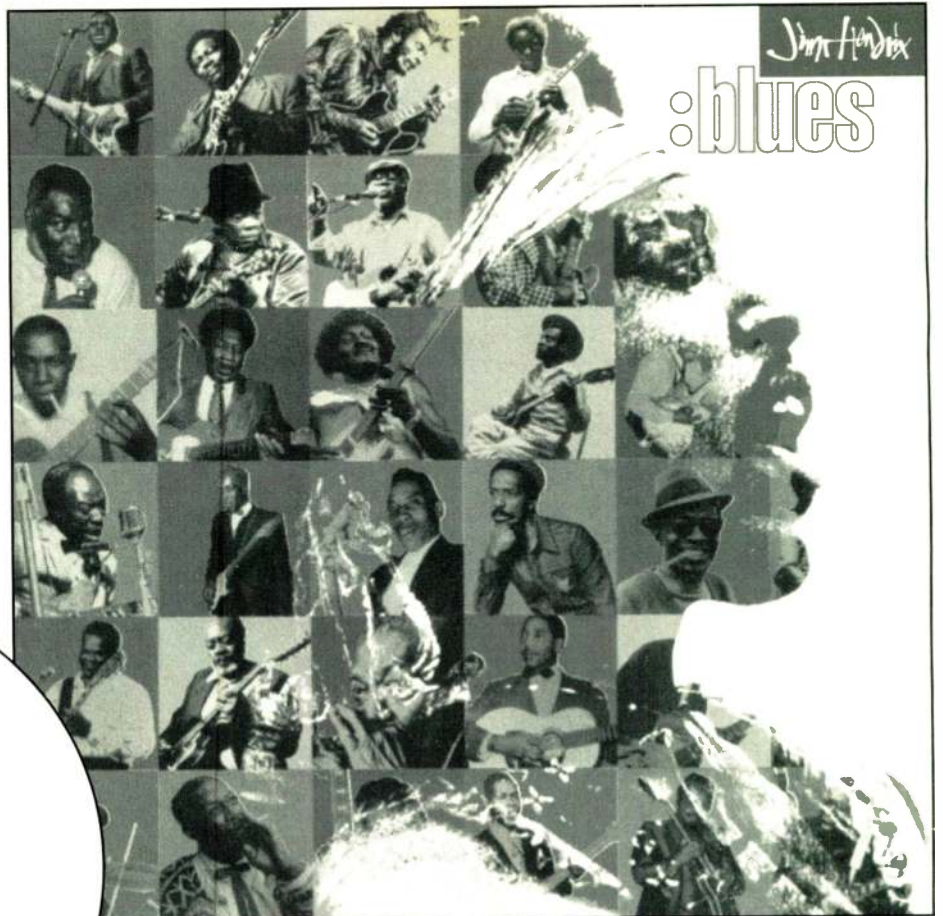


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Jimi Hendrix :blues



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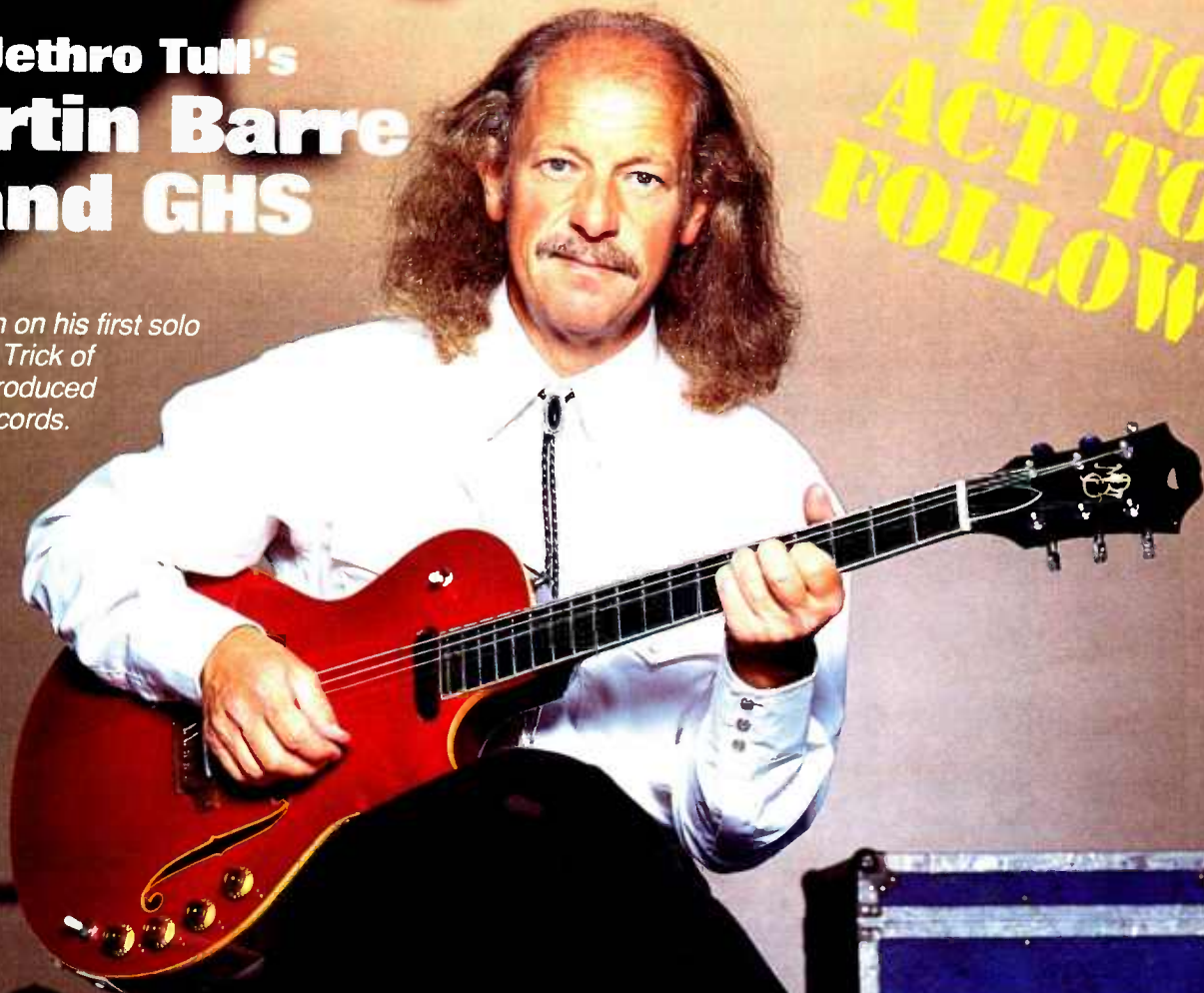
"He could play anything he wanted. He could play Deep Blues, what d'ya think Red House is? Red House will make you jump up and choke your mother!" - John Lee Hooker

"For my soul, Jimi was the deepest Blues player. Red House is a monument to blues. The whole piece is an orchestration of blues from delicate to bombastic. It's unbelievable, I've worn out many a Hendrix record listening to that song over and over again." - Joe Satriani

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CANADIAN

MUSICIAN

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51 *marc cooper*



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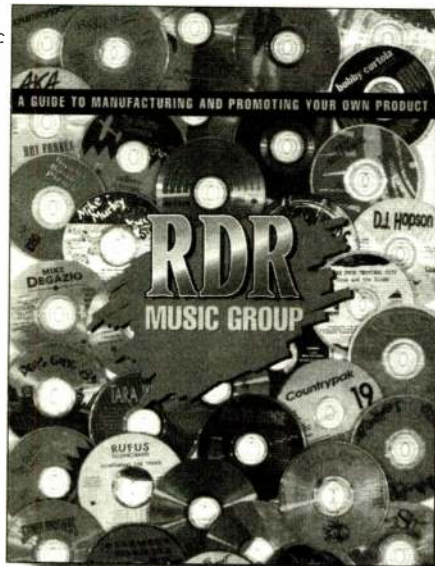
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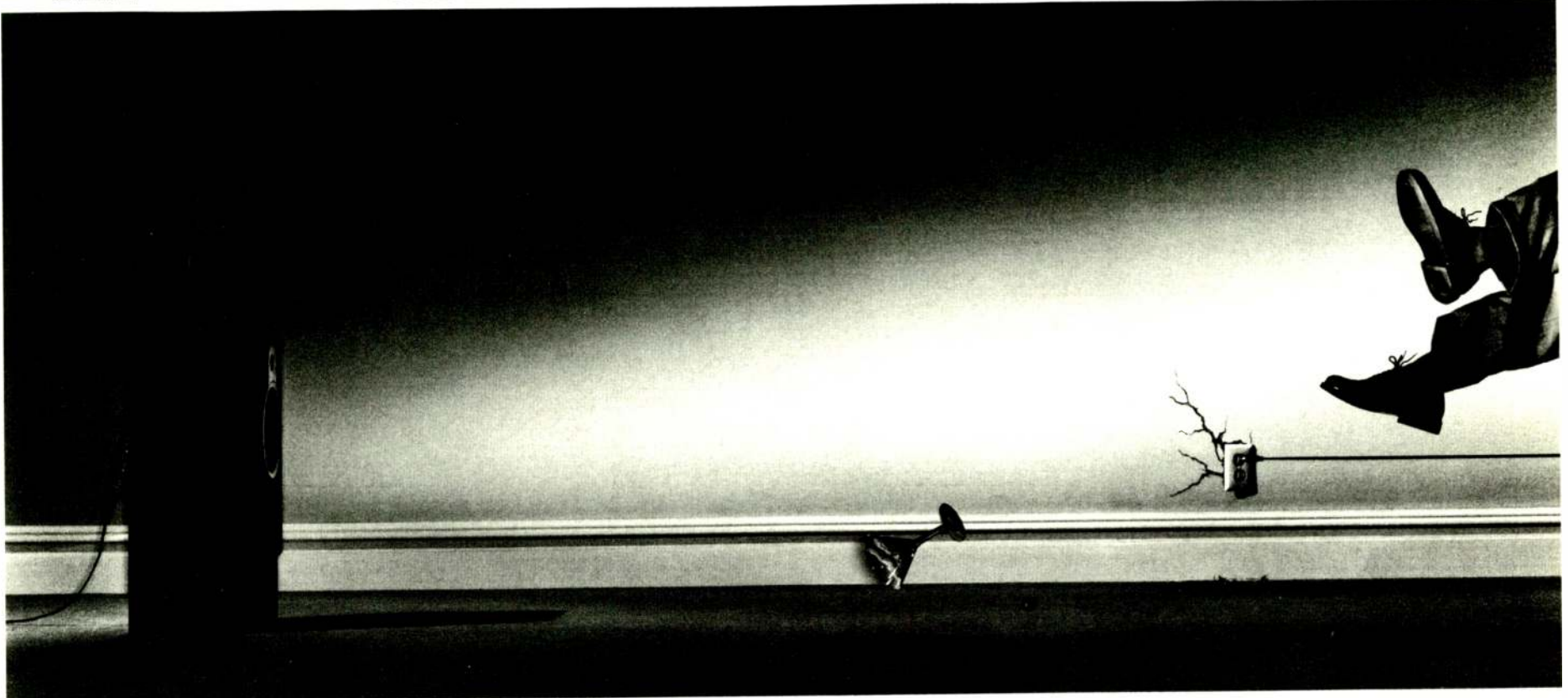
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FEEDBACK

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

I am a long-time subscriber to your magazine and a big fan of Canadian music. My favourite Canadian band since 1986 was Eye Eye. I was saddened by the death of Mark Caporal and enjoyed reading his occasional columns in your magazine. I had assumed the band disbanded after his death.

Recently, I by chance picked up Lost & Profound's latest release on a trip to Toronto and found the answer to where one of Eye Eye's members ended up. I was thrilled to see your feature on Andy Ryan in the February issue. Is Eye Eye still recording? I think Bill Wood is one of the best vocalists I've ever heard and wondered if he has continued to sing. I was fortunate to see Eye Eye in 1986 in Windsor, ON.

Please pass on to Mr. Ryan that I'm a fan of his work, including his new production talents. I'd appreciate an address or any information if possible. Thanks so much for your excellent magazine — cheers from Arizona!

Leah Miller, Mesa, Arizona

Ed: We passed Leah's letter on to Andy Ryan, who gave us some information on his recent activities.

Presently, Eye Eye as a band is no longer together, but its members are hardly silent! Singer Bill Wood has a band called Ghost Town, and just released an independent CD entitled *Cricket Serenade*. The release was recorded at The Playroom, the studio owned by Andy Ryan, and Andy not only engineered the recording, but also played all electric guitars on the album.

Andy is currently engineering a CD for another band called David Deacon and the Word, offering his guitar chops to that recording as well; and if that isn't enough to keep the man busy, he's also writing songs with Terry Tompkins (*Lost & Profound*) for future recording by female singer Rique Francs.

You may write to Andy Ryan c/o The Playroom, 605 Kennedy Rd., Scarborough, ON M1K 2B2.

THE URGE TO COMPETE

I am a guitarist who often buys your magazine. I recently bought the *Music Directory Canada* that is advertised in your magazine and it is excellent.

My only regret is that the section reserved to contests and competitions is very thin. The reason I am writing to you now is that I would like to know if there is a book or list specifically for different contests throughout Canada.

Christian De Tillieux, Outremont, PQ

Ed: The *Music Directory Canada* lists all competitions that are held annually across Canada by the major music and arts associations. However, there are new national and regional competitions being established regularly, as well as 'one-time-only' and local music competitions beyond the scope of a nation-wide directory. I suggest you refer to our 'Breaks' and 'Calendar of Events' sections which run in every issue of *Canadian Musician* for the most up-to-date information on newly-announced competitions. As well, regularly check out your own local entertainment and arts weeklies, the music stores in your area, radio stations and local A.F. of M., SOCAN office and similar industry associations, which always have information on contests and events which are open to musicians.

Join your local music association (there is a complete listing of music-related associations across Canada in the *Music Directory Canada*). Most have a regular newsletter (like SOCAN's *Words & Music* or the Pacific Music Industry Association's *Pacific News*) that gives detailed information on local happenings. As well as keeping up-to-date, you'll gain a whole network of friends with similar interests and

help support the promotion and development of music-related activities in your area.

SOCAN's Quebec office is located at 600 Maisonneuve W., #500, Montreal, PQ H3A 3J2 (514) 844-8377, FAX (514) 849-8446; and your local A.F. of M. office is the Quebec Musician's Guild (Local 406), 1000 St. Antoine St. W., #615, Montreal, PQ H3C 3R7 (514) 876-1100, FAX (514) 876-1106. Good Luck!

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A wide range gain (60dB max) for optimum signal to noise ratio. The input signal phase can be simply inverted, & a flip switch swaps the main & secondary inputs around (no re-patching required). The bus switch places the signal from the associated group on to the channel direct output. +48v is selectable individually on each mic input when using condenser microphones or DI boxes.

ATTENTION GRABBING MAIN EQUALISER

From a Soundtracs console you can expect an EQ section that puts you in total control of the sound & Topaz does not disappoint.

Two sweepable mid range frequencies, (50Hz to 1kHz & 350Hz to 8kHz) put you right in the bubble & overlap well with the high (12kHz), & low (80Hz) filters. - All +5dB.

EQ defeat button removes the equaliser from the main channel.

VERSATILE SECONDARY EQUALISER

High & low shelving filters operating at 12kHz & 80Hz respectively. 15dB of boost or cut provide effective & functional reshaping - sufficient to sweeten or enhance any line level signal.

6 SWITCHABLE AUX SENDS

The 6 pre or post fade auxiliary sends can be split in almost any way. Both inputs have one dedicated pre-fade auxiliary each & can also access any of the remaining 4 (post fade).

THE SECONDARY INPUT STAGE

The secondary input has controls for pan, level, illuminated solo & mute in conjunction with a dedicated equaliser & access to the auxiliary sends. In addition, all secondary inputs may be fed to a stereo bus (monitor mix), separate from the main bus, allowing you to create a totally independent stereo mix. - It's like having two mixers in one.

ROUTING & CHANNEL CONTROLS

You can route the main channel signal to any of the eight audio groups via the channel pan & / or direct to the main LR outputs using the 100mm long-throw fader, illuminated channel solo & channel mute.

A dedicated multitrack recording console must provide the following: Superb audio performance, exceptional equalisation, versatile monitoring, comprehensive patching and 1st class ergonomics.

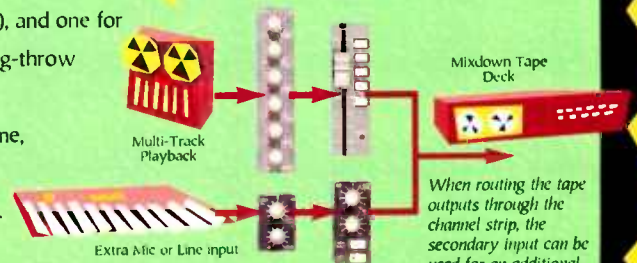
- All are in abundance in the stunning new Topaz Project Studio Console from Soundtracs. Unlike other 'budget mixers' Topaz is a dedicated multitrack console with the tools to make recording smooth and hassle free.

The dual input design means you have two independent inputs on each input channel strip. One for tape tracks or line sources, (with rotary fader), and one for mic or line sources, (on long-throw fader). These can be easily swapped around at any time, particularly for the mix-down, without re-patching.

Add independent EQ sections for both inputs, 6 auxiliary sends accessible between both inputs, 8 groups with separate outputs as well as a send facility to the output of every channel, a comprehensive Master Module, the choice of 24 or 32 inputs with up to 72 inputs at mix-down, the ability to handle up to a 32-track tape recorder without re-patching and you have a console that is set to do more than just become the class leader.

It completely re-defines the term "budget".

DOUBLE INPUTS DURING MIXDOWN



TOPAZ

PROJECT STUDIO CONSOLE

HOW TO WORK A

ALMOST EVERY INDUSTRY HAS ITS OWN SERIES OF TRADE SHOWS AND THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IS NO DIFFERENT. EVERY YEAR, THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF TRADE SHOWS, CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS HELD AROUND THE WORLD THAT FOCUS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS. KNOWING HOW TO MAKE THESE EVENTS WORK FOR YOU CAN GIVE YOU AN EDGE IN THIS VERY COMPETITIVE INDUSTRY. . .



DO YOUR RESEARCH

It's not enough to forward a cheque for your registration fee and show up for the first panel. Making the most of any conference requires some planning and research. Many shows focus on specific aspects of the business of entertainment, and if you are going to be spending hundreds of dollars, the information and contacts you make should be useful to *your* occupation.

Get the conference package and materials as early as possible. Frequently, early-booking discounts are available and you can save between 20-50% by being organized. Also, conference organizers negotiate discounts for delegates with specific airlines, hotels and rental car agencies, and this information is included in the brochure package. Any money you can save on the upfront costs of attending a show is money that you can direct back into your company (or to the hotel bar). Develop a strategy to make as many *quality* contacts as possible. Get the most bang for your conference buck.

Most conference brochures list the panels that will be discussed, panel participants, who will be giving the keynote address, what outside activities are planned and who has attended in the past. Many panels will be of little use to your area of interest but others will provide opportunities to meet legendary managers, musicians, journalists, A&R directors, publishers, etc. who offer brilliant and amusing insights into the real-world workings of the biz.

Many industry associations plan membership meetings to coincide with conferences. These meetings are not always listed in the conference materials, so a quick call to the appropriate associations (SOCAN, International Manager's Forum, Black Music Association Canada, etc.) could provide you with the necessary details of their membership events.

PLAN AHEAD

Everyone has gone on vacation or a business trip, and at some point in their lives, they've forgotten a toothbrush or comb. No problem ... every big city has a convenience store or pharmacy where you can pick up these essentials cheaply. Ever notice an all-night print shop that offers *professional* business cards at reasonable rates with a 12-hour turnaround guarantee? I thought not. Make sure you have sufficient supplies of all your promotional materials — business cards, band bios, demo tapes, resumes, etc. — and pack them for the conference. If, by chance, you run out of product or (gasp) lose it en route, get the business cards of those you intended to give materials and mail out packages as soon as you get back to your office.

Invest in a business card holder prior to your first conference. You'll collect many business cards at each conference you attend and they're easily lost — just another small piece of paper to toss. You may as well organize your business card collection from the start so you can find these people easily months down the road. A good habit to develop is writing notes on the back of business cards to help trigger

your memory about initial conversations you've had with each person (where you met them, what services they provide, who they work with). Personalize your contacts with your colleagues; you'll get better call-back results.

If it is at all financially feasible, reserve a room at the conference centre hotel. Most delegates, even those who live in-town, stay at the hotel for the duration of the conference. Non-panel schmoozing activities occur after seminars and show-cases, and you'll want to be centrally located to hear about them. Agency parties, record label meet-and-greets and concert promoter schmoozes are generally held in company hotel suites and location information is frequently passed out in lounges, hallways and after the seminars. Also, by staying in the hotel, you'll run into other delegates more frequently, giving you an extra opportunity to speak with them. On a more practical note, it is always better to have a convenient location to store your materials than in a car parked in an over-priced parking lot eight blocks from the conference centre — and who wants to weave their way home at 4:00 am after 18 hours of conferencing and schmoozing?

Imagine Getting Slammed In The Chest With A Sledgehammer.



Now that you know what kind of low end these amps have, let's talk about why. Crown amplifiers are engineered with a damping factor in excess of 1000 (10 Hz to 200 Hz) while most amps are lucky to manage 50 to 100 over the same frequency range. The result of this high damping factor is incredible speaker control for some of the tightest, bone-rattling bass you've ever felt.

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The 8 main channels are 'normalised' and routable through the L/R bus via L/R-direct channel switching for sub-grouping of channels and /or for routing through the dual full parametric EQ's available at the L/R bus.

Ten additional stereo inputs, 4 with EQ, allow for a variety of line inputs, effects returns etc . . . to be connected. Both RCA and 1/4 inch (pro) inputs have been provided on the 4 equalised stereo inputs, (2 with RIAA) and are switchable from the front panel allowing you to easily select between line sources at the 1/4 pro inputs and Hi Fi sources such as CD's, tape, turntables, etc . . . at the RCA inputs.

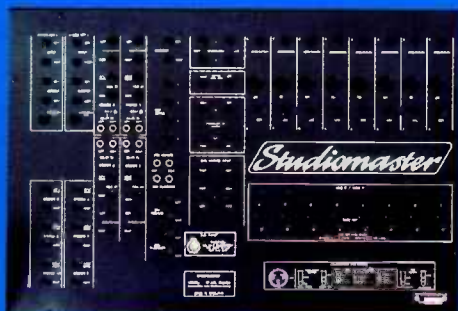
Additional features and specifications include inserts, channel mutes, input swap switching, dual 2 track tape facility, overall bus mutes for tape and stereo line inputs, PFL/ solo in place, a loudness button for the head-phone bus and more . . . Dual half/rack ports add to the overall flexibility of the STAR SYSTEM allowing for the insertion of exclusive STAR SYSTEM audio processors including a stereo compressor, stereo gate, parametric EQ, digital reverb and digital delay.



The STAR SYSTEMS' comprehensive facilities and incredible audio specifications are typically found on consoles costing considerably more and make it an ideal choice for digital multi-track recording, keyboards, sound reinforcement and broadcast. Compare for yourself!

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ARRIVE PREPARED

You've done all the necessary research and pre-planning for the conference. You know before you get to the hotel who you are likely to run into, who you want to speak to, what you should be talking to them about and what panels you are intending to sit in on. Time to hit the conference circuit . . .

Make sure you bring pens, a pad of paper and, if possible, a tape recorder to each of the panels. The information you get from these discussions is invaluable to planning your business moves, and having it on record for future reference can save you a lot of time and errors in judgement. Write down any thoughts or questions that come to mind during the panel. Usually, a question-and-answer session follows the panel discussion. Don't hesitate to approach members of the panel with a further question. Most are more than willing to give you a few moments of their time, and it's an excellent opportunity to exchange business cards.

Take some time to attend the exhibition halls at conferences. Hundreds of different companies directly or indirectly involved in the industry set up display booths and offer demonstrations, product information and discounts on goods or services. You will also meet some people who make the big decisions in these companies. You could walk away with a feature story for your band in a national publication or a sponsorship opportunity with a pro audio company. At the very least, you've broadened your base of contacts in the music business and picked up a few free samples and stickers.

This is the music industry. What conference would be complete without musical entertainment? Band showcases give you the opportunity to meet industry insiders in a more social setting. Record company personnel, managers, publicists, agents and journalists congregate at the clubs featuring the buzz bands. Wouldn't it be advisable to be there yourself? Buy the A&R rep a drink (or two) and you could have a friend for life . . .

BREAKS

... A thrilling ride in a Cessna 172 was only the beginning for **Sharon Champagne** of Belwood, ON, winner of *Canadian Musician's* "Win a Trip for Two to the Junos" contest.

Champagne flew into Toronto Island Airport March 17 to begin a four-day odyssey into the heart of the Canadian music scene. Among her many prizes were two executive passes for Canadian Music Week, where she attended numerous seminars, the Industry Awards Dinner and the Celebrity Rock 'n' Bowl. Her prize also included tickets to the Junos. With formal wear from Toronto's Carson Palmer

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BREAKS



Canadian Musician contest winner, Sharon Champagne ...

Formals, Champagne looked stunning for her first-ever Juno Awards. Champagne and her guest stayed at Toronto's Harbour Castle Westin, their 24th floor room offering an incredible view of the city and Lake Ontario. Also included in her prize package were 25 CDs of her choice from Sam the Record Man, a tour of MuchMusic, membership on the *Canadian Musician* Rock 'n' Bowl team and limousine service for Juno night.

Champagne, a mother of two, attended Montreal's Trebas Institute of Recording Arts and has an extensive background in the music business. During her stay, she had opportunity to meet many influential people who could one day help her realize her dream of becoming a talent promoter.

"I met an enormous number of people," said Champagne of her experience. "It was overwhelming and exhausting, but at the same time, it was exhilarating!"

... **Music West**, runs from May 13-15, 1994 in Vancouver, BC. The annual festival and conference features over 200 performers and is an opportunity for new artists to meet and showcase for talent scouts. This year, there will be a special Country Showcase (produced in cooperation with the B.C. Country Music Association) added to the diverse festival.

As well as numerous conference seminars featuring panelists from all areas of the music business, Music West will have an MI exhibitor area for musicians to check out the latest in new products and technology. The Music Show boasts a larger-than-ever roster of musical instrument exhibitors this year. Planned is a full weekend program of Master Musician clinics featuring artists like drummer Chad Smith of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, who will host the second annual Pearl Players Challenge. Also appearing will be recording artist Thomas Dolby, leading the Music Show's voyage into the realm of future technology.

For more information, contact: Music West, 21 Water St., #306, Vancouver, BC V6B 1A1 (604) 684-9338, FAX (604) 684-9337.

... **Canada's Vintage Guitar Show** will take place June 18-19, 1994 at the Tam Heather Country Club, 730 Military Trail, Scarborough, ON.

Stringed instruments of all types will be displayed, and the show will attract manufacturers, distributors, dealers and collectors who will be buying, selling and trading instruments. Bring an instrument for sale or trade and get a discount on the admission price!

For exhibit information, contact: Tundra Music, PO Box 135, Pickering, ON L1V 2R2 Ph/FAX (905) 420-9582.

... Musicians on the West Coast would be wise to join **Pacific Music Industry Association**. The association is devoted to providing business and educational opportunities for the music industry, and applies to the government for funding of special projects including the Demo Listen Derby, educational seminars and the Pacific Music News newsletter.

Membership is \$30/year and benefits include discounts on many goods and services ranging from music books to audio duplication. You will also receive their Pacific Music News newsletter.

For more information, contact: Pacific Music Industry Association, 400-177 W. 7th Ave., Vancouver, BC V5Y 1L8 (604) 873-1914, FAX (604) 876-4104, e-mail: pmia@ship.net.

... The **Toronto Musician's Association (TMA)** has released the 1994/95 edition of *See The Music*, their live music talent directory. An important tool for anyone planning a special event of any kind, *See The Music* is available free by calling the Toronto Musician's Association at (416) 421-1020.

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... Guitarists using **Fender-Lace Sensors** will be interested to know that there is now an e-mail address for obtaining technical support. Fender-Lace Sensor users can electronically mail their name, return e-mail or home address and technical question or comment directly to the manufacturer, and receive their response from an Actodyne engineer. Most questions received in this fashion can be answered within a few hours.

Actodyne's technical support can be reached via its Global Internet e-mail address: FNDRLCE@AOL.COM

... The 3rd annual *Georgia Strait Guitar Workshop* is being held June 3-5, 1994 at Camp Alexandra, Crescent Beach, BC. A number of guest instructors including Julie Blue, Andreas Schuld, Rueben Gurr and Flip Breskin will be on hand to lead courses in such disciplines as guitar technique, songwriting, vocal training and improvisation. For more information on the workshop, contact Granville Airton at (604) 266-8321 or Barry Truter at (604) 327-7811 after 6:00 p.m.

... Ontario's performing arts showcase and conference, **Ontario Contact '94**, will be held this year at the Ramada Hotel Toronto Downtown and the Ryerson Theatre from October 26-29, 1994.

Performances in theatre, dance, music and mime will be showcased, and workshops and panel discussions are planned to help artists and presenters develop the knowledge and skills needed to plan and present performances for adult and young audiences.

For more information or to register, contact the Ontario Arts Council Touring Office at (800) 387-0058.

photo by Steven Langley



Ladies, David Gogo, Gil Moore (Triumph) and Sil Simone (Tom Cochrane, Lee Aaron) came out to enjoy the music of surrender dorothea, Anhai and Pigfarm. Thanks to everyone who helped make this event a success, and especially to those that braved the unexpected blizzard to share this special day with us.

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Takamine Santa Fe PSF-45C Acoustic

by Marc Cooper

TAKAMINE IS A NAME LONG THOUGHT OF AS ONE THAT STANDS FOR QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE IN ACOUSTIC GUITARS. THEY CONTINUE THAT EXCELLENCE WITH A NEW SERIES OF GUITARS CALLED THE TAKAMINE SANTA FE.

Takamine guitars are hand-built in the Takamine Valley, located in the forest region of central Japan. The climate there is ideal for the aging and drying of woods used in building these guitars. The Santa Fe series was inspired by the American Southwest with its artwork designs reminiscent of the Pueblo Indian culture of New Mexico and Arizona.

There are six different models in the series. They are the PSF-48C Cutaway Acoustic/Electric, the most expensive of the series which has a specially braced and graduated solid spruce top with rosewood back and sides and fingerboard inlays cut from green abalone; the ESF-93 Cutaway Acoustic/Electric, which features a solid cedar top and silky oak back and sides; the PSF-45C (my review below); the ESF-40C Cutaway Acoustic/Electric, which has a mahogany body and features a graphic EQ system with treble, mid and bass controls; the ESF-40 Acoustic/Electric; and the SF-40 Acoustic.

As I stated earlier, the model that I played was the PSF-45C Cutaway Acoustic/Electric. From the moment I took it out of the box, I knew this was going to be a beautiful guitar to look at and a joy to play. It's simply gorgeous!

I don't always gush over an acoustic, but this guitar is very classy and, even before I plugged it in, unplugged it was warm and very easy to play when it came to running my fingers up and down the fretboard.

How many times have you ever gone into a music store and played a guitar that was intonated properly and set up right? Rarely! Even with this guitar pulled out of the box and without a set-up, after tuning it up, the instrument played great.

The action, which they claim to be a "standard action" was very comfortable and intonated excellently. It didn't hurt the fingers whatsoever. The cutaway made it easy to access all 21 frets and the neck wasn't too chunky, so access up and down the fretboard was very good. The cedar top

produced a very open sound and the rosewood back and sides gave it excellent low-end clarity. The mid-sized body was cool and wasn't too big or awkward. Some beautiful features I noticed were the natural turquoise fingerboard inlays which, again, gave it that cool Indian culture feel.

On the PSF-48C and ESF-93 models, the inlay continues right up the fretboard. The black crow rosette around the sound hole is handmade of padauk, ebony and maple, and is hand-inlaid. This feature is present on the PSF-45C and the other two models I just mentioned.

Like I said, this is one classy guitar.

The PSF-45C is fitted with the new Accuracoustic Pickup System that incorporates six individual vibration-sensitive pickups. The Accuracoustic on-board electronics system features active high and low pass filters in addition to a parametric band that can contour any frequency between 100 Hz and 10 kHz, and offers a 16dB cut or boost. It also comes with a pop up volume control and battery check as well as an external battery access, making it very easy to change the battery quickly.

How did it sound when I plugged it in? Kicking! It was gorgeous! It had a real full-bodied sound that was awesome. The combined IC and FET circuitry added very little noise and a great acoustic tone. I thoroughly enjoyed this guitar and found it to rate high. Indeed, this PSF-45C Takamine Santa Fe guitar was hotter than jalapeno and definitely cooler than mountain snow! Highly recommended.

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

Marc Cooper is a guitarist/singer/songwriter with his own band, Coop De Ville. He has written six instructional guitar books, CDs and tapes for M.E.O.W. Inc. As well, Marc conducts workshops for M.E.O.W. and clinics for Vantage Guitars, Digitech and DOD.

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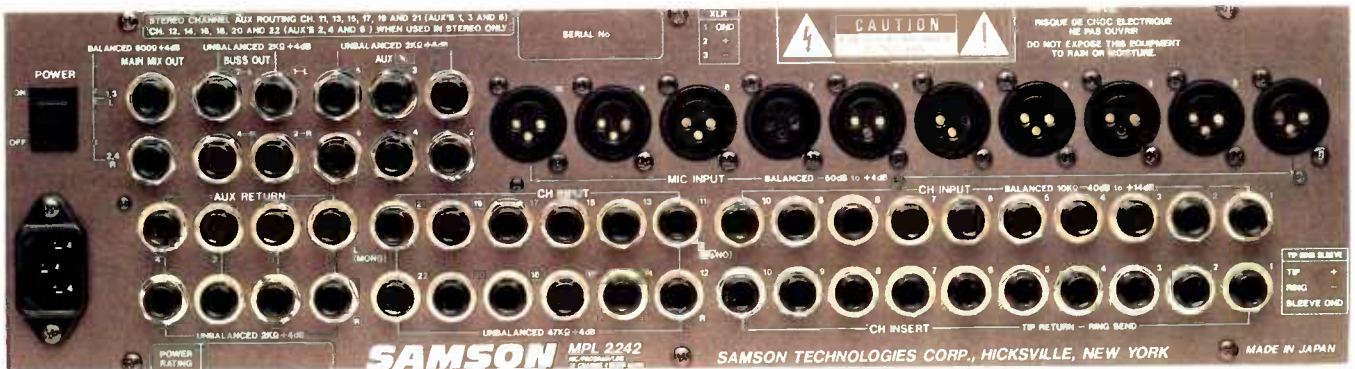
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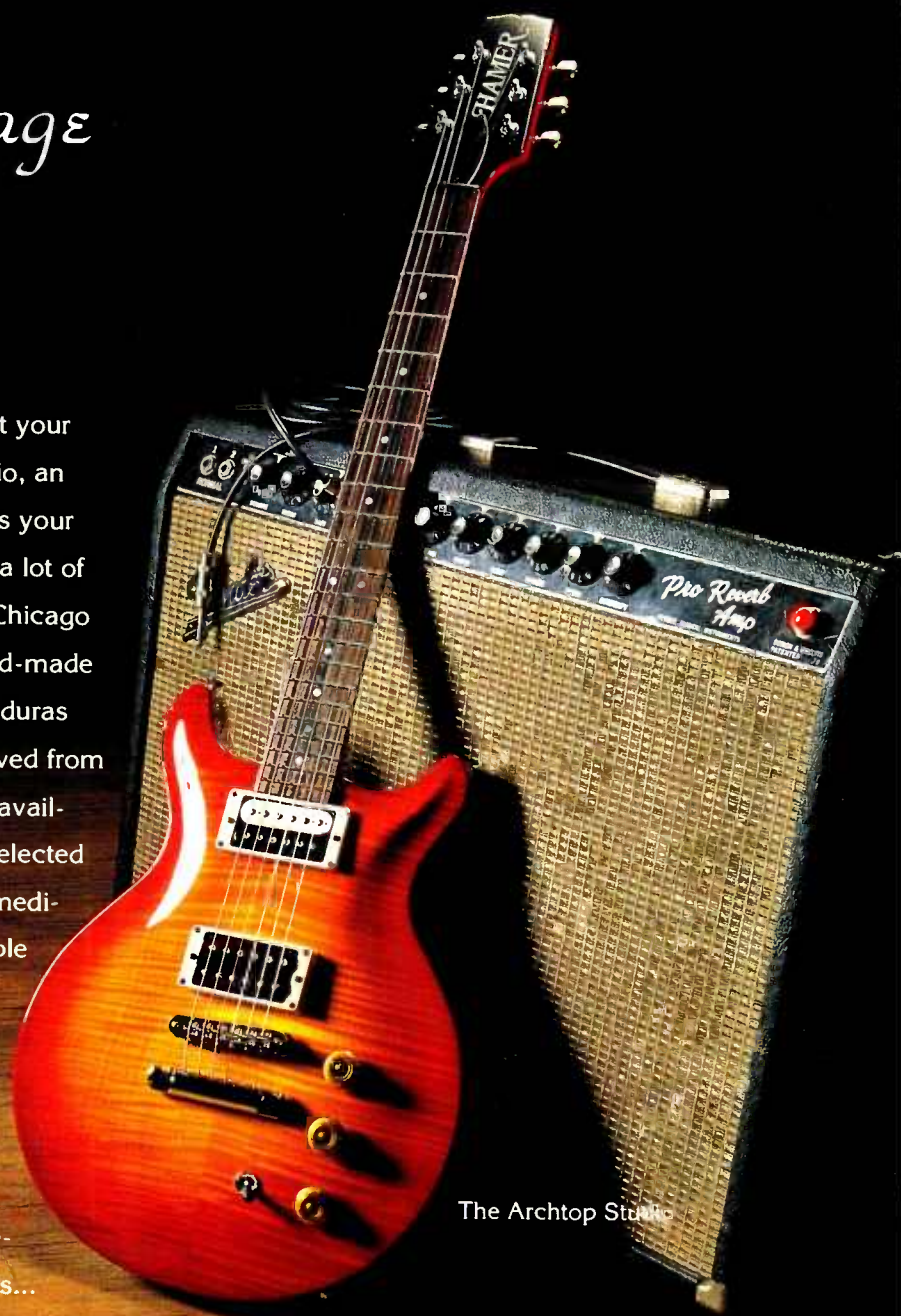
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Paul Reed Smith Custom 22 Electric Guitar

by Peter Horvath

DURING THE FIRST TEN YEARS THAT PAUL REED SMITH SPENT PERFECTING HIS CRAFT OF GUITAR BUILDING, HE ALSO TOOK TIME TO RE-EXAMINE EVERY ASPECT OF GUITAR BUILDING AND REDESIGNED WHAT HE FELT WAS NECESSARY, WHETHER IT WAS A STRAP BUTTON, PICKUP OR SANDING MACHINE. PAUL LOOKED AT THE SCALE LENGTH, FINISH AND SOUND OF HIS UNIQUE DESIGN AND APPLIED HIS OWN RIGOROUS STANDARDS AND CONCEPTS TO IT.

Until April of 1985, Paul Reed Smith manufactured, on average, ten guitars per year. Each of these guitars was handcrafted by Paul and his assistant, John Ingram. They worked for ten years in a 150 square foot workshop in an 18th century building in Annapolis, Maryland. Today, Paul Reed Smith easily produces that number of guitars in a day through his high-tech factory where many of the tools and machines are custom designed and built by Paul and his mentor and co-inventor, Eric Pritchard.

His highly-crafted guitars and basses are sought by professionals and amateurs alike, but they are designed with the professional in mind and this is reflected in the instrument's quality and attention to detail. The PRS guitars that are owned by many of the industry's top musicians (Carlos Santana, Ted Nugent, Alex Lifeson, Buddy Guy and Al DiMeola, among others) are all bought and paid for by the musicians themselves — the best kind of endorsement. When you strap on this guitar, it feels as though it is an extension of you, a neat little package that will scream like a banshee or mellow with the most (and just about everything in between).

What was important to the master builder was to manufacture a guitar that, off the shelf, felt and sounded like a vintage guitar but was firmly rooted in the present.

In this review, we take a look at the PRS Custom 22. The demo model that came to me has a beautifully figured tiger stripe maple top stained in emerald green. The rest of the guitar is painted black for a very nice approach to two-tone colour. The back of the guitar is mahogany, as is the neck.

One of the first things that you notice when you pick up this guitar is the feel of the finish, how it feels unlike any new guitar finish. It feels as though it has had a number of years to dry out. In fact, the paint is baked on to help get that old finish feel (fully dried) and the finish's chemistry is, of course, a highly guarded secret. Paul believes that a finish should interact with a guitar, not hinder its performance in terms of sustain and the tone of the instrument. New finishes tend to act as a damper to the instrument that they are applied to, since it takes a number of years for a finish to fully dry and harden.

There comes a time in each creative person's life, a time when their family decides that it can no longer exist in poverty. With an average of ten guitars being manufactured annually, the financial return was minimal once rent and the assistant's wages were factored in. So, it was decided that Paul either hang up his tools or dive deeper into his craft. In Paul Reed Smith's quest to manufacture the best possible guitar in numbers that allowed a decent living wage, it was obvious that he had to set up a small production line to increase the output. The challenge was to do it without diminishing quality.

Paul enlisted the skills of Eric Pritchard to help design and build guitar manufacturing machinery. He moved his shop out of the 150 square foot space and into a 10,500 square foot unit that is large enough to house all his machinery, storage, paint and drying rooms. One of Paul's own inventions is a sanding machine that gives the edge of the fingerboard a beautifully rounded edge that feels like a well-played, worn-in guitar.

Eric Pritchard, being an electrical engineer and machinist, decided that in the design of machinery for the production line, he would draw heavily from metal working technology, thus enabling very fine tolerances and the concept of the three dimensional copying machine.

A master model guitar body is laid down on one side of the machine and a blank body on the other side. The machine then cuts into the blank body the carved, arched top and all the holes for switches and knobs as well as the neck joint. All cutting and boring is kept to a tolerance of 4/1,000ths of an inch and the arch of the top is kept to a tolerance of 5/10,000ths of an inch. This machine has proven to be crucial to production and can precisely cut 15 to 20 guitars in an eight hour shift. That's a whole lot more guitars than Mr. Smith could produce in a year and with much greater precision and consistency than is available by hand-building methods.

Another of the subtly radical changes made to this modern guitar is the utilization of a 25" scale, which is slightly shorter than a Stratocaster's 25-1/2" scale and slightly longer than a Les Paul's 24-3/4" scale. The shorter scale length guitars offer a darker, beefier tone than a longer scale guitar, which offers a tone that has a lot of character and bite. In the Paul Reed Smith guitar, there are as many similarities as there are differences in tone, string tension and feel between these three instruments. There is an undeniable familiarity with the PRS that is almost uncanny for an off-the-shelf guitar, and that really makes this one a lot of fun to play.

When I picked up this guitar, I thought to myself that the neck on the guitar was so fat that I was just going to hate it. You see, I have an affinity for slender to very thin necks. I find that the fatter guitar necks get in the way of themselves and basically slow down the whole process of playing (check out an older Explorer for instance). As it turns out, the neck on this guitar felt extremely comfortable even though it was a handful. Why does it feel so good? Well, another interesting aspect of PRS necks is their edge. The edge of the neck has been sanded by one of Mr. Smith's gloriously inventive machines so that there is no sharp edge or frets hanging out the side to catch yourself on. Consequently, the neck has a worn-in feel to it and adds to the vintage, off-the-shelf idea of this guitar.

It doesn't stop there. Also included in the redesign of the guitar at large is the lowly strap button; the new design makes it difficult for the guitar to fall off the strap, especially when jumping manically about the stage. The new button is nearly the size of a quarter, so it may be difficult to get a strap on, but it is equally difficult for it to

slip off.

Tuning machines weren't spared the French curves either. They were redesigned so that a broken string could be replaced in moments and settle into tune in the shortest time possible. Gone are the days of multiple wraps around the sting post that slip the string out of tune because it isn't properly wrapped around the tuner.

Plugging the Paul Reed Smith into an amp was definitely an ear-opening experience. I couldn't figure out how a five-position switch was utilized by a two pickup guitar but, of course, these aren't regular pickups. Although they look like your standard humbucking pickup, they are different. The PRS people have found a way to not just recreate vintage pickup sounds, but create a whole new sound with their different models — there are ten to choose from.

The Custom 22 test guitar has a Dragon bass and Dragon treble pickup. Each coil of the pickup is used for various tones, whether they are used as single coil or humbucking. With different configurations

I would be sceptical of its overall playability and sound, but after just a few minutes with the Custom 22, I was turned into another convert of the PRS way.

chosen by the five-position rotary switch, a wide variety of sounds are available. Personally, I would like to see a switch that offers more than five configurations, since some of my favourite ones are unavailable here — like two humbuckers together. Some of the options available are single coils in series, single coils in parallel, the two outside coils and either of the full humbuckers alone. Still, this provides for a wide variety of tones.

The Custom 22 that was shipped to me came with a stop tailpiece, not the tremolo unit that most of his guitars are made with. This stop tailpiece is a non-adjustable type. This means that fine adjustments of intonation are not available. I find it hard to believe that all intonation problems can be solved with a bridge that can be compensated only as whole. I'm sure that there are one or two gauges of strings that would work ideally for this bridge, but the intonation of a string changes as it ages (I keep mine on for a month at a time), making the process of keeping precisely tuned a burden. At the least, this bridge is a comfortable place to keep your hand and allows much subtlety in string muting techniques.

The shape of the guitar is consistent throughout the whole line of PRS guitars, whether it be one of the bolt-on neck models or the outrageously priced, built-to-order Dragon, and is one of the sexiest shapes on the market. Its shape is reminiscent of just about every popular electric guitar built, yet it is a totally original design.

Overall, I was impressed by the quality of the craftsmanship that this guitar has. It is a very playable guitar that sounds great and looks good, too. With this many inno-

ventions on a guitar, I would be sceptical of its overall playability and sound, but after just a few minutes with the Custom 22, I was turned into another convert of the PRS way.

For more information, contact: M.E. Specialties, 29 Ascolda Blvd., Scarborough, ON M1J 2N6 (416) 431-1574, FAX (416) 431-1060.

Peter Horvath owns Liberty Street Recording Studios in Toronto, ON.

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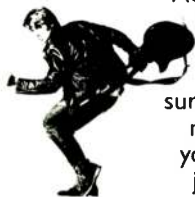
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PRODUCT REPORTS

State Of The Art CF 150 Studio Monitor

by Peter J. Moore

FROM THE OTTAWA LABS OF STATE OF THE ART COMES A NEW "NEAR FIELD" MONITOR, THE CF 150. S.O.T.A. ARE KNOWN AND RESPECTED FOR THEIR LARGE STUDIO MONITORS SUCH AS THE CF 750 AND CF 500 (WHICH I OWN). WITH THE CF 150, THEY HAVE TOSSED THEIR HAT INTO A VERY CROWDED RING FULL OF MANY HIGH-PROFILE CONTENDERS WITH HUGE ADVERTISING BUDGETS. I HAVE LISTENED TO OTHER MANUFACTURERS' ATTEMPTS AT 'SMALL' DESIGN AND HAVE BEEN VERY DISAPPOINTED, SO I WAS SOMEWHAT SCEPTICAL WHEN ASKED TO DO THIS REVIEW.



always been able to deliver. Placement of elements in the sound stage is very accurate, allowing more creative freedom for panning and setting up delay times, something not found on Yamaha NS10s. This attention to a phase-coherent design is a big plus for the CF 150.

On second audition, I had the CF 150s side-by-side with the Genelec 1031As on the meter bridge of the SSL 4056G console. Well, this is where it gets interesting because I had Paul Milner (mix engineer) switch between the two and had trouble telling them apart from a distance. Feeling a little embarrassed, I sat in the listening window and did some serious A/B comparisons (balanced the levels between the two sets of speakers and positioned the tweeters at the same height). Now, I am fond of the Genelecs and trust them for tracking and mixing and was pleasantly surprised at how close the CF 150s were. The Genelecs were only better in the very low end, probably due to the self-powered bi-amp advantage, and had a greater overall punch. The CF 150 upper mid range was only recessed slightly comparatively, much less than I had originally perceived. The middle to low bass is very smooth and had a gentle roll-off in the very low end. They almost go low enough to do a proper Kick/Bass relationship, but if you have the option to go upstairs (large main monitors), I would do it.

In conclusion, I feel the CF 150 offers one of the best values in a near field monitor in the \$1,500 and under category (less than half the price of the Genelecs, but they are self-powered). If you have a home studio or find yourself working in many different studios, you'd be well advised to check out these near fields.

For more information, contact: Adcom Electronics Ltd., 310 Judson St., #1, Toronto, ON M8Z 5T6 (416) 251-3355, FAX (416) 251-3977.

Peter Moore is a Toronto-based producer and mastering engineer who heads MBI Productions. He is well-known for his work with the Cowboy Junkies, Wild Strawberries and numerous other recording acts.

CM

The beautiful setting for the listening test was at Le Studio Morin Heights where I'm currently producing the Terez Montcalm album for BMG. Here I have my pair of self-powered Genelec 1031As, which I always take with me for outside projects, along with the studio's NS10Ms, Quested 412MkIIIs, Acoustic Research AR18s, JBLs and Auratones. When the CF 150s arrived, they definitely had the S.O.T.A. look — flat black finish and chamfered corners. They are a passive crossover two-way, consisting of a 1" metal dome tweeter with phase correction plug and an 8" woofer housed in a forward vented cabinet measuring 17" H x 10" W x 14.5" D, exactly twice the depth of an NS10M (so be careful when you put them on the meter bridge).

On first audition, I set them up on stands in a mid-field position and found them to be fairly efficient, producing a convincing bass response while maintaining their spectral balance at almost all listening levels. In playing back some of my own work, they seemed to lack some upper mid-range but I wasn't sure if that was the single malt scotch or listening fatigue. What I found pleasing is that they keep with the S.O.T.A. tradition of amazing stereo imaging, a quality that the designer, Claude Fortier (the CF in CF 150), has

SOME TIME AGO, HUGHES & KETTNER INTRODUCED A GREAT IDEA FOR A COMPACT, AUTHENTIC TUBE PREAMP THAT WAS THE SIZE OF A VIDEO CASSETTE CALLED THE TUBEMAN. IT WAS FEATURED A YEAR AND A HALF AGO IN *CANADIAN MUSICIAN*. IN CONTINUING WITH THEIR DESIGN, H&K HAVE NOW INTRODUCED THE TUBEMAN PLUS, A STANDARD 19" RACKMOUNTED VERSION OF ITS PREDECESSOR, BUT WITH EXPANDED FEATURES THAT ARE GEARED TOWARDS LIVE PERFORMANCES AND BETTER CONTROL IN THE STUDIO.

by Marc Cooper

First off, the Tubeman Plus acts as a tube preamp (there are two tubes in this unit), tube recording amp and as a tube AMP-EXPANDER preamp. There are three different channels that give you four options: Clean; Crunch; Lead 1; and with the flick of a button, Lead 2. Along with these options, they include a separate master volume knob for the clean channel, a separate master volume knob for the crunch channel and a separate master volume knob for your lead channel. This is excellent for having total control over different volume settings; so if you want to switch from a crunchy rhythm at one volume to a screaming lead at max, it can be done instantaneously by stepping on the separate stageboard that is included with the Tubeman Plus.

Also on the front panel is included a gain knob for the clean/crunch channels and a lead gain knob for the lead channels.

There are four bands of EQ: active bass, passive mid and treble and an active presence control. There is also a mid boost switch that you can easily access on the front.

Though the unit I tried didn't have any MIDI implementation, H&K does mention that an optional MSMI MIDI module is available and it takes just a few minutes to install in the rear panel (you don't have to solder anything together). There is a MIDI learn button located on the front panel. Once the MIDI module has been installed, this button is used to save your current sound setting.

Beside the spot where you can install the MIDI module on the rear panel, you have a five DIN-pin plug for where you connect the cable for the stageboard, along

Hughes & Kettner Tubeman Plus



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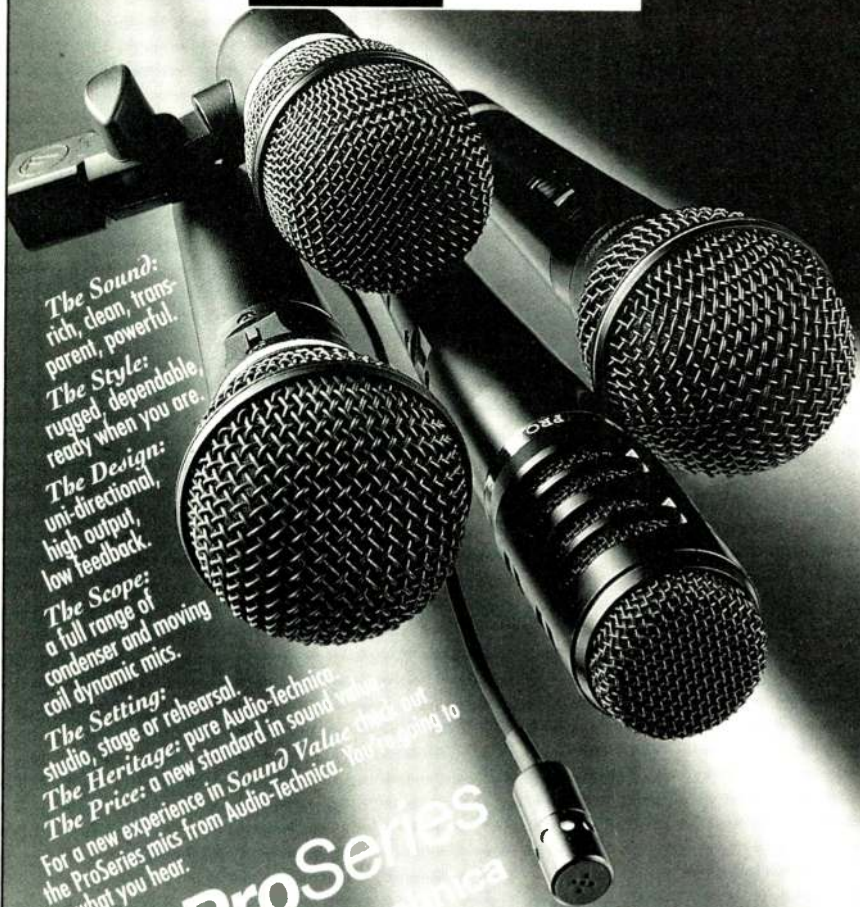
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The Tubeman Plus is equipped with an external AC adaptor that I didn't really like because it kept falling out of my power distribution rack that I plug all of my rack effects into. A separate AC cable that you could plug in or out from the back of the Tubeman Plus would have been a better choice in my opinion.

I tried the Tubeman Plus as a preamp on its own and it kicked! The clean sounds were glassy and the crunch sound had a great blues edge to it. The lead sound was wailing and definitely had a British slant to it. Switching to the Lead 2 mode gave me more bottom end and compression and some increase in sustain, though I preferred the Lead 1 channel. While engaging in the Crunch channel, I noticed it was very dynamic. I could very easily control the overdrive with my guitar's volume pot.

Where I loved this unit the most was in the Amp Expander mode. Placed in front of my guitar rig, the Tubeman Plus really added a hot dimension. I didn't think that was possible, because I already love my set up; but it gave me some easy access onstage to add or delete anything I wanted to preamp-wise. The added tube crunch or searing lead juiced up my sound and added some more rich harmonic overtones.

Another bonus is on the stageboard. It lights red when you have selected the lead channel or the clean/crunch channel. It's very easy to see (on the front panel, the lead channel is indicated by a red LED; the crunch channel is indicated by a yellow LED; and the bypass is indicated by a green LED).

Overall, I found the Tubeman Plus to be an excellent, well thought out piece of gear that could definitely be added to any guitarist's arsenal as a very useful tool.

Highly recommended.

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

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SCALE CONNEC

Scale,
Chord &
Arpeggio
Vocabulary



In my last column, I talked about the value of technique and that speed is a by-product of accuracy. In this month's column, I want to address some other issues that I feel are essential for any budding guitarist to investigate.

I can't stress enough how important it is to be able to know the language of music, to be comfortable with your guitar, to be able to walk around the fingerboard and not stumble your way through (etc., etc. . . you get the picture). At the risk of sounding a little cosmic, I want to state that a good goal could be to become one with your guitar.

I started teaching full-time in 1987 and since that time, through classes, clinics, private lessons, through my *Guitar Vocabulary* guitar books, I've talked to thousands of students all over the world. I've seen more than one student come to me, go and whip off their latest Van Halen two-handed tapped riff, but then couldn't play through a basic 12-bar blues.

I've watched players try to emulate Vinnie Moore, Yngwie Malmsteen or Al Di Meola with speed licks, but do not know what a minor scale or harmonic minor scale is (or, for that matter, what a minor progression is).

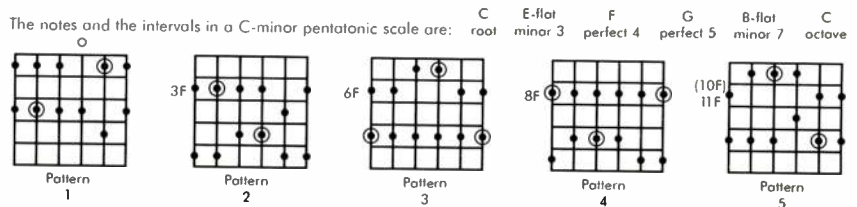
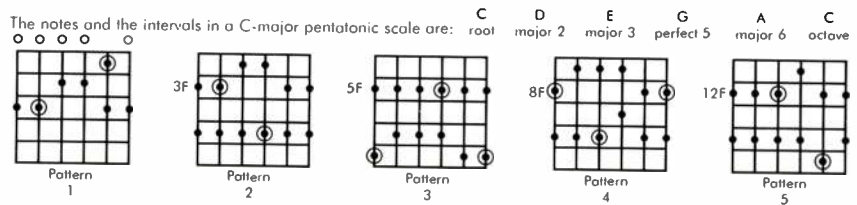
I've been frustrated in the past with guitar books that showed you how to play like your latest hero but didn't spend time giving you the material to allow you to develop your own vocabulary. Let me state that I think learning from others (their licks, their approach, etc.) is important, but ultimately, developing your own "voice" is what it will take to set you apart.

Several years ago, I started writing down my material in hopes of putting together some books to help guitarists learn the language. In 1991, M.E.O.W. Inc. (Music Education Workshop) was formed and the *Guitar Vocabulary* series was born.

My intention was to supply guitarists with the language so that they could start to create and develop their own voice. *I believe it's up to you to supply the motivation.* You can't depend on anyone else but yourself for your musical growth.

In my next few columns, I want to deal with three areas that will help you learn the language of music and start you on the road to knowing your fretboard. Let's start with scales. I'm going to use Pentatonic scales as examples (you can apply these ideas to literally every other scale).

First off, a pentatonic scale is a five-note scale and a very common scale choice used in most styles of music. I'll use C-major pentatonic and C-minor pentatonic for the examples.



If you're unfamiliar with what an interval is, I recommend Barbera Wharram's *Elementary Rudiments of Music*. When it comes to finding these scales on the fretboard, there are five distinct patterns that exist. Most guitarists are familiar with pattern three of the major pentatonic scale and pattern four of the minor pentatonic scale. By learning all five patterns, you will find yourself playing these scales all the way up (or down) the neck for 12 frets. Then the patterns start again.

This can help familiarize you with the fretboard and also develops new licks out of patterns you might not have previously played. Each pattern connects with the next one. Knowing this helps when you have to transpose to other keys.

The black dots on the guitar neck diagrams indicate the root notes of the scale. You might ask why each pattern doesn't start with the root. If you started each pat-

tern with the root, you would be limiting yourself to mostly one-octave patterns that would exist on only a few strings, the exception being patterns three and four. Also, when it comes to improvising, you may not want to start on the root but some other interval so each pattern shows where all the notes exist (for that scale) in that pattern area.

Transposing these patterns is easy. Just locate the new root notes that you want to move to and shift the same pattern to where

the new root notes are located. If you don't know the names of the notes on the fretboard, I suggest you learn that first.

By learning these five patterns of pentatonic scales, this will unlock other common mysteries, namely corresponding chord and arpeggio patterns that you can play with based on these five finger patterns. This will work for almost any chord type, arpeggio type and scale type. In my next column, we'll look at the chord connection.

Hamilton, ON-based Marc Cooper fronts Coop De Ville and has authored several guitar instructional books and tapes for M.E.O.W. Inc. As well, Marc conducts workshops for M.E.O.W. and clinics for Vantage guitars, and is an international clinician for DOD and DigiTech products. Marc was the first place winner of this year's Hot Guitarist competition held at the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) convention in Anaheim, CA.

CM

In A Sentimental MOOG



The Analog Anonymous crowd hushes as you step to the podium. "I... I am here because, well, because I play a Moog synthesizer."

An eruption of applause, some tears and a whole lot of group hugging suddenly occurs. "However," you continue, "I don't play it because I'm a retro kind of guy and dig its sounds; I play it and have done so for years because I love its *feel*."

The crowd falls threateningly silent, some actually grumble. You try and explain your actions but they want nothing short of your head.

"Feel?!" they shout. "My Casio VL-tone with the calculator had more feel! Off with his head!"

This is *mostly* a fictitious story. I say mostly because the antiquated analog synth has long been the bane and/or laughing stock of the keyboard community. This month's column will try to expound the beauty and virtues of the ol' analogger beyond the mere sounds that the beast makes.

But First, The Facts

The analog synth, particularly the Moog, has undergone a renaissance of late, thanks to the techno-retro bloom of the late '80s/early '90s. Synth lines were finally allowed to expand beyond the Bon Jovi string patch that dominated the early to mid-'80s. A good example of this rejuvenated synth styling is the 1991 debut disc by the Brand New Heavies on the Delicious Vinyl label.

This renaissance is a mixed blessing, however. While it's nice to see the analog synth receiving a resurgence in popularity, it ain't so nice to watch the synths (or their parts) go up in price. Also, the shtick-factor has grown so that, for some, the synth's presence on stage or in the liner notes is more important than its sounds. These people are missing out on the vast potential for sonic exploration hidden within these synths as well as an elusive spirituality that can sometimes exist between a player and his analog board. These potentials can only be tapped by utilizing the following three facets exclusive to analog synths.

CONTROL

While lacking an actual touch sensitivity,

analog synths offer quite a lot in terms of user control. All the knobs and dials are up front and easily accessible, allowing for immediate tailoring by the player. As a result, the synth becomes an expressive instrument, much like the clarinet or the trumpet. Attack, tone, pitch and depth of texture can all be instantly altered to suit the proper expression required. While modern synths may copy actual synth sounds well, the control offered for user manipulation is nil. This is due to the packaging of all parameters within the confines of two buttons and a slider, as well as to the phasing out of the non-spring loaded pitch wheel. Listen to George Duke's synth solo on Frank Zappa's "Inca Roads" (off 1974's *One Size Fits All*) for a good example of strong synth control and its expanded musical boundaries.

TIMBRE

Digital synths and samplers can copy an analog synth, but imperfectly. That is, they can recreate what is happening at any one microsecond in the generation of a sound; however, they can't reproduce the quirks and eccentricities that make up the body of all analog synths. What you get with a sampled sound is the personality present *within the sampling time*. The analog synth is a much more complex character than that. Check out Richard Wright's ARP solo in Pink Floyd's "Dogs" (off *Animals*, 1977) for a good example of the complexities possible within an analog tone. Digital imitations of analog merely sound like imitations, because analog sets out not to approximate another sound, but to create one entirely new and different.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

The evolution of the physical design of the synthesizer parallels that of the American automobile — big and clunky, impervious to most external threats, sleek, smooth and smart interior with sleek, smooth and wimpy exterior.

Example one: I once borrowed a friend's keyboard (which shall remain nameless, but whose initials are MI) and had the misfortune to pack it the wrong way in its sleeping bag case. The result? A sorry, scratched

mess. Since it went from my car to my house, the damage wasn't from road wear but rather from the chintzy exterior gloss that scratched off easier than a bad iron-on.

Example two: Before building a case for it, I dropped my Moog Prodigy on a Kingston sidewalk, catching it on the rebound. The exterior damage was next to nothing and the interior damage was less than that!

Apart from saving one's clumsy butt before a gig, the analog synth's armour allows the player expanded freedom of expression. That is, it allows one the option of opening up and letting 'er rip! While it's still only responding to your commands, the intensity generated from a broadened range of expression seems to transcend the barrier between player and instrument, melding your lifeblood with its machinery. Besides, who can resist the real wood side panels?

However, if you're playing the ol' job at the Airport Ramada, such a synergy is probably not required. Obviously, today's digital crop suit the purpose of efficient and economic sound recreation better. As its own instrument with its own sound, however, the analog synth wasn't and isn't given a fair shake. Most people prefer to remember the analog synth for its prog-rock French horn sounds and stratospheric string lines a la "Come Sail Away", rather than for the originality it could have brought as its own instrument. Hopefully, this renaissance of analog sound can help bring about a renaissance of analog purpose — the creation and exploration of new and original synthesizer sounds. Questions? Comments? I'd love to hear 'em.

For neat, original uses of analog synths within a pop/rock context, check out:

George Duke, *Faces In Reflection*, 1974
Pink Floyd, *Dark Side Of The Moon*, 1973
Any Frank Zappa album 1969-1981

In addition to being the keyboardist for Whereman Groove Tube, Jamie Shields has lent his stylings to such groups as Dig Circus, Sheltering Sky and The Hopping Penguins.

GUITAR SYNTHESIS

spōn•tā•nē•ous (spōn-tā'nē-əs)
adj. [LLat. *spontaneus* < Lat. *sponte*, voluntarily.]
1. Occurring without apparent external cause : SELF GENERATED. 2. Impulsive : unpremeditated.
3. Unconstrained and unstudied in behavior.

com•bus•tion (kəm-būs'chən)
n. [ME *combustion* < LLat. *combustio* < Lat. *comburare*, to burn up : *com-* (intensive) + *urere*, to burn.] 1. The process of burning
2. *Chem.* A rapid chemical change, esp. oxidation, that produces heat and light.

spōn•tā•nē•ous com•bus•tion

(spōn-tā'nē-əs kəm-būs'chən)

the explosive reaction that takes place when
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THE ENGRAINING PROCESS



In the five years that I've been teaching bass, I've learned a great deal about many things. Maybe the most important thing I've come to understand is learning itself.

In order to teach something well, you need to have a grasp on what needs to be taught and how it has to be taught. When you're taking up an instrument, you shouldn't be putting information in short term storage to spew out on an exam and be done with (as you probably did in grade 10 calculus). You want to take in knowledge that will be useful to you in a musical way and have it stay with you forever.

But how do you learn things permanently and in a way that things become second nature? When you look at a great musician play, you notice that what they do seems effortless. Are they thinking about technique and theory as they play? The answer is usually no, not much. That's because the knowledge they are using is habitual, second nature, instinctive — or, as I prefer to call it, "engrained".

When you first learn to play, it's an awkward thing. You have to struggle, much less concentrate, just to string a few notes together. It's like learning to drive standard — you've got so many things to think about that you inevitably stall the car. But gradually you accumulate information about what steps you need to follow in order to execute the undertaken task.

All this information is piled into your brain and hopefully, brought to the surface when required. The more it is used in a practical way, the more it is engrained. Successful application is what really makes you *learn* things. If you never use the knowledge, it will never be engrained and likely lost quickly. That's probably the biggest reason for learning *practical* things.

Not everything that is engrained is actively "learned". There are a lot of things

that you do instinctively — partly by chance, partly because of your own personal physical identity. Nobody told you to do them or not to do them, they just happen and they become comfortable after a while. These "things" — **habits** — have been engrained through repetition. Just about anything becomes easy if you do it enough times.

When bass players start taking lessons, their technique is a hodgepodge of good and bad habits. Some of the habits are the result of active learning from books and teachers and videos and *Canadian Musician* magazine, and most of these are hopefully good. Some of the good habits are there by chance. Some of the good habits can even be self-taught, in the case of the brighter people who give some thought to what they're doing. Then, there's the bad habits. They come from anywhere, even professionals, because no one's immune to misinformation. Bad habits, in the case of technique, include anything that hinders the quality or consistency of your tone, wastes energy that would otherwise contribute to chops and endurance or limits your general facility and agility on the instrument. Yes, there are some habits that are neither 'good' nor 'bad', but these are actually very rare.

The task in learning good technique involves replacing the bad habits with good habits. It's not easy. It can be done if you get the right information about what you should be doing and if you have the will, time and focus to engrain the information through consistently repeated application (practice).

So how is good technique engrained? First of all, your problems have to be diagnosed. This part usually requires a good bass teacher who has a solid understanding of technique. You need to know specifically what your problems are. For example, maybe alternating fingers is incon-

sistent in the right hand — you don't rest your thumb on the E-string against the pick-up when you should and your left hand pinky comes too far off the fingerboard.

Then you need to learn (or figure out yourself) *specific* exercises that develop these particular aspects of technique, one by one, *in isolation*. The more competition your brain has for attention, the less you're going to engrain anything. If you have to train your right hand thumb to move between the top of the pick-up and the E-string position, practice simple exercises that have you playing E, A and D strings. But, if you practice scales off the A string, for example, you're not practising shifting thumb positions because your thumb will (should) always be on the E-string.

By practising specific exercises targeted at your technique problems, you're going to get rid of your bad habits efficiently because you're forcibly engraining good technique. It's really a lot like treating an illness with a correct diagnosis and appropriate treatment. Luckily there are no bass technique diseases without cures! Eventually (hopefully) your technique will encompass only good habits that have been deeply engrained, meaning that not only do you have great technique (and the tone, chops, endurance and musical "sophistication" that comes with it), but also that you can play without having to concentrate at all on what your fingers are doing. If theory, harmony, rhythm and other essential elements in the "bassist brain" are also engrained, you'll be liberated! You'll have all of your conscious thoughts free for feel, groove, emotion, performance and conviction.

Peter Murray is a bass teacher, session musician and producer who plays with the Toronto-based act surrender dorothy.

GROOVE Eaddies



In this issue's column, I have decided to take our good old friend the paradiddle (RLRR LRL), to show you a few examples of how you can play and express this pattern in a variety of tasteful ways. The best way to approach each example is to get comfortable with the sticking pattern on the drum or cymbal they are as-

signed. After that is achieved, add the bass drum.

All of the following examples are in 4/4 time and are played in the sticking manner **RLRR LRL**. They continue to repeat that pattern throughout the bar. Remember to start off slow and most of all, have some fun!

EXAMPLE 1 : For the first example, you may keep time with quarter notes on your hi-hat. Also, you can apply a double bass single stroke sixteen note pattern under the paradiddle.

EXAMPLE 2 : To play this example effectively and groove, play all the notes that are on the snare drum quietly, except for those notes which are accented.

EXAMPLE 3 : This example is known as **TWO SURFACE RIDING**. There are many bass drum patterns that you can apply to this example.

EXAMPLE 4 : This example is a drum fill. The goal, in order to make this example groove, is to focus on playing the accents accurately. You can also keep time with quarter notes on your hi-hat.

EXAMPLE 5 : This pattern is known as a linear displace groove. Concentrate on playing the accents accurately.

Jeff Salem is a studio and live drummer who has played with Saints & Sinners and Coop De Ville. You can catch him at one of his CDM instructional clinics, promoting his Complete Drum Method series being held across Canada.

Questions & Answers

Q A

PART II



In a continuation of my February *CM* column, I will answer some questions that have often been put to me. I invite readers to send in their own questions, in care of this magazine, to be answered in future instalments.

“What kind of trumpet should I buy?”

I have always said that assuming good working order, the difference between one trumpet and another is smaller than the difference in the chops’ (lips’) response from one day to another.

This leads to a few observations I’ve found that are shared by many players:

1. Many horns feel good in the music store when trying them for the first time.
2. Many of those same horns don’t feel so great two weeks later.
3. No matter how different a horn sounds initially, if you continue to play it, you will sound like you again in short order.

This leads to the conclusion that the choice of a horn should not be made on the basis of 15 minutes playing in a room the size of a closet in the music store.

The best approach is to borrow the horn for a while and take it out on gigs with you. For this, you need a good relationship with your local dealer.

You should respect the valuable service the dealer is providing you with by taking care of the horn and returning it in new condition, so that they are perhaps willing to lend you another.

Professional players can be the bane of the music retailer’s existence since, in their search for the horn that solves all problems (which, of course, doesn’t exist), they may try horns endlessly before parting with the relatively paltry sum for a new instrument.

“What should you look for?”

First, examine the construction. The most obvious thing is the valves. Once oiled up, they should feel silky smooth. Since many manufacturers are making excellent valves these days, there is no reason to accept valves that are substandard, hoping they will break in. Beyond that, look for well-fitted slides and nicely finished solder joints. There are small differences in the way a horn feels in your hands and this might be a consideration for some.

“How does it play?”

There are two factors regarding how it feels and how it sounds. In determining how it feels, I look for evenness throughout all registers first. As you slot a two-octave C scale, do the notes smoothly flow from one to another or do you feel a constantly changing resistance on your chops? In my normal practice routine, I leave a tuner on the stand in front of me all the time so that I develop a feel for which notes tend to be high or low on my horn. Thus, I can compare the pitch of a different horn in the same manner. You must be blowing straight down the centre of notes in order to really hear the pitch of a horn. This is only a rough approximation, as pitch is determined more by your playing than by the tuning slide, but I can find meaningful differences between horns in their intonation.

Another thing to look for is the ‘slotting’ of notes. Some horns tend to lock in the notes more than others.

“How about fast tonguing?”

I always try some double and triple tonguing on a new horn as I find that is a good test for response.

“How about the high register?”

Anyone who visits a brass conference where the instrument manufacturers have their products on display can’t help but notice the room full of trumpet players screaming high notes on one horn after another. The temptation is unavoidable, as we would all like to pick up a horn and have the ability to play never-ending double Cs. Unfortunately, if you can’t do that now on your horn, you won’t be able to do it on another, either.

Now concern yourself with how the horn sounds. The lightweight, thin bell horns which used to be favoured for screaming lead playing have fallen out of favour somewhat these days, with many players preferring horns with more weight on their instruments. This can be seen on heavywall construction, heavy bells, heavy valve caps, heavy mouthpieces (or standard mouthpieces with add-on weights), ribs on the bell or maybe the ultimate: the seven pound Monette custom-made jobs played by Wynton Marsalis and others. The

heavier horns tend to have more body and fullness to the sound, as well as being darker. (Another determining factor in the darkness of the sound is the copper content in the brass. Higher copper content is called gold or red brass and is darker in sound and colour.) Heavier horns tend also to have the ability to play very loud and still maintain the character of the sound without becoming shrill. I play a heavywall Yamaha with a large, gold, brass bell and a Bach heavy gold-brass 43. While these two horns are different, their overall character is similar and they will both work in many situations.

Bore size is a variable with horns. While the majority of players play a medium-large (ML) bore, a player who likes to push a lot of air through may prefer an L bore or a player who wants a small, intimate sound might prefer an M. Some horns start out M at the leadpipe but progress to a large at the bell, to give the resistance of a smaller bore with the bigger sound of a larger bore.

Another aspect of a horn is its ability to project. This is impossible to determine from behind the mouthpiece. For this reason, it is important to have others listen to you from out front, and also to hear other players try the horn while you listen. In fact, hearing other players try a horn tells you more about how it sounds than playing it yourself.

At a time when the playing opportunities for brass players have been sharply diminished, there are more instrument manufacturers making great horns than ever before. I find the pro players to be playing largely Bachs and Yamahas, the latter especially notable for their exceptional consistency from the student range on up, but there are many fine horns out there and you should have no problem driving yourself crazy trying to choose.

Next issue, I will delve into the other half of our equipment: the mouthpiece.

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

Recording Techniques for SAXOPHONE



Here are some techniques and ideas you may find useful for home recording. Many of them will apply to other instruments as well. Whether you do it yourself or record in a studio or at live performances, it's essential that you know how to get your best sound on tape. Don't assume that the engineer will know exactly how to get it for you — you will have to work together.

Microphones

There are a number of different mics that will work well for sax. Condenser mics differ from dynamic mics in that they usually require a battery (or phantom power supplied from the mixer) and have a broader pickup pattern, which makes them less useful onstage because they tend to feed back. They provide a flatter response, meaning that all frequencies are presented more equally, whereas dynamics are often 'coloured' to bring out voice tones.

When recording with a condenser mic, you can 'back off' with it at eye level up to three feet away from your face or 'close mic', keeping it aimed near the bottom of the left hand over the bell as you would performing live. Most of us have discovered not to aim it down the bell as this can do some severe damage when you let go with a low B-flat. Your choice of mic, playing style and recording set-up will determine just where to place it. If you are recording yourself, get a scrap tape to pop in the deck to experiment with. You'll need it later to set the equalization.

The Neumann U87 is the industry standard voice mic and sounds great on sax. If its high price (\$1,000+) is out of range, you might consider a Sennheiser 441. It's a dynamic mic with a flatter response than those designed for live vocal use. Even the Shure SM57 and SM58 can work well, but you'll need to EQ a little (read on). The one I use in my home studio is the AKG C1000S. I like it because of its low price (around \$300), good sound quality and versatility. It brings out all the warm sax tones I can't live without and works well with

voice as well as other instruments (e.g., acoustic guitar and drum overhead). It can also be used live, but don't expect to get a lot back through the monitor.

Compressor

The next link in the recording chain is the compressor. The compressor will bring up the volume on the soft parts and prevent the signal from getting too hot on the loud parts. It also allows you a little freedom of movement so you don't have to be glued in place while doing your takes. I get the best results in my home studio when plugging the mic directly into the compressor and the compressor directly into the deck. If you don't have a compressor, plug the mic directly into the deck. Whenever possible, eliminate any unnecessary circuitry to get the cleanest signal on tape. The track will go through the board to get remixed and this is where you should apply EQ and effects.

The dbx 163X is a nearly foolproof compressor with only a level set and compression slider to worry about. Once the level is adjusted (usually about -10), use your scrap tape to determine where the slider goes. With the sax, around -21 is usually about right. You want just enough so that everything you play gets recorded at a good level without sounding too processed.

Equalizing

Using the direct approach will require that you apply EQ during mixdown. I find that with the right mic, I usually don't need to change anything, but if you are working with overdrive guitars and thick synth patches, you might need a little help to bring the sax out. If you have sweepable mid-range, you can boost 5K for those upper-mid voice tones. If you are using a dynamic mic like a Shure SM57 or SM58, be sure and boost the 300-350 lower mid-range a bit to warm up the tone. These mics drop off in that register, leaving the sax sounding pretty tinny. Use your scrap tape to record your sax alone and experiment.

Reverb

Reverb is lipstick for the saxophone — a different mood, a different shade. What works with one ensemble clashes with another. Of course, too much looks cheap.

Always add reverb post (during mixdown). This way, you get it in stereo and, because of the delicate nature of the overtones, they can get easily obscured if they are recorded on the multi-track. Most processors have a wide selection of presets to choose from. Because of the saxophone's voice-like quality, the hall and vocal plates work very well in many situations. For funkier, more Sanborn-like sound, try the small club settings. You can use way more signal with these to achieve that kind of boxiness that sounds great where you don't want an audible trail.

If you've ever tried to emulate those recordings where the sax is swimming in a huge reverb, you will have discovered by adding that much, it sounds like it's down at the end of the hall. So, how do we keep the horn 'in your face' (upfront) and get that hugeness? Here's the secret: use a large hall setting and set the *pre-delay* parameter to around 250 ms. This allows a quarter of a second of everything you play to go on dry before the effect kicks in. It works beautifully on ballads and gives the horn a truly magnificent sound.

Here's a mixdown technique they use on the big-money recordings that can work well for the home recordist. Say you have an eight bar intro, then in you come. Use the pan controls at about 5 to 1 o'clock on the whole mix so that it is just about mono. When the sax comes in, pan down to full stereo. This is a subtle effect but will give the listener the impression that something magical occurred just as you started playing.

Keep the magic coming!

Paul Wainwright is a freelance alto and soprano sax player living in Victoria, BC. His group, Latin Transfer, is well known for their red hot salsa fusion. He has recorded extensively in Canada and Europe. As well, he records at home with a MIDI 4-track studio.

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CRASH COURSE SURVIVAL FOR SINGERS



In this column, I'd like to speak to young singers who are just starting in the business, doing gigs or thinking about it.

I've been singing and recording for over ten years; throughout that time I've picked up tricks that have helped me, but I believe the best thing you can do for yourself is to study singing with a good voice teacher, learn proper technique and explore your vocal range. Having said that, I'd like to go on to less technical aspects of being a singer.

My first gig was at Joe's Truck Stop on Highway 27 with my band Senseless. We were a weekend cover band and I was by far the "greenest" member, having only sung in front of a mirror. The first night was exciting — it was packed to the rafters, fights broke out, toilets overflowed and we got an encore. The second night I showed up with no voice left. I managed to make it through the night sounding like a Canada goose on a southern flight. That's when I started my campaign to learn how to survive singing in loud bands and preserve my voice.

The first thing I realized was that I had to find my own voice and stop trying to sound like other singers. I wasn't going to be Janis Joplin 'cause there already was one. So I stopped trying to mimic others and started to get in touch with what I did as a singer. I started singing songs in a comfortable key for me, even if it was different from the record, and I chose songs that had an emotional connection for me (even if they weren't popular). I experimented with

different styles, found what I loved and was good at and stuck with it. The voice is the sound of our soul, and it was important for me to discover who I was in terms of singing. I believe everyone can sing because it's a true expression of who we are. If you have a somewhat "strange" voice, don't be

Avoid alcohol. It dehydrates the vocal chords and can make you kinda stupid (so that by the end of the night you're agreeing to a gig in Petawawa for five bucks).

dismayed — it could turn out to be your strongest selling point. One of the best ways of discovering your own voice is to write your own material, then bend and mould it in a way that works for you.

As singers, we often perform under crappy circumstances (you know, no monitors, no soundcheck, loud band, lots of smoke, drunks screaming in your face, you screaming back) and sorry to say it, but this scene will probably repeat itself a million times throughout your career. What our job is, is to adapt to it, survive it, roll with the punches and have some fun.

Here's some tips from my own personal treasure-trove of survival skills:

- ▣ Get lots of sleep. Let your bandmates party the night away, but you go home and rest. Your instrument is your body and if you're tired, you'll hear it.

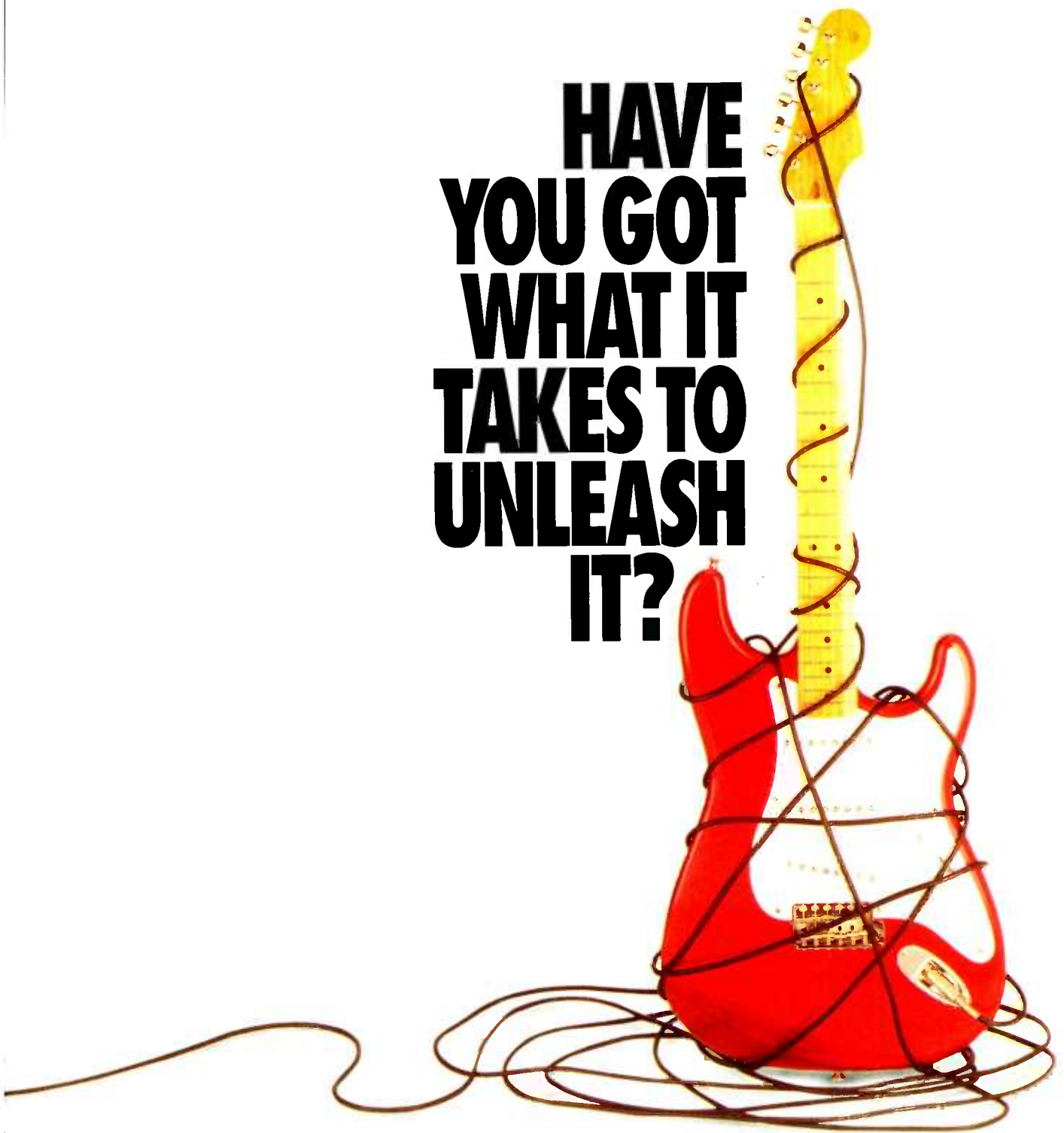
- ▣ Avoid alcohol. It dehydrates the vocal chords and can make you kinda stupid (so that by the end of the night you're agreeing to a gig in Petawawa for five bucks).
- ▣ Get the band to turn down (good luck!) so you can hear yourself in the monitors.
- ▣ Drink lots of water throughout the day and night.
- ▣ Avoid dairy products as they produce lung-slugs and throat barnacles at the most inappropriate times.
- ▣ Do a warm-up before the gig, either with a vocal tape or singing songs with a guitar.
- ▣ Use a humidifier or steam machine in your room when sleeping, or turn the shower on hot for steam.
- ▣ Psyche yourself up mentally before the gig (say to yourself, "They're gonna love me, I'm gonna sing my ass off, this will be the best gig yet").
- ▣ Try the "Master Cleanser" for hoarseness or anything that ails you. Combine a glass of warm water, 1/2 a lemon, 1 tbslp. of maple syrup and as much cayenne pepper as you can stand.
- ▣ Say your prayers, go out, have some fun and kick some ass!

Remember, there will always be another gig, another stage and another chance to do your thing: so if you have a shitty gig (or even a slew of them), don't give up. The key to having a career as a singer is perseverance and commitment. With that in mind, go get 'em!

Lori Yates has long been known as a "sparkplug" on Toronto's Queen St. West club scene. Her new Virgin/EMI release, Breaking Point, is a superb collection of rocking country and bluesy pop tunes. Lori is currently preparing for a cross-country tour.



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by Tim Moshansky

THE WEST COAST AND VANCOUVER, IN PARTICULAR, HAS ALWAYS HELD A CERTAIN FASCINATION FOR PEOPLE ANYWHERE EAST OF THE ROCKIES. AS A BOY GROWING UP ON THE DRY, DUSTY PRAIRIES, VANCOUVER REPRESENTED FREEDOM, PHYSICAL BEAUTY — IN SHORT, PARADISE. NOW, AFTER HAVING LIVED HERE (AND IN VICTORIA) FOR ALL OF MY ADULT LIFE, I HAVE GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO THE FRESHNESS IN THE AIR, THE NURTURING QUALITY OF THE SEA AND THE SAND, AND THE EFFECT THIS ENVIRONMENT HAS HAD ON MY CREATIVITY.

I RECENTLY HAD A CHANCE TO TALK TO SEVERAL PROMINENT WEST COAST MUSICIANS TO GET A SENSE OF WHERE THEY'RE AT IN THEIR CAREERS AND HOW LIVING ON THE COAST HAS AFFECTED THEIR MUSES.



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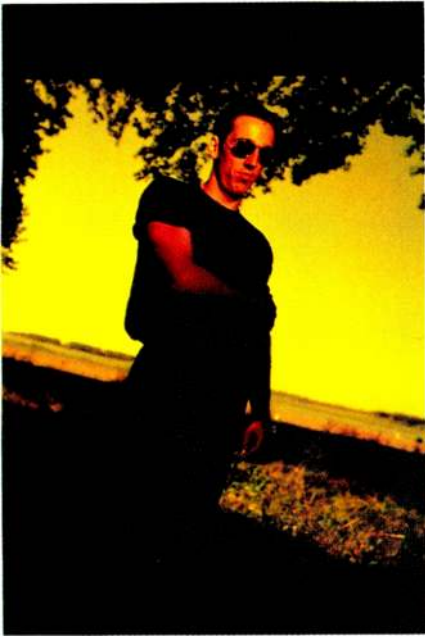
LOREENA McKENNITT



CANADA'S CELTIC MAVEN

by Ian Menzies

To listen to Loreena McKennitt's music is to enter another world. A world of pagans and priests, snake charmers and sufis — hidden treasures at once sensual and sacred. Like no other Canadian artist, she unearths these treasures for all to see. With Celtic harp and clarion voice, she draws us into her medieval web and takes us with her on her journeys of discovery. "When I make a record," she says, "I'm not really interested in compiling eight or ten tracks of just my point of view. I really want to throw spotlights on certain aspects of history or culture or religion that bring about more questions than answers."



Stephen Fearing

The impression I used to have of Stephen Fearing was that he was a "folk" singer and perhaps because of that, I had never really given his music a chance. Then I got a copy of his recent disc, *The Assassin's Apprentice* (True North/Sony), and realized that there was volumes more to this singer/songwriter than I had so narrow-mindedly imagined. The album, with its soothing textures, luxurious poetry and haunting melodies captured my ear at once and brought to mind Peter Gabriel more than what I had imagined folk to be.

"I've never felt really comfortable with the folk music label," Fearing agrees. "I have my own definition of folk music, but I have a hard time with the label myself. I don't like to be lumped into that category merely because I play an acoustic guitar. I don't think of myself as a folk musician. I think of myself as a songwriter who plays an acoustic guitar."

Fearing's finely crafted tunes were recorded in Vancouver at Jim Vallance's Armoury Studio with Steve Berlin (Los Lobos) at the producer's helm. Several guest musicians and singers helped out on the project including Richard Thompson (guitar), Sal Ferraras (percussion), Sarah McLachlan (vocals) and long-time cohort Paul Blaney (bass). Ash Sood (drums and vocals), who seems to be the Manu Katche of Vancouver's recording scene, contributes to the album as well as many other guest appearances.

Fearing describes how his association with McLachlan and her band came about. "I went out of the province opening shows for Sarah," he says, "and I doubt I would have had her and Ash come in if it wasn't for that. Ash and Dave Kershaw love sitting in. It wasn't so much asking them (to be on the album), it was trying to keep them away from my project. (laughs)"

Fearing goes into the studio with his ly-

rics and music pretty well set, records bedtracks and then gets musicians to come in and lay down tracks of vocals, guitar, organ, lap steel, percussion, cello, trombone and other instruments. He is quick to point out the help of Steve Berlin, who gave many good suggestions regarding outside players and preferred to keep good, complete takes rather than chopping everything up. He also credits bassist Paul Blaney, who helped with transcribing and arranging many of the songs.

Lyrics from Fearing's songs are close enough to poetry that they could stand on their own. A lot of this, he explains, has to do with the fact that he lived with a poet for ten years. "I've always been fairly intimidated by the literary world," he says, "but it's only in the last couple of years that I've started to look at my lyrics and think more of them than just lyrics. My lyric writing has changed, too. If you went back to my last record, I think my lyrics are getting a little less dense. I certainly have been criticized in the past for being very wordy. I'm very picky in my lyrics; I love the craft of lyric writing. I love reading other people's lyrics. When there's good lyric writing I can get right off on it. Shawn Colvin's a good lyricist.

"(Lyric writing) is sort of a mixture of sitting there and slogging and then every now and then, something really great comes along. Very much, the technique of writing with me is something I struggle with, like the internal editor business and self-criticism thing is really strong in me. I feel like I want to let go of that a little bit more and 'lighten up' lyrically, not necessarily in the content, but just not packing so much in."

When writing the music for his songs, Fearing says he usually has the majority of the lyrics written before attempting to write because he gets his musical ideas very quickly. "The music comes so fast that it will take a form very quickly, like drying cement," he explains. "And then I have to write lyrics to music which I find really hard to do. I much prefer to have a lot of lyric written."

Fearing uses approximately 30 percent open tunings and the rest, standard tunings on his guitars, including a Manzer "Cowpoke" cutaway six-string built by Linda Manzer and a Guild D25 with a Manzer neck. Often, he drops the low E to D. "It's got a lot to do with that sense of playing solo and wanting to make a very full sound," he says. "I capo a lot in order to accommodate my vocal range and it also allows me to play different sounds without using a lot of bars, so I can get the strings droning."

After three albums, many miles of travel and hundreds of performances, Fearing has stuck it out and created a niche for himself on the Canadian music scene. He offers this advice to those who may be attempting to pursue a career as a singer/songwriter in today's music marketplace: "Try to keep your own thing to yourself as much as you can, as opposed to, 'I need a manager right now,' or 'I need a record deal right now' because the old systems are falling apart now in the

age of digital recording technology. The more independent you can be, the better, because the chances of you coming up with something original and finding a way to get it out there are greater than they used to be. Especially in the folk world, there's a need to be very crafty and creative. If you want to make a living at it, you've got to be cunning, you've got to have your shit together with selling stuff off the stage. You have to work very hard to get a network of little clubs to play in across the country. Now, things have opened up a lot so you have artists like Loreena McKennitt who are able to be so independent. She's an incredible businesswoman.

Fearing hopes to maybe stretch out in the music world and perhaps even give some guitar lessons at some point in time. While creating and performing music are Stephen Fearing's main passions and commitments, he says he wants to have new avenues to release his creativity and emotions. "I want to try and find ways to move out of putting all of my eggs into one basket," he concludes, "and at the same time, rediscover the joy that got me into music in the first place."



Mae Moore

I spoke with Mae Moore at Vancouver's Starfish Room where she and her band were preparing for a show in support of her latest Epic/Sony release, *Bohemia*, an album that has done respectably well at home as well as reaching into the U.S. "AAA" (Adult Alternative Album) radio stations. Originally from the prairies of Manitoba, Moore attended art school in Ottawa before moving to the coast 15 years ago. She agrees that there is something about living on the coast that makes it conducive for creative activity.

"I would say my main growth as a musician has been on the west coast here," she says. "Musicians are by and large very cre-



ative people and I think just the physical environment of the west coast is great that way. It works that way for me and I know it works that way for Sarah (McLachlan). The ocean has this real introspective effect that makes us think.

"We seem to be really content in Vancouver as musicians just to be here," she continues. "Living in Toronto, it's almost like the record companies are always looking over your shoulder. Here, it's like a little microcosm where people kind of leave you alone and you're allowed to develop without commercial influence; and as a result of that freedom, I think bands really blossom. There's a really eclectic music scene here; we've got everybody here from Bryan Adams, Spirit of the West, Pure, Sarah McLachlan. Vancouver's not a very big city compared to Toronto but the amount of music that comes out of here is pretty good."

Moore moved across the pond to Vancouver Island two years ago and found it has helped her creativity. "When I was living in Vancouver, friends were constantly phoning and saying 'Let's go out tonight,'" she explains, "and I found when I moved to Victoria, I really got more involved in my music and more focused. Victoria now has a really strong and supportive artistic community for visual art, written work and dance as well as music."

Listening to *Bohemia*, one can sense a romantic, exotic element that conjures up images of mist-shrouded islands or going for a cappuccino in some arty west coast cafe. Interestingly enough, the album was recorded and partly conceived not on Canada's west coast but in Australia.

"My publishing company wanted me to write with someone," Moore says, "and suggested Steve Kilbey from The Church; and I went down to Australia for a month, just to see if it would work, and it worked out very

well. So, we ended up asking Steven if he would produce." Kilbey, a multi-instrumentalist, played on the album, as did Ash Sood (Sarah McLachlan) and Gordon Downie from the Tragically Hip.

Moore attributes a big part of her sound to her use of open tunings on the acoustic guitar. She has over 20 different open tunings that she uses. During a live show, you'll notice she changes guitars a lot. She cites people such as Michael Hedges, John Martin (from Wales) and even groups such as Pearl Jam that are picking up on the open tuning thing.

"For me, open tunings really have this huge sound," she explains. "I've done shows solo before with an acoustic guitar and if you're just playing in a standard tuning, the notes don't hang as well or they don't create the harmonic feeling that you get when you do play in open tunings. It fills up a lot of space when you play in open tunings. For me, it's more interesting because I can approach the guitar differently each time. You have to create new chords, and for me, that's really challenging and exciting."

Moore uses two Larrivee acoustic guitars on tour, with Fishman pickups that sound "incredible". She is backed by Rick May (Sass Jordan, Larry Coryell) on upright acoustic fretted and fretless bass, and Stephen Nikleva on guitars and effects.

Moore considers herself a fairly prolific writer and says she often just has to guide her ideas as they come gushing through the flood gates. She already has most of the material written for her next album.

She admits that success in the music business in Canada has taken a lot of hard work and also a fair amount of luck. "There's a million musicians across Canada that haven't had the lucky breaks that some of us have had. A lot of times, it comes down to luck. They could be equally talented, but a lot of

times, it's connections or luck or being in the right place at the right time. A lot of musicians let their frustrations eat away at them and they don't remember that the thing that made them happy in the first place was just playing, and it tears them up that they haven't gotten their record deal. I think it's so important to remember what gives you happiness. It's not going to be getting a royalty cheque. That's nice, and I can say that because it's happening to me, but when I write a song, that's what makes me feel really happy."



Spirit of the West

I met up with Spirit of the West guitarist, vocalist and flautist Geoffrey Kelly on a warm Vancouver day in March and we went to a downtown park (complete with rubbies sleeping on nearby benches) to discuss their songwriting and recording approaches for their new album *Faithlift*, as well as the effect of the west coast on their lives and careers.

"Those are great little things," he says, noticing my microcassette recorder. "They improved my songwriting immensely. John (Mann) has one, too. It helps just so you can remember the chord progression of ideas that you come up with. Eventually, we'll get together and go through them all and sort out the good ideas from the bad ones. It's good to start documenting. I keep a little list in the back of my notebook with what each idea is, like a little index, give it a name and where I came up with it. That always attaches a little memory to it; it's easier to put it in context."

CM: Do your ideas for songs come out fairly completely?

"John and I sort of work together now, and we tend to just develop an idea to a certain point and then move on to something else. And where we get together, then we complete the idea. We try and leave room — it's also partly laziness — but we leave room for each other to contribute to the idea. It's very rarely now that I'll write a whole song from top to bottom, just because I know that it's nice to collaborate on making it as good as it can be.

"When it comes time to start actually turning things into songs, we'll get together

usually with two acoustic guitars and rent a little space somewhere and work on them there. We leave a lot of room for the band (including Vince Ditrich on drums, Sandra McRae on bass and vocals and Hugh McMillan on piano, mandolin, Chapman stick and bass). We just bring in a chord progression and the lyrics and then everybody kinda moulds it and shapes it."

Is it a natural progression after six albums to use the studio more and get a slick, heavy duty 'production' sound like on *Faithliff*?

"I think with this record, we really wanted to use the studio. In the past, with the earlier records, we were always conscious about being able to recreate it live. I think we're feeling now that long after the band has finished or we move on to different things, we wanted the record to be everything it could be and not necessarily keep it as stripped down. For some songs that means kind of going for it, production-wise, using lots of background vocals and whatever."

CM: Does that make it more challenging, playing it live?

"It does; it just makes it a different thing. Some bands want to be able to nail the record exactly like it is, but I think we make up for it in other ways. Sometimes people like hearing it stripped back a little bit."

CM: How did producer Michael Phillip Wojewoda help in creating SOTW's 'new' sound on *Faithliff*?

"I think he really brought us together. Unanimously, he pooled our talents and he's one of those people who is really good at bolstering your confidence. He'd also know when he was pushing a little bit too far, as far as ability or your patience. He just has a great sense of when to ease off and when to make you feel really good about what you had just done. He's a musician as well, and that is very helpful. He's been on the other side of the glass. He was very laid back. The whole album had a real lazy feel in making it."

CM: How did the song "God's Apprentice" come about?

"The overall scope of the song is about the abuse of power; and in this case, it's religious power, and I think the incident we're referring to is the Mount Cashel situation with the abuse of the orphans there. We always liked the word 'apprentice', and it seemed very fitting for one of these people who are doing the work of God, at least in their eyes, and abusing it completely. Musically, it's manic and disturbing. We don't really play that song much live; we can't seem to bring ourselves to that point where we were when we recorded it."

Like many of the artists I talked to, Spirit uses open tunings almost exclusively on

Faithliff. "We use open D tuning with capos (DADGAD). Occasionally, we'll tune a couple of strings differently and we just capo up to wherever John's voice is strongest."

"Some of our songs are quite dour, lyrically, as we love juxtaposing a very bright melody against it. That's another one of our favourite approaches. I think it's amazing to look out (while performing) and see people really getting off on the melody. In the end, if they go out and buy the record and listen to the words, they realize what's going on. It's very easy to browbeat people into accepting issues or looking at issues, but if you can do it in that kind of manner, they come to the issue more on their own terms."

CM: Would you say that Vancouver has an identifiable "acoustic" sound?

"I think we do have a scene here with heavier bands, but it hasn't developed as much as it has in Toronto. You have to really look for it. I guess when you think of our main scene, like Sarah McLachlan or 54-40 or Ginger, it's a bit more of a lighter tone. Just looking at artists who have been reasonably successful from here, you couldn't overlook the fact that acoustic music is very much appreciated here. Maybe more so than in the east; and out in the Maritimes and Newfoundland, it's very much appreciated as well."

CM: How do you feel about people calling your music Celtic or folk-rock?

"We don't really want to be pigeon-holed. For a while, we felt that we had a bit of a noose around our necks and that folk was kind of a four-letter word. Celtic is one thing that's so identifiable in what we do, although it's not a really big part of it anymore. It's still there, but I would never put the word Celtic first. There's as much or more electric guitar as there is accordion or flute or whistle on the record. So, if you break it down that way, we're more of a rock band or a pop band than we are a folk band or a Celtic band. Hugh described us once as "heavy folk". I liked that one."

CM: Do your surroundings influence your music?

"Yeah, I think it does. 'Death on the Beach' is very Gulf Island-like and it was partly conceived on Hornby (Island). Over the years, there's certainly been a lot of songs that have drawn from life here. Certainly being on the coast is a factor; knowing that the ocean is there is a great peace of mind. It's a nice feeling to know that you can just jump on a boat or a ferry and get out on the ocean."

Spirit of the West will be spending the majority of the summer jumping on boats, planes and automobiles touring in support of their new album, including a month-long tour of Germany and select dates in Europe and the U.S. Depending on how things go,

they'll probably be back in the studio in January 1995 to record a new album. In the meantime, look for them at a number of Canadian venues throughout the year.



One Horse Blue

Formed in 1978 in Edmonton, Alberta, One Horse Blue is a good example of a band that has stuck to their guns and survived in the music business by applying themselves musically in whatever way they can. The band actually disbanded in 1981, and was then, in 1986, reformed in Vancouver by founding members Rocko Vaugeois (vocals, drums and acoustic guitar) and Michael Shellard (vocals, guitar and harmonica) along with newcomers Gord Maxwell (vocals, bass) and Larry Pink (keyboards).

As well as playing and recording in One Horse Blue, the band members stay busy doing things like engineering and producing other acts, writing songs for publishing deals, session work, soundtrack and jingle work and playing solo acts around town. I managed to squeeze in an interview with Rocko Vaugeois in between sets at North Van's Spirals Cafe, where he has a solo acoustic guitar show every Tuesday when the band's not on the road. During the day, he works in his own and other studios engineering and producing hopeful new acts.

One Horse Blue enjoyed a fair amount of success in the late '70s with songs like "Cry Out for the Sun", "Deliver Me" and "One Horse Blue", but then started to fizzle out due in large part to the upswing of punk and disco and to the rigours and realities of playing in a band. "We sort of got caught in the 'crash of the urban cowboy'," Vaugeois recalls. "We weren't really rock and we weren't really country at the time. We were country rock and it just wasn't working."

The band split up and independently moved out to Vancouver and gained some other musical experiences under their belts before deciding to reform in the late '80s. Vaugeois admits that there is something about Vancouver that attracts so many musicians, and feels it has helped the new One Horse Blue tremendously.

"There's a huge amount of musicians that have come out of the prairie provinces," he explains. "and they all seem to migrate either to Vancouver or Toronto. It's sort of a decision you make, which way you're going to go, east or west. I was always more attracted to the west. It was closer, it has a nice eli-



mate. It's a melting pot here, you know? A melting pot of talent. The cream rises to the top, and it's easier to find something when you need it, like a good dobro player. In Edmonton, there might be one or two guys you can call; in Vancouver, there's a list of guys."

The band released a mini CD in 1990, won Group of the Year from the B.C. Country Music Association three years in a row and got noticed by Nashville's Brian Ferriman, who signed a management and recording deal with the band. Ferriman has high praise for the band, calling them the "finest contemporary vocal band (he's) ever heard." The band was recently nominated for a Juno for Best Country act.

One listen to the album and you can sense

the skill with which these gentlemen craft songs and melodies to suit their outstanding three-part harmonies, reminiscent of The Eagles, Pure Prairie League and Crosby, Stills and Nash. Produced by Vancouver studio hound Bill Buckingham, the album has the integrity of musicians who have been there, done that and got the t-shirt. "We've been at it a long time, so we've got a lot of angles covered that we didn't have in '78," says Vaugeois with a laugh.

All of the recording was done in Vancouver in a myriad of local studios, including Mushroom, Blue Wave and Soundwerks. A lot of the pre-production was done in Vaugeois' home studio, which help cut down costs. "It's great," he says, "because you can work without any pressure of the clock going tick, tick, tick at \$100 an hour. The more prepared you can be when you go in, the better." According to Vaugeois, the decision to enlist the services of Bill Buckingham was based on his technical ability and musicianship, as well as to be a mediator between the technology and the band.

"We're all producers," he says with a chuckle. "So we needed somebody to be the link between the technical end of it — which I kind of have a handle on as well, but not as much as Bill does. I didn't know at first how musically in-depth he was, but I'll tell you, he surprised me. He's very in tune." The album features guest spots from many local musicians, including Andreas Schuld, Brent Shindell, Charlie Hase and Rob Steiniger.

After the album had been recorded and released, Jim Foster joined up with the band in July, 1993. Many of you will remember him from his '80s hit, "X-Ray Eyes". Foster has already begun writing songs with the band as well as playing dobro and mandolin onstage with them.

Vaugeois says the band has a lot of material written for the next album, and has realistic hopes that it will be a big success here in Canada as well as the States and Asia, a market that is apparently booming for "big vocal sing-along music". In the meantime, Vaugeois and the rest of the band intend to keep on doing what they love and not get too serious about things. "We try to be intelligent writers without being too clever and too sophisticated," Vaugeois says just before his next solo set is about to start. "We want our music to change maybe the way somebody feels about something, or to strike an emotion. That's what songs are supposed to do. That's the beauty of songwriting. One of all of our favourite things to do is to write the song. Recording it after that's hell, usually, but writing the song is so gratifying for all of us. That's why we do it."



Freelance writer and musician Tim Moshansky lives in the beautiful city of Vancouver, B.C.

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Let's go back to '89; not the Yukon gold rush, but a gold rush here in Toronto for a smart spankin' new artist, the recently discovered Maestro Fresh-Wes. Picked off the air by veteran rapper Stevie B after performing on CITY-TV's *Electric Circus*, Maestro Fresh-Wes's *Symphony In Effect* was recorded and released and Wes's killer track, "Let Your Backbone Slide", took over the dance floors, shot to number one and sold 50,000 copies. Walking away from the Junos with two of the acrylic prizes (one for Best Rap Recording and Best Video for "Drop the Needle"), Wes' future seemed assured. "Black Tie Affair" was released in 1991, but Canadian radio's complexion had changed and many shied away from spinnin' this new rap disc. As strong as his first release, both this and a subsequent EP suffered from the lack of a strong radio identity for dance and rap music. Both releases showed that Wes was growing — a force to be reckoned with. His smooth, intelligent style shied away from the usual theatrics of the genre and instead, he offered his own insights, not just the stylistic regurge spew so many wannabe rappers droozle into the market, with its gangs, guns, hoods and boasts of unending virility. The musical tracks had more in common with, well, *music* than a mind-numbing, monotonous pounding. Carefully arranged, they went somewhere!

MAESTRO FRESH-WES is drinkin' milk now, south of the 49th parallel



Yaaah, Dis Kid's From Canada!



It's 1994 now, and all that is somewhere else — somewhere in Brooklyn, New York. Tucked away in that neighbourhood, Maestro Fresh-Wes' two Juno Awards stare back at him from across the room, reminding him of where he's from. He's got a new release now on Attic Records here in Canada, called *Naaah, Dis Kid Can't Be From Canada!!!*. Chock full of his insight, wit and impeccable style (he's not called Maestro for nothing, you know . . .), it jumps to life in an incredibly infectious manner. From the opening track, "I'm Drinkin' Milk Now" ('bout growing up in the business) through the two singles so far ("Fine Tune Da Mic" and "Certs Wid Out Da' Retsyn"), it's the sound of a man who has arrived.

But it's not easy. Apart from the move, says Wes, "This record was a lotta work, man, a lotta work! Hip-hop is so diverse now that certain people's gonna like certain types of grooves better than others; so it all boils down to the fact that every group is different, yet each has its own original thing. You got Onyx, you got Wu Tan Clan; and on the other side you got Pharcyde, Tribe Called Quest — then you got Showbiz & AG. It's diverse, but it's all hip-hop, man; it's all under the same umbrella! What I tried to do on the record was mix many different styles, you know . . . "Milk" is different from "Check My Vernacular", which is different from "Certs" or "Brown Sugar" — it's all different flavours. It works from a concept and then just gathers texture on the way. Word.

"I really feel confident with my lyrics, so I don't really feel I have to throw a lot of theatrics and dramatics and all that. I'm not talking about shit I never done in my life — I'm not a gangsta! I never really had to live like that, so I can't really rhyme about that — about killin' people and shit like that; shootin' bitches, and dissin' that — it ain't me. I got skills; this is hip-hop. The brothers who motivated me kicked skills back in the days of '82. This is '94 now, so what happened to lyrical skills, man? It's all such bullshit. If you're real with that and it's true, I love it — and you are real; but at the same time, a lot of people are just jumping on that 'hard-core' perspective of hip-hop because it's selling a lot of records. Lot of brothers talking 'bout loading Glocks and they can't even load a VCR!

"The track that took me a long time to write was "Dat's My Nigga!!". I spent a long time with that, it was like, a PROJECT, you know? "Certs" also took a while — building it and mixing it and putting elements in and out, and all the different horn samples and stuff. I had a little problem with that, but it came together smooth. I like "I'm Drinkin' Milk Now" 'cause it was different for me to make a jazz record out of different sounds and stuff." All honking saxes and threatening bass line overlaid with Wes' own smooth style, it is deservedly the album opener.

How exactly does all this "building" happen? "Well," confides Wes, "I come up with the music. A lot of times, I'll come up with the concept first and then the music. Now when I say music, I might find bass lines and horns and stuff first, and then try and find drums to go with it. What most producers do, which I should be doing, is to get my drums on point first, and then build around that. If I have a bass line, the first thing I hear is horns, or I might hear other elements within that bass line. Maybe just a snare instead of building a whole drum track. For me, horns are easy to find, to hook up; I think I got a knack for that. What I gotta work on more is building my drum tracks."

Always building, always working towards building a better rap — but that's not all he's working on.

Profile. It's a big one to work, but Wes has the skills. Being from Canada is a plus, too; he's fairly unique as an ambassador of Canadian rap in the country, nay the neighbourhood with the most rappers per square foot.

"There's a lot of competition, but I don't care; I say 'I don't give a fuck, I'm here, man!' That shit ain't seein' me — I'm here! That's how confident I am. I just came from rhymin' on the street here with these kids I just met, you know; they just said how they heard my shit on the radio. Feels good, you know? I just try to show my brothers over here (in the U.S.A.) that there are rappers with valid skills from 'up there', you dig? A lot of them are really shocked when they first hear me rhyme that I'm from Canada; there aren't too many groups that have penetrated here — they usually haven't heard anybody from Canada."

They usually haven't heard anyone from Canada? What's the problem here? Is it the way the radio market has gone? Is it the Canadian music market?

"Hey! Let's not talk about the market," says Wes, concentrating on the positive, "let's just talk about the talent. There are a lot of talented brothers and sisters up there (in Canada) with serious skills. You got producers with flavours and stuff, and they're all wondering 'what's the market saying?' But I'm saying now that your beats is cool and now that your rhymes is cool, what's the next move? Well, the next move is to try to get paid with that — 'cause you can have a library of beats and a catalogue of rhymes and still not be paying the bills. What's all that worth then?"

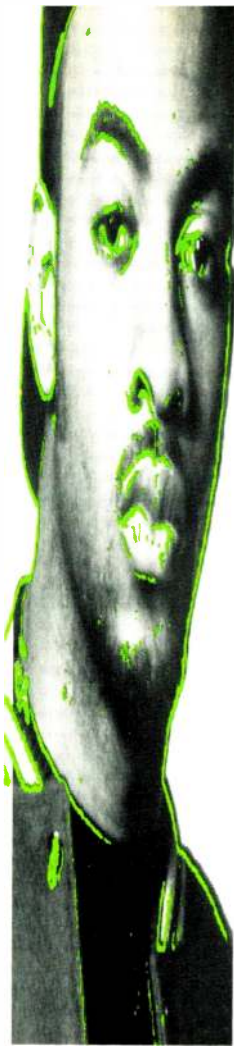
"I'm happy with my album so far. I just found out I got charted in a couple of major rap charts throughout America. Cool! I've been getting played on some MAJOR radio stations over here. I mean, college been playing me for a while, and "Fine Tune Da Mic" got a little play on the commercial stations; but now, "Certs Wid Out Da Retsyn" is getting some play on the commercial stations in New York, and I feel good 'cause that's a track that I produced; it's all me. The scarcity of dance-oriented radio stations was definitely a problem for me in Canada. Definitely. But I'm just the type of brother who'll overcome obstacles if I can. That's what I been trying to do — overcome obstacles. And you know, that's one thing in which I made a mark as a black artist coming out of Canada. My first single did really well, it really blew me away — in Canada — you know what I'm saying? But we have to be real with this; at the same time, you have to ask yourself, "What's the next move?" I was making lateral moves instead of vertical. So it was time for me to move vertically. That's what I tried to do."

Some in Canada may snipe at Maestro Fresh-Wes for being "the Bryan Adams of Canadian hip-hop" with his U.S. move, but he's done some serious thinking about that.

"Let me tell you something about my business. You got to circulate, you got to get paid, man. Why should an artist be starving? He has to get paid — later for that. I don't blame Bryan Adams, man. He do what he have to do, got paid, he represented Canada, blew up in Canada, what else is there for him to do? Stay in Canada? Alone? He's gotta go other places too! Look at Shabba Ranks! Shabba Ranks blew up in Jamaica, and now he's tryin' to venture out to other spots. The guy's just trying to get paid. That's like saying Michael J. Fox sold out or whatever. Come on! Y'all gotta get paid, you know what I'm saying? (laughs) Let's be real with this, man! This is a business we're in. Entertainment is a business. Why

should an artist be starving just so someone can say 'he's patriotic' and be broke? Those guys are just trying to get paid, that's all I'm trying to do. I get paid to do my thing, man. I represent it. My first album went platinum in Canada — no black artist ever did that before. So that was cool, and I thank my fans and everything, and that's great because if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't be able to do what I'm doing; but at the same time, I got to move to the next level."

Moving towards the next level hasn't made him completely forsake Canada. Wes plans to tour here in May/June of '94 and still likes recording here. In fact, "Fine Tune Da Mic" and "Makin' for the Rough" were recorded at Wellesley Sound here in good old T.O. "The rest of the album," says Wes, "was done at Power Play in New York City. I like working there. K-Cut put me onto that studio. I was like the engineer there; I like the vibe there, I been workin' there for a while. I'll be



checkin' different studios too, but I like working there. Plus, Showbiz worked over there too, coincidentally. It's cool, it's a good experience for now. I really feel I'm just startin' out now. In Canada, that was good for Canada, but over here, people are starting to get to know me now — that's why I called my album *Naaah, Dis Kid Can't Be From Canada!!!*, 'cause I want to represent and let people know right away where I'm from. Right off the bat. And it's not like I'm perpetratin' that from some place else; I'm from Toronto, let people know that, man. You know, you can't put a boundary on talent, you can't put a boundary on soul; I've been saying that for years. That's where I'm from."

Being from Toronto does give him a clean image, one he deserves and one he's proud of. Though the PMRC may sticker his work, that's all right with him. What isn't all right is when other rappers dis him or try to devalue his work because he's never 'lived hard'.

"People try to tell me I ain't got skills! You can't try to tell me I don't got skills just 'cause I never killed nobody! Everybody's capable of something. A lot of people go through that in hip-hop and I can hear who's real and it's scary how real that is; but don't talk about killin' people because real murderers, they ain't trying to get props, man, and get their face out there. They're just

trying to be down low. Some of the brothers be on some bullshit! And everybody's tryin' to be *satanic* now. Everybody's *satanic* now and it's cool; I'm just sayin' it's not me! I'm just trying to be real to myself. When I wake up in the morning and I look in the mirror, I can smile 'cause I know I ain't fake the funk. I'm not going to speak of stuff that I never did. I talk about stuff I've experienced — like "Drinkin' Milk" — that's just about me growing up in the entertainment business. I see more shit now than I did three years ago, and I still don't say "Black, Black, Black" just to push it down your throats; it just happens to be part of my experience; part of my culture. Hip-hop is a culture. You can't just listen to "Walk This Way" by Run-DMC and Aerosmith and think you're into hip-hop. This is a culture. This is real. It's something that gets learned. Word."

And getting learned is just what Maestro Fresh-Wes is up to at the moment. Honing his ever-evolving style by moving to the next level. In the words of the man himself, "That's hip-hop, man. I love it! That's my culture!" as if to say, geography doesn't matter; it's just the great old story of an artist and his skills.

Word, indeed!

Freelance writer Geoffrey Davis is based in Toronto, ON.

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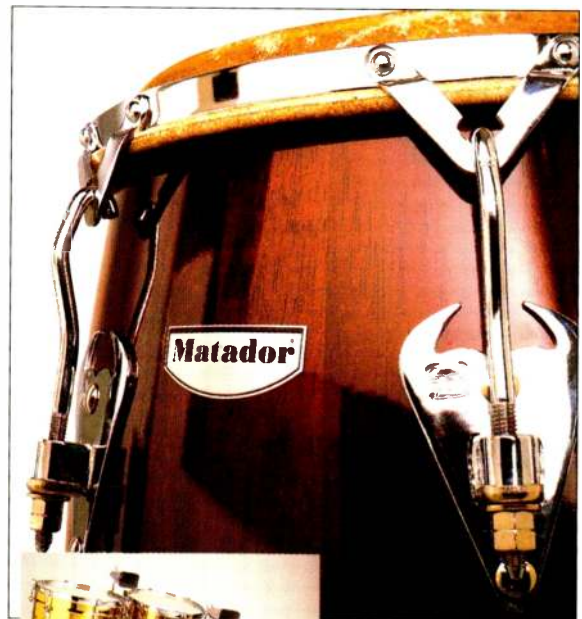


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On her latest release, *The Mask And The Mirror*, McKennitt has turned her spotlight to a wider spectrum of influences, but the rays still shine through a Celtic lens. "This recording began with an image of a night market in Spain — not that I'd ever been to one, but somehow there was enough of a picture haunting me that I was driven to find out more about it." Spain's place in the evolution of western civilization made it a crossroads of European culture, and McKennitt draws on its rich history to paint her sonic pictures. "There were pilgrimage routes which stretched from all corners of Europe to this place (Spain)," she explains, "with monasteries, inns and resting places set up along the way. These routes, which were at their most active between 1000 and 1598, became tremendously influential in the cross-fertilization of the Judaic, Christian and Islamic cultures, including the fields of music, literature, mathematics and astronomy."

Famous for doing things her own way (she was a successful indie artist before the Barenaked Ladies were out of high school), McKennitt has her own ideas on how to use the studio environment. The latest release was largely recorded in her farm house near Stratford, Ontario (they also used Toronto's McClellan Place and Peter Gabriel's Real World Studios in England). "We used her dining room for our control room," explains engineer Jeff Wolpert. "We covered the walls with some curtains that we got from the props department of the Stratford Festival. It created a nice atmosphere and also helped dampen the sound a little." With the installation of some tasty gear, including a 24-track Studer A 820 with integral Dolby SR and a CAD console, a studio was born.

The non-traditional surroundings lent themselves to Loreena's unorthodox approach to monitoring her voice. "For myself, personally, I cannot work with headphones on," she says. "For some reason I need to hear a certain amount of my voice acoustically. It's sort of a crosscheck system between what I hear and what I'm feeling in my throat. That's also the reason I choose not to have a vocal monitor right beside me (in live performance).

I rely more on the side fills, the idea being to re-create the exact same sound that's going to the house." It's a logical extension of the techniques Loreena developed in her early days of singing. "In choral training, singing in a choir, you develop a sense of the whole. You have to listen to your neighbour, blending in with that person's voice. In the band context, I strive to try and get a feel for the whole psychological picture as opposed to people being off in their own limited sound environment."

In the studio, McKennitt cuts her vocals in the control room listening to the reference monitors, a situation that creates its own set of difficulties. Wolpert explains. "She sets up right behind me so we're both listening to the same thing. This technique has two main problems; first, there's feedback and the other is bleed. You have to be careful you don't have anything in the monitor mix that you don't want on the final track. The advantage is that she has an incredible sense of pitch when she's not using headphones and she's much more comfortable."

The quality of the results speak for themselves. On *The Mask And The Mirror*, Loreena's voice is decidedly front and centre, embellished with the lush reverbs that have become her trademark. The produc-

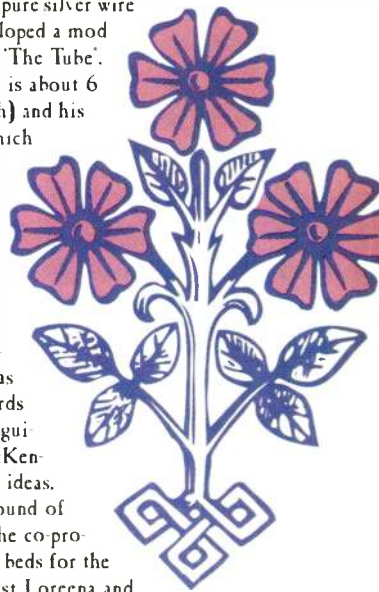
tion team went to great lengths to find the right microphones to capture the many subtleties in Loreena's voice. "We used two different spectacular mics," gushes Wolpert. "One was an original AKG C-12 tube mic, circa 1958, but to find another mic, we did a little research. There's a guy in Los Angeles named Steven Paul. He's kind of the Stradivarius of microphone builders. Very few people build mics from scratch but he rebuilds them. His trick is he replaces the stock diaphragm with one that's much thinner and more sensitive and he also rewires them with pure silver wire and stuff. He told us he had just developed a mod for the new AKG C-12 reissue called 'The Tube'. The standard diaphragm on the thing is about 6 microns (a micron is 1/1000 of an inch) and his mod took it to about .9 microns — which is getting about as thin as air (laughs). We ended up doing most of the vocals on that mic, a very delicate piece of gear. Loreena liked it so much, she bought it."

No discussion of McKennitt's creative process would be complete without mention of Brian Hughes, A recording artist in his own right (he has two solo releases on Justin Time Records and a third due this fall), the virtuoso guitarist is a long-time collaborator of McKennitt and early sounding board for her ideas. Hughes was integral to the overall sound of *The Mask And The Mirror*, which he co-produced with McKennitt. "When we cut beds for the tunes," he says, "often it would be just Loreena and myself in the studio. She would usually play a keyboard pad and sing the song and I would strum along on guitar. Then, when we got a take we liked, Rick (Lazar) would come in and we'd build the song up with him percussion-wise."

For many of the songs, straight-ahead guitar was not appropriate. "The album's opening cut, 'The Mystic's Dream' was built up at Real World," Hughes continues. "On that one, I just did more ambient kind of stuff which helped keep it really moody, and built it around a doumbek loop that we used for the rhythm part of the tune." Technology also played a role in disguising Brian's input. "There's some weird sounds that don't sound like guitar at all, like a bent note I played on the E Bow we pitched down an octave through an AMS delay. We sampled it and laid it in and it sort of sounds like a big cow or something (laughs)." This experimental attitude is an important part of the duo's working process. "With Loreena, she seems to know, somewhere in her head, what she wants the final result to sound like. It's a question of trying things; sometimes it's hit and miss and sometimes you get exactly what you want but you discover things along the way."

From the Uillian pipes in "The Two Trees" to the sound of Loreena blowing into the pipe of a church organ in "Prospero's Speech", the album's medieval soundscapes are laced with exotic instrumentation. "The oudh is an example of an instrument I've been using a lot of lately," says Hughes. "It's like a fretless 10-string lute (from East India) with the middle four strings doubled. I used it on 'The Mystic's Dream'. Bassist George Kohler, who has toured with McKennitt, lent a unique flavour to the song 'Full Circle'. "The instrument playing the melody at the beginning is an esraj," Hughes explains. "George has always been into exotic things and this was a new thing that he'd got, so we thought we'd try it out. It's about the size of a viola but it looks more like a sitar. You play it upright with a bow like a cello, sitting on the floor."

Most satisfying to McKennitt was the inclusion of the little known instrument, the hurdy-gurdy. "I was really thrilled to find this hurdy-gurdy player when we were at Real World. The fellow's name is Nigel Eaton from a band called Blozabella. A real young guy — all hip in black — and he plays this medieval French instrument (laughs). You have to listen very carefully on the song 'Santiago'; there's a drone and this rhythmic sound both produced by it." The ancient axe, described in the dictionary as — 'a stringed instrument shaped like a lute or guitar whose strings are set vibrating by a rosined wheel turned by a crank at one end' — was sought after for more than its unique sound. "Over the past few years," she says, "I've learned that the structure of ancient music was really built on three elements. These elements are embodied in the hurdy-gurdy and they include drones and



A HARP DAY'S NIGHT

Every working musician has had to deal with life on the road. But for Loreena McKennitt, the demands can approach the outrageous. Speaking from her hotel room in Spain — the first stop on her current tour — Loreena gives us some insight into the reality of the road for her.

"A lot depends on which country we're in. Spain seems to be an entity unto itself in Europe as far as what time shows start and what time dinners happen, so our daily schedule is a challenging one. Because I manage my own affairs (she runs her own label, books her own dates and oversees her publicity and merchandising), I generally have my breakfast, lunch and sometimes even my dinner in my room while I'm doing phone calls. When it comes to my voice, for me, the most important thing is rest because with the material that I'm working on now, it's more vocally demanding range-wise than any material that I've performed before. It also helps if I'm in good physical shape; you're almost like a professional athlete. Of course, with all the travel, rest and exercise are two of the most difficult things to get on the road, but they're also the most essential."

With her days full of business, pre-gig preparation often receives short shrift. "Except for at sound check, I vocally don't warm up. I wouldn't suggest that to everyone, though. The fact that I don't is more a function of time and I'll choose to do something else that I really need to do over warming up. Having had the good fortune of having studied classically, I understand singing properly. I recognize that when I'm in danger of damaging it, I can pull back a bit or whatever I have to do to protect it."

It's safe to say that Loreena's life on the road is a long way from the cliché 'limo in the swimming pool' outing of your classic rock band. But then, nothing about Loreena has ever been cliché.

rhythm. The drone philosophically represents the universality of all things, so the instrument has associations much larger than its musical function, both spiritual and sacred."

With all the ancient instrumentation on the record, it took modern technology to take the show on the road. The touring band consists of McKennitt, Hughes and Rick Lazar joined by Steve Lucas on bass, Kiki Misumi on cello and background vocals and . . . a triggered MIDI interface. "I went into the studio and sampled all the weird instruments and sounds off the multi-track," explains Hughes, "and all of the percussion that Rick had played. Onstage, he triggers all of it with a KAT pad and foot pedals. He's still got his full array of acoustic drums but it enables him to play things like talking drum fills without having to physically pick one up and strap it on which would be impossible to do. Regrettably, we can't take ten people out on the road, so we just tried to make it sound the best it could."

The band's best is now being heard far and wide. They've just begun

an extensive touring schedule that will see them in more than eight countries before they're through. It seems clear the former St. Lawrence Market busker is fast becoming a world renowned performing artist. With the respect of her peers, her fans and her business partners, she is changing a lot of expectations in an industry that is largely built on false ones.

From 15th century shrines to record company boardrooms, Loreena McKennitt is truly a modern day renaissance woman.

Toronto-based freelance writer Ian Menzies plays with Sheltering Sky.

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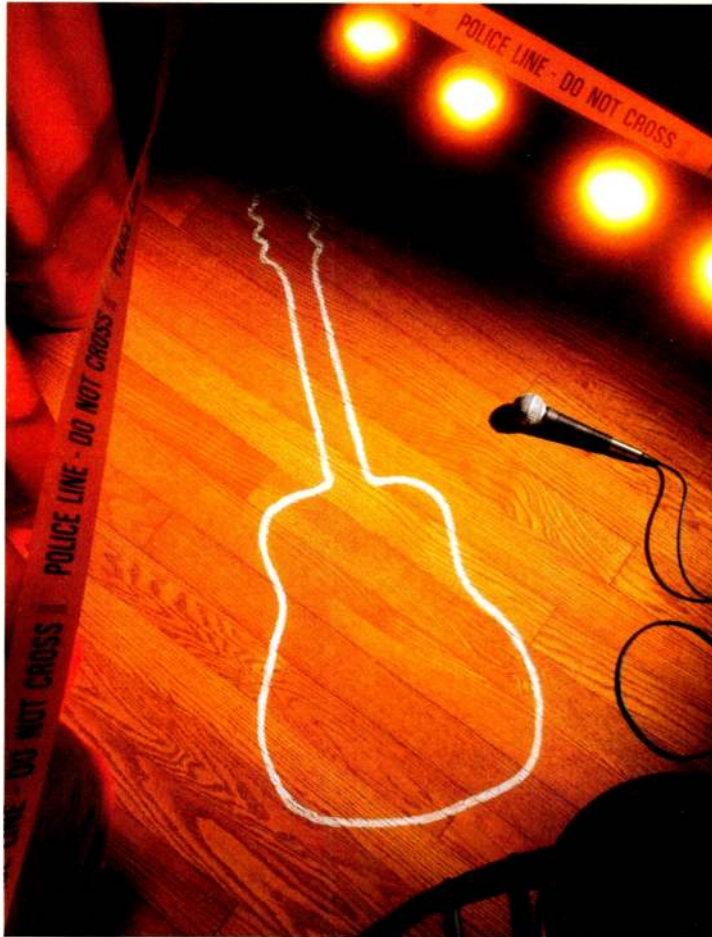
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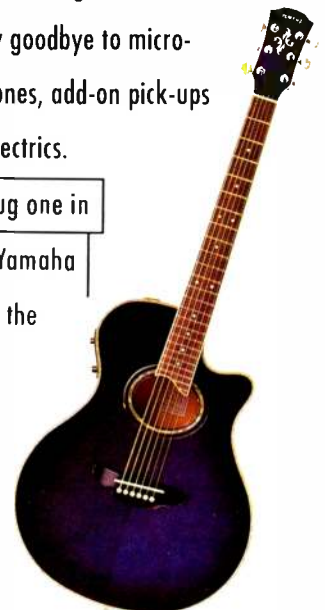
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As a guitar columnist for *Canadian Musician*, I've always liked to tap into what's happening with guitarists in Canada and around the world. I wanted to take tab on the state of guitar in 1994. It's 39 years since Elvis first came on the scene, The Fender Stratocaster is celebrating its 40 year anniversary (still one of the most enduring, sought after guitars even today) and Jimi Hendrix has been dead 24 years; but still, guitar music and guitarists are at the front lines of music again more than ever.

Tube amplifiers are screaming at full volume and guitarists how have a big desire to go back and search their roots to seek out all of their earlier influences, the pioneering guitarists who started it for so many of us.

I interviewed nine very happening guitar players from very different walks of life. Some, like Steve Morse, Danny Gatton and Colin James are veterans in this business. Others, like newcomers Kevin Briggs, David Gogo and Gary Hoey bring to this article fresh insights. Players like Roy Ashen, Phil X and Sil Simone have made names for themselves just from their sheer talent and phenomenal playing techniques. One thing about all of them ... they are all killer guitarists that play their asses off!

Some of these players I've become friends with over time, others I've just gotten to know. I was fortunate to take some lessons with Steve Morse years ago when I was at GIT back in '81. Last year, at Music West '93, I got to play with Danny Gatton, Joe Walsh, Seymour Duncan and Greg Bissonette, which was a real thrill. I took lots of mental notes that night.

As you are reading this, I'll be just coming back from a guitar clinic tour overseas in Taiwan, China and Indonesia, so I'll have lots to report in my next guitar column.

Enjoy, as I did, the thoughts and ideas from these nine individually gifted players.

CM: *When did you start playing guitar and how old were you when you started playing clubs?*

Roy Ashen: "I started at six years of age. I was 13 when I first performed in a club. It was a major club in Houston, Texas and the owner had hired us from a demo tape, not knowing we were so young and just kids. When he saw us setting up, he thought we were the roadies. Needless to say, he freaked when he found out that we were the age we were. After failing to get another band to replace us, he let us go onstage as the opening act before the headliner, strictly warning us to hang out in his office before and after the show. We went over very well, I guess because of our age and the fact that we could play."

Gary Hoey: "I started playing at 10 years of age. My sister's boyfriend played the blues and I was fascinated by the guitar and the music. He taught me basic guitar. By 15, I was playing high school dances and halls and a couple of years later in clubs. I could only go in the club at show time."

David Gogo: "Basically, I picked it up around five years old after hearing my Dad's records of Elvis and others. I got more serious around nine or ten and by 16, I was playing bars throughout the west coast and the prairie provinces."

Kevin Briggs: "I didn't get into guitar really until I was 16. I started out on sax first but then made the switch to guitar and by 17, I was out playing in bars. I re-

member getting caught for being underage and not having a permit to play in a bar and our band got fired."

Phil X: "I was five when my dad said, 'Here. This is a guitar.' He wanted me to play and because I saw guys doing it on TV, I thought it was cool. I started playing in bars when I was 16. I had a band with no bass player and two guitar players, so the other guitar player bought a bass for \$50 and has been playing bass ever since. In fact, he's quite good. Anyway, there was nothing that gave me the same buzz as doing what I loved to do in front of people who appreciated it. Needless to say, I'm addicted."

Colin James: "In my parents home, there was always music playing. My older brother played as did my sister. At 13, I was given a beautiful handmade acoustic. By 16, I was getting into the blues, all kinds like Delta, Chicago blues and folk music. I used to go every year to the Winnipeg Folk Festival. It was sort of a pilgrimage."

Sil Simone: "I started playing at eight years old and by 12 or 13, I was taking lessons. When I was 16 years of age, I was out doing the cover band thing, learning as much as I could."

Steve Morse: "I didn't come from a particularly musical background but around 11, I got an acoustic guitar and started taking lessons for \$1.50 an hour. By 12,

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I was playing an electric guitar, doing all ages shows in clubs. I started out doing cover material. Around 15, I got serious about the instrument and started writing originals and thinking about my future in music."

Danny Gatton: "I first got started around nine years of age. I took lessons right away for about two years, learning my theory and reading, stuff I've forgotten about now, though these lessons definitely kept me into playing guitar and started a foundation. By 12, I started learning things by ear and by 14, I was in clubs playing guitar. Back then, they didn't care that you were so young; they just didn't serve you. At 13, I picked up a banjo and started learning that, too."

CM: Who were your influences early on?

Colin James: "Big Dave McLean was a big influence on me. He is still at it in Winnipeg. Lots of blues and folk artists, like Elmore James, Honey Boy Edwards, Robert Johnson, Taj Mahal, Howling Wolf, Colin Linden, who I first met at age 13, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Charlie Christian, B.B. King, Fats Waller and Django Rheinhardt. Too many guys to mention."

Kevin Briggs: "Jimmy Page and Van Halen were big early influences. Pat Metheny, Jim Hall, Mike Stern, John Scofield — the hip jazz guys. Also David Gilmour and then, later on, Steve Vai and Joe Satriani. Even after that, Stevie Ray Vaughan became an influence."

Danny Gatton: "Definitely Les Paul. The magic of his sound thrilled me and I tried to emulate his sound. Jazz, country and bluegrass players always have had an influence on me. Billy Butler, Scotty Moore, James Burton, Cliff Gallup and lots of other players."

Sil Simone: "For chordal influences, I'd have to say Bill Evans and Allan Holdsworth. For melodic sense, Miles Davis. Solo-wise, from Jimi Hendrix to blues guys like Ry Cooder."

David Gogo: "Elvis, B.B. King, Cream, Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, the Stones, Otis Redding, Bob Dylan, Steve Cropper, Canned Heat, Van Morrison — you know, all the greats."

Steve Morse: "Church music and Bach chorals. My father was a Presbyterian minister. Early on, I'd say Chuck Berry and the Beatles sound-wise. Guitar-wise, Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck and John McLaughlin were big influences."

Roy Ashen: "I'd say Alex Lifeson, Andy Summer, Trevor Rabin, Jimi Hendrix, Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page, Eddie Van Halen, Eric Johnson and Allan Holdsworth."

Phil X: "The first solo I heard when I actually knew what a solo was, was 'Hotel California' and I fell in love with that

sound. It was Joe Walsh and the other guy. From that point on it was Ted Nugent, Eddie Van Halen, Ulrich Roth and a Bouzouki player named Manolis Hiotis."

Gary Hoey: "Definitely Hendrix and Beck. Also, Johnny and Edgar Winter, Rick Derringer and lots of blues players like Muddy Waters, B.B. King, Stevie Ray and Albert King."

CM: What do you consider are your strong points when it comes to playing the guitar?

David Gogo: "I think I'd be pretentious in answering this question too extensively. I guess my way of approaching the guitar, which is fiery. The way I attack and assault the guitar."

Roy Ashen: "My ability to create a mood. For instance, I use my eight finger hammer-on style to enhance the tune and create a mood more so than to do the guitar hero thing."

Kevin Briggs: "I try to play for the song and enhance the song, and not just wail away on technique for technique's sake alone."

Sil Simone: "I use a lot of interesting chordal voicings to create a unique sound. Probably more than anything else, I just play the way I play."

Colin James: "I try to always play with a lot of feel and I look for hot spots to add excitement. I like to create tension in my playing to create a fiery solo."

Steve Morse: "I would say variety. I play many different styles and especially when it comes to songwriting, I strive to always have a lot of variety in the music."

Gary Hoey: "I believe I've developed a good balance of technique and emotion in my playing. I've also learned to make use of a lot of melody."

Danny Gatton: "My strong point is that I cover a lot of styles. I'm not a master of any one style but I've absorbed many different styles and it all comes out in my playing."

Phil X: "Whether I'm playing rhythm or lead, I think I have a percussive style . . . very aggressive. I can also go from helicopter attack to a flowing stream in a blink. It also comes in handy to have a sonically weird imagination."

CM: What would you like to improve in your playing?

Steve Morse: "I'd like to develop different styles, such as Indian folk music. I'd

COLIN JAMES

Colin James, certainly not a stranger to Canadian and worldwide audiences, released his third album in 1993 while in between recording his next rock outing. Sound confusing? Well, he took time off to record and blow off some steam with *Colin James and the Little*



JAMES O'MARA

Big Band, an album full of blues and swinging jump tunes from the '40s and '50s. It was recorded very quickly with a stellar line up of blues experts — Reese Wynans (Stevie Ray Vaughan's keyboardist), Chuck Leavell (Rolling Stones, Allam Bros. keyboardist), the Room Full of

Blues horn section and drummer, Colin's own sax man, Johnny Ferreira and a hot session bass player from Vancouver. This is arguably Colin's best work to date and it reeks of authenticity. He has successfully captured this time period and recently, when I caught up with him live, he delivered the goods and the crowd delivered their applause tenfold.

Colin's earlier releases, *Colin James and Sudden Stop* have made him a Canadian star. His first album was the fastest selling debut in Canada's history. In 1991, he headlined the Montreal Blues '91 Festival which included Otis Rush, Albert Collins, Buddy Guy, Albert King, Pop Staples and Bo Diddley. In 1992, he made a guest appearance on The Chieftains' *Another Country* album. Colin is currently playing guitar on a new album by French rock & roll legend, Johnny Hallyday.

SIL SIMONE

Silvio Michael Simone, lead guitarist for rock artist Tom Cochrane, watched things start to get hectic when Cochrane released *Mad*, *Mad World*. Sil was hired on at the beginning of that tour in 1991 and it didn't stop until September 1993. Sales of the album in Canada have reached just over 900,000.

Sil has been involved in the Canadian music scene for quite some time. Years ago, he was a member of Simon Chase. He's a very busy session player and juggles his time between live dates with Lee Aaron, Robbie Rox and others. He is also a busy guitar teacher with an instructional cassette and book out on the market entitled *Sweeping the Nation*, which focuses in on sweeping techniques and licks. His excellent rhythm skills and soloing chops make him an all-around in-demand gunslinger who also yearns to break out and do his own thing. Currently, Sil is preparing to record his own CD that should be out by the end of this year.



RICK PESKID

also like to further develop more polyphonic stuff and get more fluid with intervallic jumps."

Phil X: "There are so many! Sometimes when I get hyper, I have terrible timing. I think I'm getting better, but there's tons of room for improvement. I'd like to keep bad notes down to 20 per night (Ha ha). I'd also like to be able to read and write music; although, I would only apply that when there was a total absence of feel."

Kevin Briggs: "My reading skills. It's something I don't use all the time anymore and I'd like to brush up on it."

David Gogo: "I'd like to learn more licks and increase my number of licks. I'd like to also really improve my chordal rhythms. When I listen to Jimi Hendrix, he was the best."

Sil Simone: "There are three areas I'd like to improve. One, the physical and how you say it; two, develop more harmonic sense; and three, I'd like to deepen my emotional and spiritual sense."

Danny Gatton: "I'd like to practice my technique again but I'm so busy these days that I don't have that kind of time. My technical chops were better years ago than they are today."

Colin James: "I'd like to improve my knowledge of chords more and try to be more melodic."

Roy Ashen: "To continue to learn different styles. Also to get better at throwing away any preconceived notion of what to play on guitar, or what can be played on guitar."

Gary Hoey: "I've come to relax with my playing and where it is. I focus more on the writing and the music now."

CM: Fill in the blanks. A good guitar solo should . . .

Phil X: ". . . paint a picture. I know everybody says 'Take you on a journey' and it's true, but it's a short trip if it's eight bars. I think it should make you smile, frown, get angry, sit back, relax, jump up and down. A great solo makes me laugh like a good joke. It should get a reaction."

Danny Gatton: ". . . include lots of melody. I think any guitarist should listen to Les Paul's playing or listen to an early recording of Bill Doggett. Their solos were so melodic."

Sil Simone: ". . . be a voyage or a destination. It should take you somewhere."

Colin James: ". . . be from the heart. Look at guys like Stevie Ray or Albert Collins; they were amazing at playing heartfelt solos."

Gary Hoey: ". . . enhance the song. It should complement the song and capture a mood."

Steve Morse: ". . . at least, be as good as the melody. That's not an easy thing to do."

Roy Ashen: ". . . include passion! All the technique in the world won't make you passionate. I think you can't be all passion without some technique either. Learn to say something with your solo. Also, dynamics are so important."

David Gogo: ". . . be about improvisation. Don't overplay! Say what you have to say then move on. Sometimes I'll take 48 bars to say something, sometimes I'll take eight bars and then that's it; I move on."

Kevin Briggs: ". . . reinforce the song. I think it should also make a statement and have a strong melody. I can't forget passion as well."

CM: And what about rhythm playing?

Sil Simone: "It should set up a groove. Your rhythm playing should be able to stand by itself. Having a good understanding of time and how to manipulate it is important."

Roy Ashen: "Rhythm playing is as important. Being percussive and creating a mood is something that isn't done enough. Above all, experiment."

Danny Gatton: "It's important to learn as many styles as you can. I'd also say learning how to comp chords. It's interesting that you asked me that because I'm about to have my second instructional video released called *Rhythm Guitar for the Lead Guitarist*."

Gary Hoey: "It's the most overlooked part of playing! It should fit the music and groove for days! Having a good foundation of chords is essential."

Phil X: "Rhythm playing should make you wanna dance. It should also surprise you once in a while . . . 'Hey, he didn't do that in the first verse . . .'. Stuff like that. It should also complement the vocal or lead instrument."

Steve Morse: "Well, first off, just listen to John Lennon or Pete Townsend. They're brilliant rhythm players. They learned how to play to the song. I think you should play to the sound also. If it's a distorted sound, you'll use less strings and different voicings to complement the sound you're using. There's so much expression you can do with just a couple of strings."

DAVID GOGO

Newcomer David Gogo has released his first major label album on EMI Music Canada backed up by the power hitting, solid drumming of Jorn Anderson (Alannah Myles, David Wilcox) and tight bass work of Steve Webster (Alannah Myles, Billy Idol). David Gogo has created a wildly loud, rocking bluesy album that at one moment is reminiscent of Jimi Hendrix, then B.B. King, then Cream, then Albert Collins. He comes across as a rocker who got weaned on the blues and both these elements come spewing out all over the place.

I first heard about David while I was recording my own album at Phase One studios where he was recording, too. At that time, the engineer wouldn't let me hear anything or even tell me about the tunes and didn't say much about him. When I interviewed David, he told me that he was signed on his guitar playing and vocal ability, and had to learn how to write great songs. Guitar playing-wise, he certainly attacks his Strat with real fire and, after I witnessed him live, I'm convinced he is the real thing and will be around for a long time. Backing David Gogo live is drummer Jorn Anderson again and bassist Todd Sacery from the west coast who thumps out loud, mean, muscular bass lines that complement David's no-nonsense, in-your-face playing style.



KEVIN WESTENBERG

ROY ASHEN

Los Angeles-based guitarist Roy Ashen is no stranger to *Canadian Musician* for in '93, Roy was one of the players dazzling and educating aspiring guitarists with his innovative eight finger hammer-on playing style at the guitar and bass clinic **The Axemen Cometh**. A GIT instructor at Musician's Institute in Hollywood, Roy has taught thousands of guitarists about eight finger techniques, songwriting and creativity studies. Roy's phenomenal playing style has kept him busy as a clinician and educator across Canada, the U.S., Japan and Europe. He's also a columnist and contributing editor to *Guitar World* magazine.

Currently, Roy performs regularly with his band, Ashen, described as a cross between The Police, Jimi Hendrix and Stevie Wonder. They are currently finishing up a CD. Roy's playing style has even garnered him accolades from such notable guitar heroes as Brian May of Queen.



CM: If you could have the ultimate dream band, who would be in it?

Kevin Briggs: "Ooh, that's a tough one. Definitely Joe Satriani on guitar, Stu Hamm on bass and Will Calhoun from Living Colour on drums."

David Gogo: "I'd want to have John Paul Jones on the bass and Mitch Mitchell on drums. If I couldn't get John Paul Jones, it would be Billy Cox."

Danny Gatton: "I'd have to say the players that I played with on my new album; the baddest B3 player in the world, Joe DeFrancesco, Tim Beiry on drums and John Previti on bass and acoustic upright. The only other player, who didn't play on the album, would be saxophonist Bill Holman."

Sil Simone: "This is a really hard one. Jaco for sure on bass, John Bonham on drums, Bill Evans on keyboards, Lenny Breau on rhythm with me taking notes, Miles Davis on trumpet and Jon Anderson singing. I'd have Neil Young sub in for Lenny Breau every other night. Even though they are at complete opposite ends of the playing spectrum, their musical convictions have both been so strong."

Colin James: "I'd have Willie Dixon on bass, Buddy Miles on drums, Keith Richards and Jimi Hendrix on guitars and Howling Wolf on vocals because he's simply the best vocalist I've ever heard."

Roy Ashen: "My first choice would be Simon Phillips on drums, Mark King on bass, Stevie Wonder on vocals and Jeff Beck on guitar. My second choice would be Geddy, Alex and Neil of Rush. I grew up learning their music when I was a kid; that would be a thrill."

Phil X: "Terry Bozzio on drums, Dave LaRue on bass, Stevie Wonder on lead vocals and keyboards, the Tower of Power horn section and my wife on background vocals and percussion."

Steve Morse: "To be honest with you, I've never even thought about it. I've been in a few situations where I've played with some great players whom I have admired; but other than that, I've never had that kind of wish. I'd say The Chieftains because their music is so beautiful. Dream band-wise, I couldn't imagine not having Dave LaRue on bass, the guy is just so great, and either Steve Smith, Danny Gottlieb or Michael Walden on drums. This is not so much of a dream band because I've performed with all of them."

Gary Hoey: "Tony Franklin, who played bass on my first record would be my first choice. If it couldn't be him, it would be Jeff Berlin; and Terry Bozzio on drums would be killer. For a vocalist, it would be someone who sings passionately like Steve Perry or Janis Joplin."

CM: Any advice guitar-wise or career-wise for the aspiring guitarist?

Gary Hoey: "In every step of your musical journey, try to grow from each situation and learn to enjoy it every step of the way. I wouldn't change the good times or the bad times, the dives that I've played or the great concerts or travelling in a bus in 2D below zero weather. I wouldn't change it for anything."

Colin James: "Finding your own sound is very important. I'd also add don't be afraid to take from other players and make it your own."

Roy Ashen: "Develop a passion and desire for music and set goals — whatever those goals may be. Don't just be a talker, work your butt off. Last but not least, develop creatively."

Sil Simone: "Find out what you want to do and get a solid understanding of music. Work on creating and above all, enjoy what you do."

Kevin Briggs: "Believe in yourself. Keep going on despite things that don't always go the way you want them to. Lots of my friends have stopped playing because they've lost faith in themselves. Be true to yourself and try to learn as much about this industry as you can."

Steve Morse: "Do it because you love it and do it from the heart. If you're doing it for the money, buy a lottery ticket instead; you'll have better odds."

Danny Gatton: "I love playing rhythm guitar in a band maybe more than soloing. I'd say to learn chords and find out where they fit. Learn to make them tasteful. I'd also add that it's so important to learn this business inside and out and watch your behind. There's a lot of snakes in this business."

Phil X: "There are two things as far as guitar playing goes that I think are really important. First is working on your timing. Whether you're shredding or laying down a blues riff, your groove is the most important element. Second is playing with other people. You can practise like crazy but applying is the old cap on the bottle. Find out how it works in a live environment."

David Gogo: "Do what you like to do and persevere. Stick to it. I didn't want to play 'Top 40' music, so I stuck to the kind of music that I loved. There have been so many low points at times, but I kept at it and didn't give up. Talking to more experienced players encouraged me to either stick it out and do it or get out."

STEVE MORSE

Steve Morse and Danny Gatton are hardly newcomers to this scene. They are simply two of the most influential guitarists in America. Combined, they have 67 years of experience between the two of them and yet, they have their own very different and unique styles.

Steve Morse has been in the public eye since his ground-breaking rock fusion band, The Dixie Dregs, pumped out a series of instrumental albums in the '70s and early '80s. Steve struck out on his own in '82 with Jerry Peek on bass and long-time Dregs cohort Rod Morgenstein on drums. In '85-86, Steve joined forces with Kansas, releasing two albums.

Despite winning many guitar polls and having lots of guitarists running back to their rooms to woodshed his licks, he quit the business twice, once in 1982 at the demise of the Dregs and after the stint with Kansas when he earned his pilot's license. But Steve came back, fueled with a new focus, a new musical direction and a new band with Dave LaRue on bass and Van Romaine on drums. *High Tension Wires* showed a different side to Steve Morse with an almost 'new age' feel to the album. It was *Southern Steel* that brought him back to the instrumental rock front, displaying once again his command of many different styles and searing solo abilities.

To date, Steve Morse has recorded 13 albums (not including the two with Kansas). He has recorded on several other artists' albums such as Michael Manring's recently released *Thonk* and Dweezil Zappa's upcoming release. Steve also has several videos and instructional books that REH Publications have published.

PHIL X

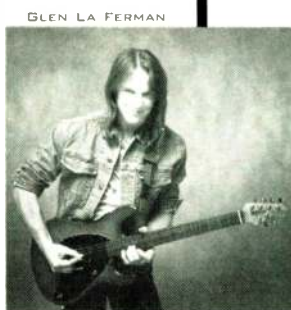
Toronto-based guitarist Phil X played with *Frozen Ghost* from 1987-90 and from 1990-92 played with Aldo Nova. In 1992, Phil joined



Triumph, performing on their latest release, *Edge of Excess*, and was named Best Guitarist at the 1993 Q107 Rock Awards.

One of the hardest-working guitarists in the city, Phil is one of

those players that just loves to perform and can't leave his instrument alone for very long. Phil, along with the Big Banana Band, performs at numerous jams he's established around the Toronto area, giving up-and-comers a chance in the spotlight. Most recently, he added his guitar talents to The Bush Doctors' latest release for Spy Records.



GUITARMANIA!

GARY HOEY

Gary Hoey is a hot new American guitarist emerging on the international guitar scene. In 1993, with his first major label release *Animal Instinct* on Reprise Records/Warner Bros., he managed to reach *Billboard's* No. 5 spot with his single "Hocus Pocus" (originally recorded by Focus in 1972). Gary released an earlier solo album in '89 entitled *Get A Grip* and in 1992, released the debut album *Heavy Bones* as a member of the band *Heavy Bones* on Reprise. On *Animal Instinct*, Tony Franklin (The Firm, Blue Murder) played bass and Frankie Banali (Quiet Riot, W.A.S.P., Faster Pussycat) handled drums. Gary has recorded 22 songs for a new album, a film score to the movie *Endless Summer II*.

Gary epitomizes the '90s modern rocker who is big on technical prowess but balances his playing with great passion and feeling and squeezes out lots of melody.



MARTY TEMME

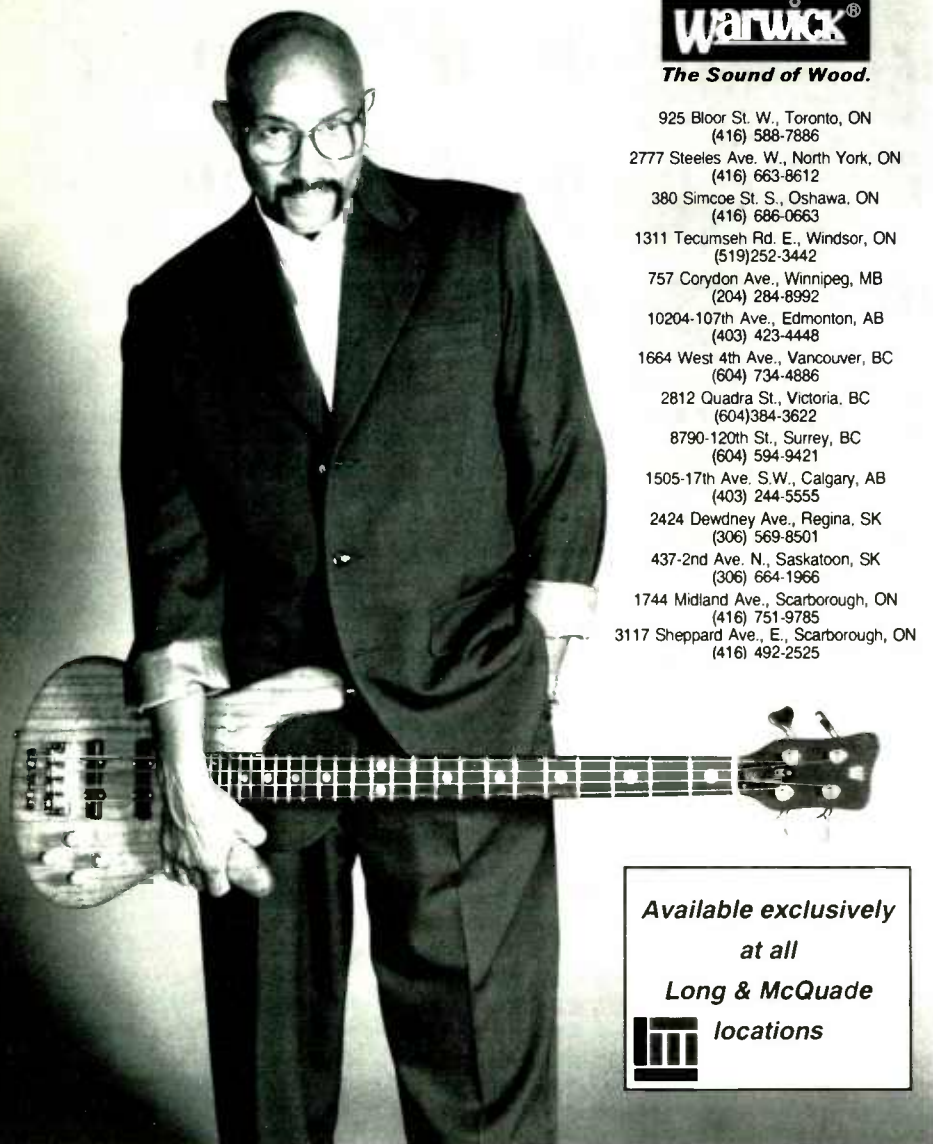
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- Soldano amp

STEVE MORSE

Recording:

- Mesa Boogie Triaxis preamp
- Ampeg V4 head
- Digitech TSR-24 multi effects unit
(for acoustics)

Live:

- Marshall 100 watt head
- Peavey 4x12 cabinet
- VTM head and 4x2 cabinet
- Digitech DSP-28
- Digitech GSP-21
- Lexicon delay

Guitars:

- Music Man Steve Morse model electric
- John Buscarino handmade classical
- Steinberger 12 string

DAVID GOGO

- Stratocaster with Evans pickups
- Reissue Marshall (Plexi head)
- 4x2 cabinet
- two tube screamers
- Vox wah
- Roger Mayer Octavia
- Super Vibe
- Leslie
- Digital reverb

ROY ASHEN

- Mesa Boogie studio preamp; Triaxis preamp
- 290 Power amp
- Mesa Boogie 2x12 cabinets
- Eventide H3000 SE Harmonizer
- Godin electric and acoustic guitars

MERS THE ODS

PHIL X

- Marshall JCM 800 100 watts
- Marshall 4x12 with vintage 25s
- BOSS overdrive
- Crybaby wah wah
- Marley Wah-SP
- Freiheit custom guitars
- Fender Strat HR
- Gibson Les Paul Jr.
(all guitars fitted with Seymour Duncan pickups)

KEVIN BRIGGS

- Laney 100 watt head
- Marshall 4x12 cabinet
- Digitech GSP-21
- Vox wah
- BOSS Super overdrive
- Electro-Harmonix talk box
- 1986 Charvel model 4
- Fender Stratocaster with humbucker (in bridge position)

DANNY GATTON

- Fender Vibro King
- Fender Twins
- Fender Tweed bassman
- Leslie
- 1990 Fender Danny Gatton model Telecaster with Joe Barden pickups
- Fender Stratocaster (studio)
- Gibson J-200 acoustic
- Gibson ES-50 (first guitar Danny ever owned)

GARY HOEY

- VHT Pitbull head
- Soldano head
- Racktron Cameleon preamp
- Racktron Intelliflex
- Racktron Intelliverb
- Hamer Dayton guitar
- Hamer Chaperell

SIL SIMONE

- Marshall JMP I preamp
- Marshall Power amp
- Fender Twin
- Alesis Quadraverb
- Gibson Les Paul
- Fender Stratocaster
- Charvel electric

DANNY GATTON

Danny Gatton was a best kept secret until the '80s when *Guitar Player* magazine bestowed on him the title of "World's Best Unknown Guitarist". Aficionados knew of him from his two early albums, *Unfinished Business* and *Redneck Jazz* (available through NRG Records, PO Box 100, Alpharetta, Georgia, 30201). His major debut on Electra Entertainment entitled *88 Elmira St.* and the sophomore release *Cruisin' Deuces* were solid outings that displayed consistent playing and impeccable musicianship, but failed to garner enough sales and he was subsequently dropped by the label.



ROBERT KITTLA

Danny has a new album out in May on the BIG MO label entitled *Relentless*. Always wanting to do an album with a B-3 player, he got his chance with the "baddest B-3 player in the world", Joey DeFrancesco. This album, according to Danny, is totally relentless, very raw and will cut you to the bone. Having had the privilege of being on stage with Danny Gatton at Music West '93 in Vancouver, I'd say Danny is completely relentless and has enough mind-numbing chops and tricks to keep any guitarist glued to the stage watching every move he makes. Danny also has two videos out on Hot Licks Video including his latest, *Rhythm Guitar for the Lead Guitarist*.



PAT CIPRIANI

KEVIN BRIGGS

Kevin Briggs is an up and coming hard rock guitarist who hails from Hamilton, ON. No stranger to the Canadian music scene, in 1992, thousands of people got to witness his dexterity on MuchMusic as Kevin placed second in the Canada-wide Yamaha Labatt's Guitar Warz contest.

Kevin is currently writing a computer-based guitar instructional program for PG Music, the creators of "Band in a Box". He is also hard at work preparing to release his first all-instrumental independent CD that should be out by July. I was fortunate to hear three of the cuts for the disc and they are smoking! Kevin is a serious player with monster chops and a wild imagination reminiscent somewhat of Steve Vai.

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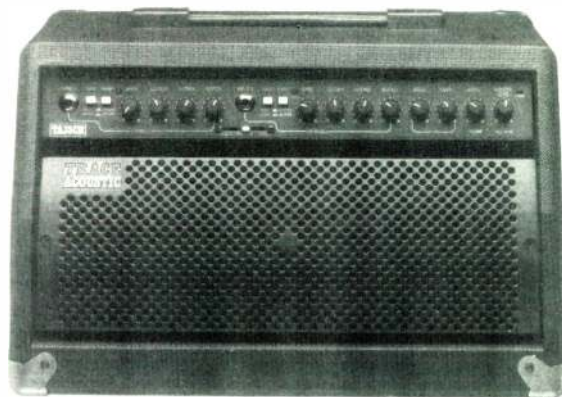
GEAR & GADGETS

NEW ENTRY LEVEL TRACE ACOUSTIC COMBOS

The new Trace Elliot TA35R and TA35CR combos provide affordable performance in a highly versatile and portable package. True acoustic instrument qualities are perfectly reproduced by way of Trace Elliot's Dynamic Correction principle, which compares the signal at the input stage with the signal being presented to the speakers and 'corrects' any differences.

With a proven 2 x 5" speaker configuration and a 35 watts RMS output potent enough to deal with the majority of smaller gigs or solo performances, the two new models share many of the facilities of their bigger relatives. Two independent channels are provided with a master Balance slider control adjusting the blend between channels when both are in use. Each channel has its own Gain and Low/High EQ trim controls plus a Notch Filter for dialing out unwanted feedback. Switchable input gains for each channel allow the TA35 models' compatibility with any active or piezo pickup configuration, while a three-stage LED is included for accurate judgement of the instrument's optimum input gain setting. As a finishing touch, a phase reversal switch is included for tonal variation and further protection against feedback for each channel.

While both combos share these preamp facilities, variations ex-



ist in terms of on-board effects. Both models feature a warm-sounding spring reverb, but the TA35CR also offers a variable Chorus facility for added tonal colours. The TA35R, meanwhile, offers more direct control over the actual tone of its reverb function.

For more information, contact: The Russ Heint Group, 10471 Resthaven Dr., #24, Sidney, BC V8L 3H6 (604) 656-5133, FAX (604) 656-5137.

By Paul Sanderson

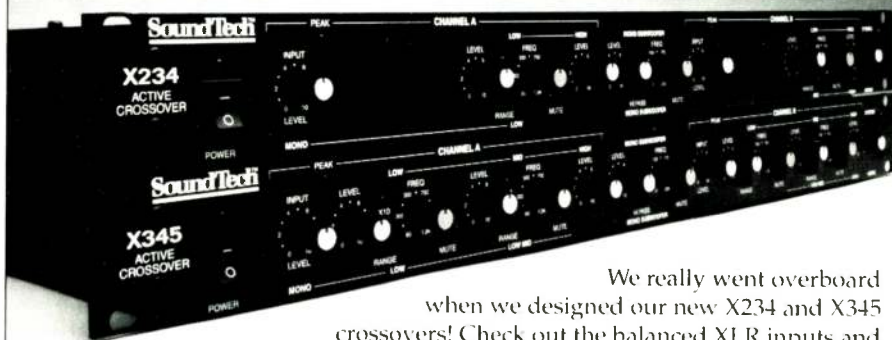
MUSICIANS & The Law In CANADA

By Paul Sanderson

This is the only legal reference book written specifically for the Canadian Music Industry. Updated and revised for 1993, *Musicians & the Law in Canada* covers every aspect of the music business, from live performance contracts to recording contracts, to tax laws, royalties and publishing. A must for musicians and managers.

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HUGHES & KETTNER TUBEMAN PLUS



Hughes & Kettner has announced the introduction of TubeMan Plus — a performance-oriented version of the TubeMan recording amp/preamp. TubeMan Plus was developed by Hughes & Kettner in response to customer demand for a rack mounted, footswitchable version of the TubeMan with MIDI capabilities.

TubeMan Plus incorporates the latest TubeMan gain and tone technology and is constructed in a sturdy 19" steel rack housing. TubeMan Plus features footswitchable channel selection (metal footswitch included), Hughes & Kettner's famous Red Box cabinet simulator output, guitar level outputs and line level outputs. Channel features include Clean, Crunch and Lead channels with a separate Lead Mode switch. TubeMan Plus also incorporates Hughes & Kettner's optional MSM-1 MIDI module. The MIDI module allows all switching functions via a MIDI controller.

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

GROOVE TUBES STP-GII

Groove Tubes has announced the release of its Studio Tube Preamp for Guitar II. Groove Tubes' very first product introduction was the STPG in 1985. The original STPG incorporated GT's patented Speaker Emulator circuit design which converted the power section of the amp (1-6V6 Duet, similar to a Deluxe Reverb) into a direct recording preamp. The Speaker Emulator circuitry captures all the feel and response of playing an amp cranked up, very different from the feel and sound of a distorted preamp design. The original STPG is perhaps one of the most recorded guitar preamp/amp products ever and has been the sound of top recording artists like Billy Gibbons, Chet Atkins, Chuck Berry, David Lindley, Alan Holdsworth, Mike Rutherford, David Gilmour and many others.

The new STPG II has the same classic sound of its legendary predecessor and now offers several new features which expand the tonal possibilities for direct recording and increase the production possibilities for live recording.



New for the STPG II is the selectable output stage feature, which switches between modern Class A/B design and the older style Class A design (used in the early '50s Tweed Fender and the famous Vox AC3D amps). The STPG II's power stage can use either the EL34 or the 6V6HD power tube and will generate 35 watts RMS into 8 ohms in the Class A/B mode, or 24 watts RMS into 8 ohms in the Class A mode.

Also new is GT's Parallel Effects Loop, with balance control between the original tube preamp signal and the effects signal chain, much like the loops on the "Big Boards" used in the studio.

For more information, contact: Groove Tubes, 12866 Foothill Blvd., Sylmar, CA 91342 (818) 361-45DD, FAX (818) 365-9884.

D'ADDARIO INTRODUCES PREMIER END AND BRIDGE PINS

In a continued effort towards providing the musical consumer with superior quality products, D'Addario is expanding its line to include fine crafted end pins and bridge pins.

The pins are constructed from ebony, a dark hardwood yielded by various Old World dicotyledonous trees. These pins are a must for any musician bent on using only the best accessories on their acoustic guitar. The pins come in solid eb-

ony or with either abalone or mother-of-pearl inlays. They are available in sets of seven bridge pins and an end pin, sets of 12 bridge pins and an end pin or bulk packs of 1DD in any of the three styles.

For more information, contact: D'Addario Canada, 50 West Wilmot St., #13, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1M5 (905) 889-D116, FAX (905) 889-8998.

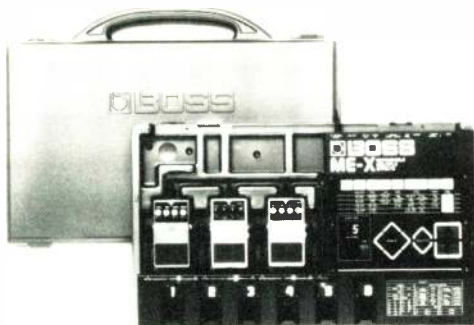
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BOSS CUSTOMIZABLE PEDAL EFFECTS

BOSS has introduced the ME-X Expandable Multiple Effects Board, combining a multi-effects processor and three open slots to accommodate any combination of BOSS compact pedals into a sturdy pedal board.



The built-in multi-effects processor includes eight digital effects and performs six simultaneous effects while incorporating any three BOSS compact effect pedals through programmable effects loops. This allows electric and acoustic guitar players to hand pick their favourite pedals and create unique effect combinations, with all the ease-of-use of familiar pedals.

Fully programmable, the multi-effects section includes a 3-band EQ with adjustable mid frequency, a Noise Suppressor, Chorus, Flanger, Pitch Shifter, Reverb and unique Tempo Delay that lets a user set a delay of up to 1600 ms by tapping in the tempo with a foot pedal. The ME-X features 25 user-programmable patches and a Manual patch to store configurations. Many parameters can be controlled with an expression pedal for powerful real-time control.

Fully enclosed and ruggedly constructed for road travel, the ME-X protects both its internal processor and the three integrated compact pedals. A built-in guitar tuner provides quick and easy tuning.

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

TAKAMINE G SERIES NATURALS

The Takamine G Series guitars have been extremely well received by dealers and consumers alike. Now the company takes the exciting range of acoustic and acoustic-electric guitars into the already-proven Takamine Natural Series by introducing two styles of guitars.

The G-10, EG-10 and EG-10C feature mahogany backs and sides and cedar tops in acoustic, acoustic-electric and acoustic-electric cutaway models.

The rosewood version is available in an acoustic-electric (EG-15) and acoustic-electric cutaway (EG-15C).

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



Bruce Cockburn is a member of Ottawa Local 180.

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ROLAND GR-09 GUITAR SYNTHESIZER

Roland's GR-09 Guitar Synthesizer is an affordable new addition to the GR-series line of guitar synthesizers. With its simplicity and incredible sounds, the GR-09 makes it possible for electric and acoustic guitarists of all levels to easily enter the world of synthesis. With the ability to expand and update the GR-09 with sound expansion boards, guitarists will always be able to keep their sound palettes fresh and exciting.

Like its big brother, the GR-1, the new GR-09 is a compact floor unit that provides easy operation and access to its sounds with foot switches. It utilizes the new GK-2A Guitar Synthesizer Driver, which attaches easily to any steel-stringed acoustic or electric guitar. The GK-2A Guitar Synthesizer Driver includes all the same features and functions of the popular GK-2 but the hexaphonic pickup is smaller. This means it can fit on virtually any guitar. It's also constructed of a new durable material that is ideal for road use. The GR-09/GK-2A combination does not require any knowledge of MIDI to quickly set up and start playing.

The GR-09 can be expanded to 360 Tones with the addition of the optional GR9E-1 Expansion Board, which offers 180 new high quality tones. This user-installable board provides 4 Mb of samples which have been hand-picked from the SR-GR-01 expansion board, including ethnic instruments, guitars and electric pianos, synth waveforms and many more.

Digital reverb and chorus complete the picture for a high-quality, polished sound. Simple knobs and footswitches control all tone selection, sound editing, signal processing and MIDI parameters, and there are no hidden software menus

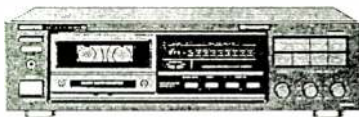


to frustrate users. With the GR-09, a guitarist can sound like a piano, synthesizer, horn or almost any other sound imaginable.

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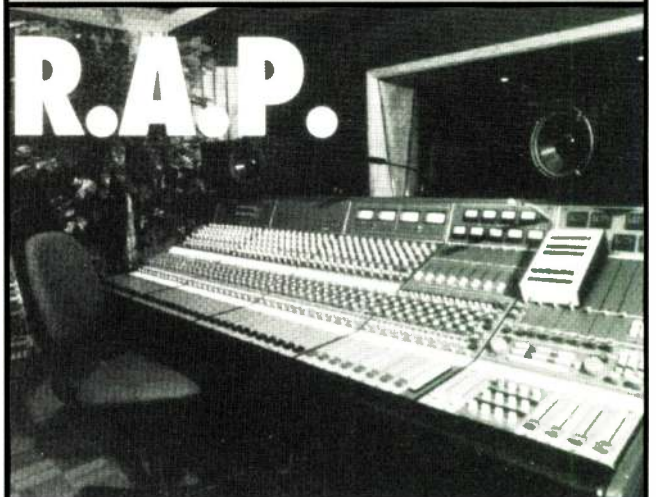
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The Song



IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, SAY IT! Don't beat around the bush. Pick a topic and stick to it. Develop the characters and the story line.

As many of you are well aware, it's all easier said than done. I have spent many hours rewriting lyrics and changing the feel of the music to suit the lyric.

The atmosphere of a song should stay consistent. Always strive then to create a mood, stir an emotion so the listener can feel what's going on. The listener should be able to relate to a song's topic, either through having experienced it themselves or knowing someone who has. In addition, they should be intrigued enough by a good story to want to hear the next line coming up. Try not to say the same thing just by changing the words. Keep the story moving, advance the plot — that's the kind of writing that keeps listeners involved.

Pictures are stronger than words (how many times have you heard that?). I try to use colours, objects and descriptive language in my own writing. Here is an example from the third verse of one of my songs that demonstrates this concept:

"How Long Before I Stop Loving You"

©Ack-rack Publishing (SOCAN)

If you forget to kiss me
Will I forget to care
There's something really missing
There's no magic in the air
The couch is sinking lower
On the side that you sit on
The only glow that's in the room
is when the TV's on.

Here's a second example from another of my songs that shows how to create word-pictures when you write:

"Corey's Dream"

© Ack-rack Publishing (SOCAN)

Corey's got his mind on the ranch
It's his own Alberta gold
He's got the cattle roundup
And he's heading them on back home
The sun's slowly setting just
beyond the trees
And red fills the sky tonight
With promises and dreams.

I tried to pick examples of my own work that convey strong, immediately identifiable images — as if you were sitting back and watching a moving picture.

A problem writers often encounter with story songs is the tendency to let them go on too long. Here's where editing comes in. You'll probably find you can get rid of some lines that really don't take the story anywhere. This takes a lot of patience, as you always run the risk of upsetting the balance for the rest of the lines following. Therefore, keep the story's length in mind right from the beginning.

A story song is like a play. It has a setting, characters, a conflict or drama and the conclusion or payoff — or, at the very least, a statement or point trying to be made. These elements all help make the lyric work.

For inspiration, do yourself a favour and get out of your everyday environment. Let your imagination run wild. Get away from

the phone. Give yourself two hours somewhere in the day or week just for writing. You'd be surprised at what you can come up with.

Develop a songwriter's antenna for turning everyday situations into potential song ideas. Life is full of drama. There's always something you can draw upon if you keep your rabbit ears up!

If you've been writing for a long time already and find yourself in a rut, pull out all those books you've bought at all those seminars. Even if you only read one chapter, it may be all you need to re-ignite that creative spark.

I always bounce my songs off of other songwriters who can provide an objective view. At times, this can lead to co-writing — and I've gotten a lot of good songs from those experiences. Don't be afraid to expose your ideas to others. Constructive criticism can make the difference between a good song and a great one. Because I've become less protective of my little "babies", I've grown up to become a better songwriter. Above all, don't forget to have fun! If an idea isn't coming along, put it aside for a while. Come back to it later with a fresh perspective.

During my career as a professional musician, I've written in many different styles for every band I've been in. Times change, however, and songs become dated. Story songs are timeless — and the stories they tell will always appeal to the little kid in every one of us.

Toronto-based singer/songwriter Gayle Ackroyd has written and recorded several songs and also has been actively involved in staging songwriter workshops and showcases in the Toronto area.

Tape Hiss ?

What tape hiss ?



In my last article, I spoke about analog tape machine alignment. One important aspect of analog recording that we covered in that article was tape hiss. We mentioned two ways of decreasing tape hiss and thereby lowering the noise floor to improve our S/N (signal-to-noise) ratio. One method was to raise the fluxivity (recording level) of the tape machine. The advantage was that, even if you raised it by only 2dB, that meant a 2dB improvement *per channel*. On a four-track, that's an 8dB improvement in the mix. On a 24-track, that's 48dB less noise during the mix. The other method was increasing tape speed. Doubling tape speed improves noise specs by 3dB per channel. A third method, which was not discussed in the last article but which I will touch upon briefly here, is track width.

Doubling track width allows for two things. The first, and most obvious, is greater frequency response and separation between tracks. The second is an improvement, as with doubling tape speed, of 3dB per channel of tape hiss. Therefore, a 1/4" 8-track will have 3dB more hiss per channel than a 1/2" 8-track. A 1/4" 4-track running at 15 ips will have noise specs 3dB per channel better than a 1/4" 8-track at 15 ips, even though both machines are using the same width and formulation of tape and the same fluxivity. Thus, the 1/4" 8-track will have 3dB more noise per channel as well as twice as many tracks, for a total of 24dB more noise.

Pretty gross, eh? Enter Noise Reduction Systems (NRS) . . .

Ever notice that NR on 1/4" 4-tracks is usually an option, while on an 8-track, it's built-in without your consultation? Now you know why! Can you imagine what they had to do with 8-track cassette? With tape that's 1/8" wide, running at 3-3/4 ips while trying to record eight tracks of audio? A quarter the tape width of an 8-track 1/2" recorder, running at a quarter the speed . . . that's, let's see now, eight tracks x 3dB x 2 for halving the tape speed twice, plus eight tracks x 3dB x 2 for halving the track width twice . . . that's 96dB more noise during the mix! Oh, Gawd! What do we do???

"Press the button marked 'NR'. Now, proceed with your recording.

The first NRS on the market, to my knowledge, was Dolby A. Because tape hiss is concentrated in the high frequency range, it was decided that the audio spectrum should be divided into four frequency bands covering lows, low-mid, high-mid and high frequencies. Each band is treated differently according to amount of content and amplitude, using a combination of compression and equalization. During recording, higher frequencies are compressed to tape, allowing more level-to-tape during recording. Upon playback, the process is reversed through expansion, thereby restoring the original high frequency content and lowering the noise in the upper frequency spectrum. In the lower frequency bands, the process becomes progressively less radical, in proportion to the decreasing severity of the noise problem it is correcting. In addition, an equalization (EQ) curve is used to boost high end to tape and is also reversed upon decoding or playback. The result is the restoration of the original high frequency content and a decrease in high frequency tape hiss through the compensating high end attenuation circuitry. The only problem is that this unit costs a big pile of money and utilizes a 19" rackmount space.

dbx, soon after, devised dbx I, a NRS based on roughly the same principles while costing considerably less. Its advantage, in addition to the price, is that eight of them fit into a single powered rackmount unit, cutting down on space. These factors made it easy to create dbx II, the semi-pro and consumer version of the unit, small enough to fit inside recorders to become the "NR button" we know on our home units while still sounding comparable to its parent. Dolby, meanwhile, had developed Dolby B, which we all know and laugh at. It's the one that utilizes EQ only and seems invariably to remove more high end than it ever added, making all your recordings sound like you had a pair of Levis over the mic. The retaliation was Dolby C, which uses EQ and compression, improves noise specs by 10dB over Dolby B and sounds one hell of a lot better.

One huge difference between semi-pro/consumer NRS and pro NRS is the intelligence factor. Intelligent systems process in-

coming signals only when parameters indicate that noise will be audible unless something is done about it. In other words, a loud signal will not be affected by intelligent NRS. The sheer level is sufficient to mask the tape noise. This explains why I bypass NRS when I am recording a death metal band, but am glad for it during jazz recordings. Unintelligent NRS processing is extremely audible during low level, low frequency or highly transient signal. I therefore recommend disengaging the NRS on your home unit for the drum tracks, bass guitar and, perhaps, chunky rhythm guitars. This is, of course, provided that individual NRS track control exists on the unit in question, which rarely occurs in semi-pro audio. Also, because it is the NRS's job to reduce noise and not yours, take it a bit easier on recording levels. What you see on the VU meter is not necessarily what is going to tape. Remember, the NRS, as part of its function, EQs and compresses the signal, causing higher signal on tape than what you see. You don't need that extra 1 or 2dB on tape that you're pushing for. The NRS is ridding you of 10 or 12dB of noise, so don't worry!

When you take your tape recorder in for an audio alignment, please ask them to look at your NRS, should you have any. What goes in should come out. If your recordings sound any different from using NRS, it is an indication that your NRS is decoding differently from the way it is encoding. This is akin to recording on a different tape formulation than the one your machine is biased for. With the unit bypassed, 0 VU at the input of the NRS should result in 0 VU at the output, regardless of whether it is encoding or decoding.

This adjustment, however easy it may sound, *can be done only with a pure 1 kHz sine wave and an accurate metering device*. Do yourself a favour and leave it to someone with such tools at their disposal. Once you do, you'll thank yourself for having spent the money to get it done.

And me, too.

Eric Abrahams is the owner of Sounds Like Hell Productions and the distributor of The Hollywood Edge Sound Effects Library.

MICROPHONES

The First Frontier



Your microphones are the very first piece of equipment in the long chain of the audio path. Hence, it is of utmost importance that we ensure a good starting point for our signal to originate.

Between stick-wailing drummers and mic swinging vocalists, our microphones will be subjected to a lot of physical abuse. Our budget for mics, direct boxes, stands, drum clips, cables, road cases and microphone clips will be \$5,000. The first thing we should do is get some of the smaller purchases out of the way.

Stands and Clips — \$600

When purchasing mic stands, it's important that you make a compromise between your average typical band set up and your worst case scenario of a large touring act. It's always better to have more stands than not enough, although you can rent some extras from your local music store in a pinch. If you do a little shopping and a bit of bartering, you can pick up a good quality mic stand for around \$40. You will need at least one good-quality round base stand for your lead vocalist.

Next, you will need at least four boom stands for the other vocalists. I find that the K&M tripod collapsible-style stands have stood up the best over the years, although many of the other manufacturers offer a stand of similar quality. A couple of shorter boom stands will be required to mic up the guitars and a third would probably come in handy if you choose to mic the bass guitar rig.

When it comes to miking drum kits, you'll need a couple of real short boom stands for the kick drum, a couple of tall boom stands for the overhead microphones, another medium height boom for the hi-hats and at least six drum clips for the toms and snare drum. I like to use mic-eze style drum clips because of their size, durability and flexibility, not to mention the affordability factor.

Road Cases — \$550

The best way to protect your investment is to purchase good custom cases. You'll need one case capable of holding at least 20 microphones with a side compartment for mic clips and direct boxes. A second case will

be required for stands and mic cables.

Microphone Cables — \$600

We'll need to purchase at least 30 good quality mic cables. Rodam is a company that specializes in standard and custom cables and are one of the best at it. I have made the mistake of purchasing cables from several other manufacturers that continually fall short of their promise. Don't compromise quality for cost. Spend a few extra bucks to ensure peace of mind.

Direct Boxes — \$355

Direct boxes or DIs (direct injectors, as more commonly referred to) are used to deliver signals from instruments such as keyboards, bass guitars, acoustic instruments equipped with pickups or any other form of audio signal without amplification. These come in a few different models, each offering various types of features. The two basic types are passive and active. Without getting into a lot of technical jibber jabber, a passive DI requires no external power to operate (i.e., phantom power via the front-of-house console, battery or an external A/C transformer-type adaptor). An active DI will require one of these sources. There is considerably less noise and sound colouration with the active type DI, but not without added expense.

For cost purposes, we'll purchase three passive DIs running us around \$60 each. To save a little more cash, we'll purchase one quad director (a piece of equipment that incorporates four units into one single box). This can be used to handle multiple keyboard signals where the box can be stationed in one spot, and will probably cost us around \$175. One feature that is a must is a ground lift. This breaks the ground signal between the instrument and the front-of-house console to eliminate ground looping (buzzes and hums) between the two components.

Microphones

By purchasing microphones all at once from one dealer, you'll have a lot more bargaining power than if you were to buy a couple here and a couple there. Pay close attention to the polar patterns (the area around the microphone that picks up the sound) and

frequency responses of the microphones. Make sure that they will properly suit their intended applications.

Vocal Mics — \$600

You will need to purchase at least four good quality vocal mics. The most common and widely used style is that of the dynamic ball-type mic with a cardioid polar pattern. The cardioid pickup pattern is most popular because of its ability to reject unwanted sounds from the sides and rear. This is extremely favourable to avoid monitor feedback. Remember, the more in-line you keep your monitor to the base of the mic, the less chance you have of monitor feedback. In cases where a vocalist requires more than one monitor, you may want to look at a hypercardioid or supercardioid mic instead because of its superior rejection of sounds from the sides. Most major microphone manufacturers will be able to offer you a reasonable quality vocal mic around the \$150 mark. For a respectable price, Shure Brothers offer the SM58 model that has been pretty much an industry standard for years.

Guitar Mics — \$450

Most bands will have at least one or two guitarists whose amplifiers you'll be required to mic (unless it's Brent Doerner from Helix. In that case, you won't need any because he plays so loud onstage). With stereo becoming such a popular way to go these days, a lot of guitarists are beginning to take advantage of this and split their rigs into stereo. In this case, you'll need one for each cabinet. If we purchase three decent dynamic microphones, it will probably accommodate most groups.

Bass Guitar Mics — \$250

Many sound engineers, myself included, tend to mic and DI the bass. I find that quite a few bass guitars give plenty of low end but lack the upper mid-range required to give distinction to the notes. By miking the bass cabinet as well, I can get that extra high mid from the speaker that the direct signal from the bass may be lacking. Electro-Voice ND308 and ND408 and the Sennheiser BF509 dynamic style microphones work

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really well for this application.

Drum Mics — \$1,595

This particular area is probably the most controversial and personal than any other. Most sound techs will never agree on which mics to use, although there are some standards that we can all live with. I would advise purchasing as many used mics as possible to keep the costs down in this area. You'll find some pretty good deals in the rental stock departments of most larger audio suppliers.

Bass Drums — \$500

Although you can spend in excess of \$500 for one microphone on this part of the drum kit, it's not very logical in keeping with our budget. Not too many techs will complain if you hand them a couple of Sennheiser MD421 mics for the kick drums. You can usually pick these up used, in good condition for around the \$250 mark.

Snare Drum — \$200

For many years, the Shure SM57 dynamic mic dominated the industry as an acceptable method of miking the snare drum. Sound reproduction was always favourable, although the mic itself was extremely fragile. One accidental hit from a drum stick would usually render the microphone inoperable (protecting the capsule with bent coathanger pieces taped over the top reinforces the mic against these hits). Realizing this as a problem, Shure introduced the Beta 57, constructed of a material made to withstand this type of abuse. That, in addition to an extended frequency response, makes it my microphone of choice.

Toms — \$500

In keeping with our budget, we'll hit the rental department and purchase five used Shure SM57s. If you take reasonable care in your placement of these microphones, they'll give you many years of dependable service. Because of their cost, replacement isn't too painful to absorb.

Cymbals — \$395

To adequately mic hi-hats and cymbals, we'll require at least three condenser microphones. Condenser mics are preferred because the diaphragm of a condenser is absent of the weight of the coil found in a dynamic mic, thus allowing it to respond more quickly to the information. Because of their sensitivity to humidity and physical damage, extra care should be taken to protect your investment.

A condenser microphone will require an external power source to operate. Audio Technica manufactures a few good quality condenser mics well within our budget.

Well, we've managed to put together a reasonably respectable microphone selection as well as cover our stands, cables and cases and still stay within our original budget. Check out the next issue of *CM* as we continue building our dream system.

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





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SERIES

**WHATEVER YOU DO —
DON'T BUY THE WRONG MIXER.**

Especially if you're doing multitrack recording — whether digital or analog. Fact is, a mixer that's not specifically configured with the features essential for multitrack recording just isn't a recording mixer. Bottom line is, general purpose mixers make multitrack recording a nightmare.

You see, mixers that aren't designed and engineered for multitrack recording will torture you with the endless hassle of patching and repatching — every time you track, overdub or mixdown. It's frustrating, wastes valuable time and leaves you tangled in cable.

So before you choose a mixer for your studio — be sure it has the features of a dedicated recording mixer.

IT'S NOT A RECORDING MIXER IF IT DOESN'T HAVE THESE FEATURES.

SWEEPABLE MIDRANGE EQ

Ask for it. Because when it comes time to tailor your sound, you need the flexibility where the action is — in the midrange. The M1500's sweepable midrange lets you isolate specific mid frequencies allowing you to make the subtle tonal corrections you want.

MULTITRACK DECK CONFIGURATION

If you don't have dedicated inputs and outputs for your 8-track deck, where do you plug it in? Without this basic recording configuration you'll be repatching day and night and you won't be able to record on 8 tracks at once. With these inputs, tape monitoring is as simple as pressing a switch. Also, because the TASCAM M1500 is a true 4-buss mixer, you can mix any combination of your input signals to any of the 4 output busses directly to tape.

DIRECT OUT AND GROUP OUT ASSIGNMENT SWITCHES

You gotta have these. Because without them you can't directly send a single input to tape, or record several inputs to one track. But with them, assign your inputs anywhere by pressing a few switches. Best part is, you'll never have to refer to any complex patch diagrams.

IN-LINE MONITORING

A sure sign of a recording mixer. This lets you monitor your tape tracks at any time without sacrificing an input channel. Just press a switch. With the M1500's dual section not only can you monitor tape tracks, it can be used for additional effects sends, or to double your inputs for virtual tracking at mixdown. And do any of this by flipping a switch.

ELABORATE MONITORING

In a recording environment you need to hear what's going through your board at all times. With the M1500's comprehensive monitoring matrix you are able to hear any sound source at any time — inputs, tape, AUX sends, anything — it's your choice, just press a switch.

TRUE TRANSPARENCY AND LOW NOISE

In recording, your signal goes through the mixer several times. And each time it goes through, it is important not to lose or gain anything. Especially an identifiable "mixer sound." Test any mixer for its transparency. Take any signal and bounce it 3 or 4 times on your favorite digital recorder. With the truly transparent M1500, you'd be hard pressed to differentiate between the bounced tracks and the original signal.

At TASCAM, we've been making multitrack recording equipment for more than 20 years. We pack that experience into every mixer we make — and we make more recording mixers than any other company in the world.

For our M1500 Series of recording mixers, the result is an affordable mixing console configured for 8-track recording. A truly transparent mixer that makes tracking, overdubbing, and mixdowns easy. An extraordinarily flexible console loaded with the features and specs you'd expect on consoles costing thousands more.

But the M1500 Series of recording mixers are priced less

than many general purpose mixers on the market. They're available in a 16-channel/32-input tabletop version (M1516) and a compact rack mountable 8-channel/16-input version (M1508). So if you're involved in digital or analog 8-track recording, you've just found the best recording console value in the industry.

Get your hands on a true recording mixer today: the TASCAM M1500 Series. There's one waiting for you at your authorized TASCAM dealer. Go ahead — test it and play with it. It's your next recording mixer.

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having the *best digital filters* and most powerful synthesis architecture, V.A.S.T.® is the most flexible programming architecture ever offered, for warmth, richness and realism of sound. **KURZWEIL GIVES YOU ACCESS TO THE**

SOUNDS YOU NEED - reads not only Kurzweil, but also Ensoniq®, Roland™ (SCSI only) and Akai® libraries; accepts

sample dump via MIDI or SMDI (SCSI). See your Kurzweil dealer. Or

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INDEPENDENCE

the double-edged sword



By now, most musicians are well aware of the increasingly healthy attitude towards the independent recording scene. In Canada, we've heard the success stories (relatively speaking) of such acts as Barenaked Ladies, Loreena McKennitt, Lowest of the Low, Moist, The Tea Party and The Waltons.

Traditionally speaking, the majority of recording artists in the pop genre launched their careers with demo tapes. Their tape usually finds its way to A&R reps who, if interested enough, arrange to see the act perform live. At this point, if A&R believes the act to be a worthy investment, they will try to convince the company heads into signing the act to the label.

However, this formula appears to be losing its popularity, presenting advantages and disadvantages for both the prospective recording artist and the hit-seeking record company . . .

THE WAY IT WAS

In the past, musicians composed and performed their music and the record companies exploited it. Now, the independent attitude has forced career-minded musicians to also finance, produce, distribute and promote their recordings as well. On top of all this, the independent musician is forced to become publicist, publisher, booking agent and maybe even video producer!

Generally speaking, record company expectations of unsigned acts have escalated in recent years and the thriving indie scene is largely responsible for this. Where musical merit and performance was once what solely linked artist and record label, the company now has several additional points on which to base a decision.

It's their money at risk and the more information they have on an artist, the more confident a decision they will make. If the A&R department of any label is doing their job properly, they will know where your record is selling and if you've toured. They should have an idea of how strong your live draw is and how much attention you're given by the press.

AN OPEN BOOK ON YOUR ATTITUDE

All of these elements present an open book

on your attitude and work ethic. Most acts that reach this point have completed what record companies consider to be the most important and difficult level of your career — the developmental stage. You've shown that you can write and play your own songs, work well with the press, make it to radio and keep your band together without killing each other. This period was always The Big Unknown for labels that signed acts directly from a demo tape.

But where one party gains, the other loses. You've proven yourself to a degree and now the record companies have sufficient data on you and are more comfortable about approaching your act with an offer, or at least serious communication.

In the meantime though, you may have spent your life savings on a video that is rarely seen and turned your parent's basement into a shipping warehouse. Of course, the other side of the coin is that you get to keep most of the profits of your recording sales (which usually go right out the door again to pay for the new transmission in the touring van).

You do get to keep 100% of the artistic control, which should make it worth all the headaches. The record company's loss is that by taking the time to monitor bands this way, they run the risk of letting an act slip through their fingers to a label that has kept an equally close eye on everything. Every day they wait is another day of recording profits going to you instead of them. The reality is that there is between \$5-\$9 of profit to be made on a CD. By waiting this long, a record company also diminishes its bargaining strength while you improve yours. If you have proved yourself, labels will chase you, thus giving you more choice and increased negotiating muscle.

THE DEMOCRACY OF INDEPENDENCE

One could describe it as democratic; the people are deciding what they want to hear, rather than record companies dictating the next musical wave. Popular music started in this fashion, but became too dependent somewhere along the way, maybe too dependent on money. The major labels are too big and cumbersome to really seek out

or spawn new musical genres. This has resulted in another popular practice: not only are major labels searching for which bands are on the upswing, but also what indie labels are on to something profitable.

This is also evident in the way that music is returning towards regionalization. Regionalization makes it more difficult for an act to break nationally or internationally, but provides for more acts to make some sort of splash on the scene, even if it's for a smaller audience. All forms of media are providing more room for independent artists.

Arguably, the longer you can successfully remain independent, the better. By carrying out all of these responsibilities, you become "business smart", which is crucial to your career, as ultimately all artists are their own managers. On the other hand, an artist who is too caught up in the business suffers artistically; the music always has to come before the business, and the business has a habit of overwhelming the art. By remaining independent, you'll not only retain artistic control, making approximately \$8 per CD — you'll make between \$1 and \$4 per CD when signed to a label, depending on your deal. Just as importantly, you will learn most aspects of the music business and you will also find it gratifying to earn a living doing it your own way. It is these incentives that have encouraged many people to start record companies of their own.

There may come a time when you have to make the jump to a label in order to reach the next stage in your career, in the same way that an indie label will hook up with a major label to increase their promotion, distribution and financing.

When that time comes, make sure you've been watching them as close as they've been watching you.

Don Christensen is the Chairman of the International Managers Forum Canada and operates NOISE Management, representing Bob Wiseman and Growl.

CM

A ROUND NEW JERSEY,

word has it, there are some dangerous guitar players. The

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Subjects: Richie Sambora, Al Di Meola - Roundbacks: 1992 Collectors' Series, Custom Legend - Location: 2nd and Boardwalk, Asbury Park, NJ - Photo: Jeff Sacks
For more info: Ovation Guitars, distributed in Canada by
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P R O D U C T



N E W S

Lexicon Vortex

The Vortex from Lexicon is a stereo effects processor that can produce simultaneous effects including modulation, spatialization, unique tap-demo echoes and looping — all controllable via dual-quadrature LFOs, an envelope follower or footpedal.

The Vortex also offers the unique ability to “morph” effects, producing a continuously varying combination of two effects. The “morph” can be anywhere from 0.01 to 10 seconds, or you can use

an expression pedal to morph in real time.

In addition to 32 Presets, you can create 32 User Registers that can be footswitch-selected, morph between any pair and set up custom register “chains”. Each of the 32 Presets features a dynamic envelope follower patched into one of the parameters.

For more information, contact: S.F. Marketing, 6161 Cypihot, St. Laurent, PQ H4S 1R3 (514) 856-1919, FAX (514) 856-1920.



Kawai Pocketband

Kawai announces the release of the Pocketband, a compact, more affordable version of the highly successful GB2 session trainer. Completely portable, the Pocketband is powered by four AA batteries or optional AC adapter.

The unit hooks on to a belt much like a portable cassette player, enabling anyone to practice with a full band anywhere, anytime. Pocketband may be played through the player's own optional external speakers or through headphones for total privacy. Pocketband comes with 20 built-in rhythms, from blues to rock to big band, and is also compatible with optional Kawai Song Cards (ROM cards), which contain over 240 well-known arrangements including music from the Beatles, Santana, Jeff Beck and Led Zepplin, as well as metal, rock, blues, standard jazz, fusion and country.

For more information, contact: Kawai Canada Music Ltd., 6400 Shawson Dr., #1, Mississauga, ON L5T 1L8 (905) 670-2345, FAX (905) 670-3646.



Sabian Jack DeJohnette Encore Series

Sabian's Signature Series has lead off their '94 collection with an update from the artist who started it all, modern jazz pioneer Jack DeJohnette.

For the Encore Series, Jack and Sabian completely re-worked his Signature line, retaining the raw unlathed work, but incorporating hammering and a new Gold Satin finish. The results, according to Jack, were highly rewarding. “These cymbals are user-friendly. The sonic vibrations are

tuned to reduce ear fatigue. The Ride is crystal clear . . . Chinese warm, dark and versatile. The Crashes are the most exciting and different — they have a silvery, singing sound. The Hi-Hats are thick and heavy — lighter when played with a stick.”

For more information, contact: Sabian Ltd., Main St., Meductic, NB E0H 1L0 (506) 272-2019, FAX (506) 272-2081.



Yamaha CVP-25 Digital Piano

For the entry-level buyer, the Yamaha CVP-25 digital piano provides a powerful array of the capabilities for which Yamaha Clavinova digital pianos are noted, at a new low price point.

Feature highlights of the CVP-25 are an AWM (Advanced Wave Memory) tone generator system which delivers 128 realistic instrument voices, a 76-note touch sensitive keyboard, 99 rhythm styles with fully-orchestrated accompaniments, 28-note polyphony permitting use of sophisticated playing techniques and General MIDI compatibility.

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

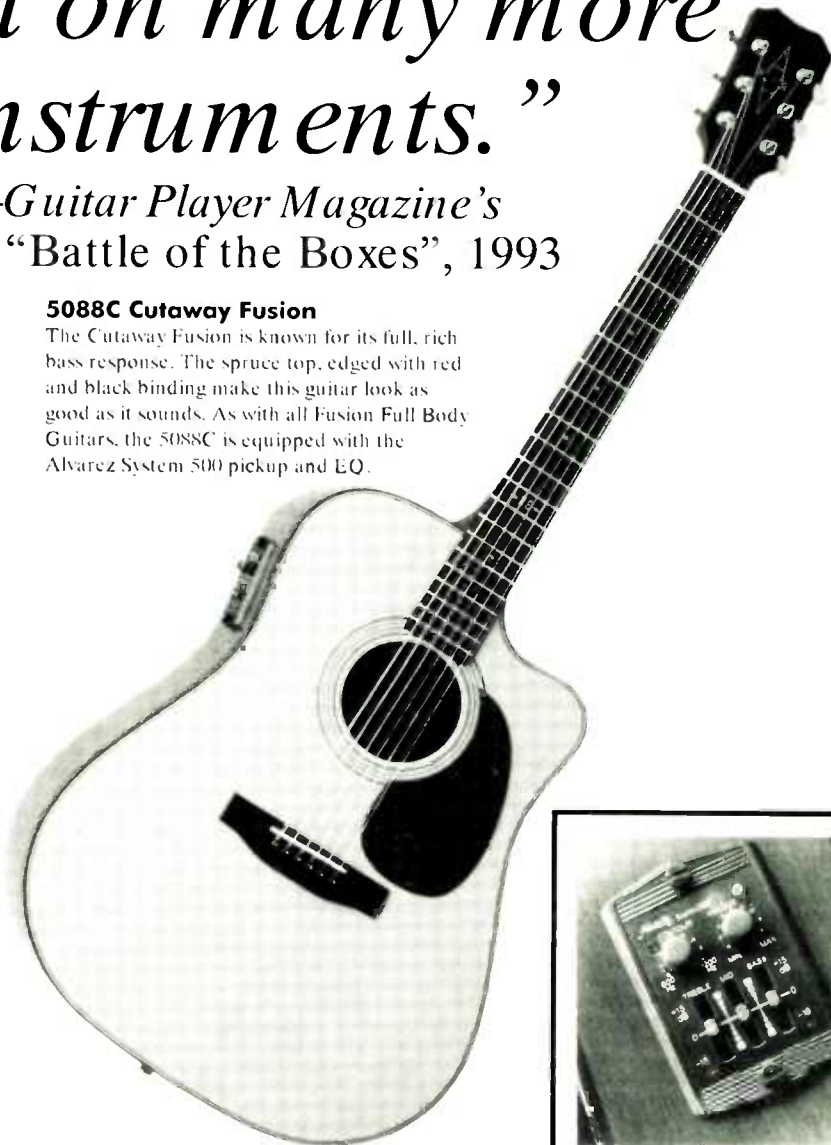
“Our ‘Best Buy’ winner is the Alvarez Artist 5088C... It kicks butt on many more expensive instruments.”

*—Guitar Player Magazine’s
“Battle of the Boxes”, 1993*

Guitar Player Magazine has had a lot of good things to say about Alvarez guitars lately. Visit your local store to see and hear what all the talk’s about.

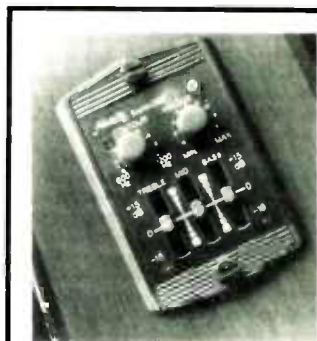
5088C Cutaway Fusion

The Cutaway Fusion is known for its full, rich bass response. The spruce top, edged with red and black binding make this guitar look as good as it sounds. As with all Fusion Full Body Guitars, the 5088C is equipped with the Alvarez System 500 pickup and EQ.



“The Alvarez System 500 is the best piezo pickup system we tried. The Alvarez Artist 5088C knocked us out with its great acoustic and electric tones and workmanship. It kicks butt on many more expensive instruments. It’s an incredible deal.”

*Guitar Player Magazine
Battle of the Boxes, 1993*



The Alvarez System 500 is the most advanced EQ system available. It offers ± 15 dB of gain on separate bass, mid and treble slider controls and incorporates a mid-contour control that selects the active mid center frequency. The System 500 effectively amplifies while eliminating feedback and howl. Also included are an on/off switch and volume control.

Alvarez
The Musicians Perspective

Whitlok Marketing Inc.

1755 Plummer Ave., Unit # 11
Pickering, ON
L1W 3S1

Crest Launches CA 6 and CA 9 Amps

Crest Audio has introduced the new CA 6 and CA 9 amplifiers.

The CA 6 and CA 9 offer levels of performance and sonic quality previously unattainable in their price category. The CA 6 is rated (both channels driven) at 350 WPC (watts per channel) @ 8 ohms, 600 WPC @ 4 ohms, 750 WPC @ 2 ohms and 1200 W @ 8 ohms bridged. The CA 9 is rated at 550 WPC @ 8 ohms, 900 WPC @ 4 ohms, 1000 WPC @ 2 ohms and 1800 W @ 8 ohms/2000 W @ 4 ohms bridged. Both amplifiers take up two rack spaces and incorporate circuitry and technology pioneered in Crest's Professional Series amplifiers, used by many of the world's most successful touring companies.

CA amplifiers are designed to operate with greater efficiency in difficult load and power conditions. Crest's IGM circuit ensures trouble-free operation into 2 ohm loads, and Crest's higher efficiency design maximizes output power under often less than ideal real-world operating conditions. The twin tunnel-cooled heatsinks and variable speed fans maintain the CA's output transistors at a consistent temperature to ensure longer life. The CA's clip limiting circuit helps protect drivers and makes sure that sound integrity is maintained in extreme overload conditions.

Hohner CX-12 Harmonica

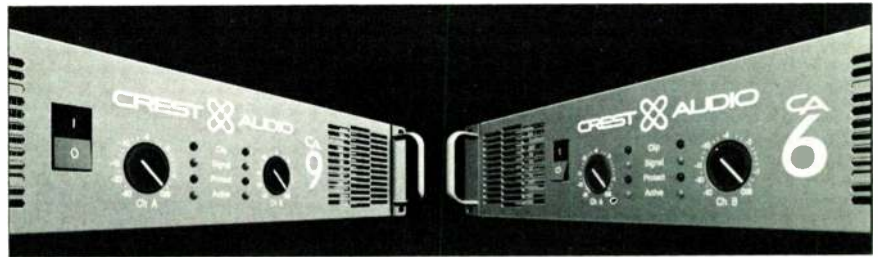
Recently awarded an Industrial Design Award by the prestigious Design Center Stuttgart, the CX-12 harmonica by Hohner offers significant advances in their harmonica design. The result is an instrument with better airtightness for improved sound projection, a smoother slide action and better reed response.

The CX-12 has fewer parts than its predecessors. Its new moulded, one-piece housing makes disassembly and reassembly for service and cleaning far easier.

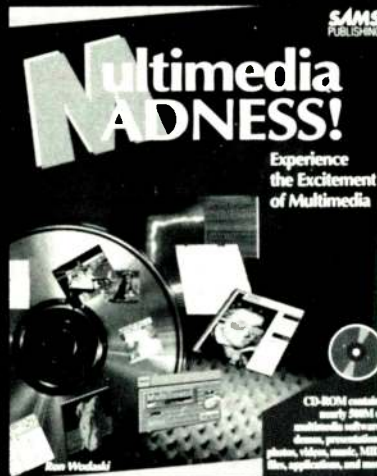
Other advances incorporated in the CX-12 include greater durability and constancy of pitch, and a new sleek design that belies the traditional staid look of harmonicas.

The CX-12 is available in black, ivory and maroon, as well as gold and silver metallic.

For more information, contact: Hohner, Inc., PO Box 15035, Richmond, WA 23227-5035 (804) 550-2700, FAX (804) 550-2670.



For more information, contact: Contact Distribution Ltd., 38 Thornmount Dr., #1, Scarborough, ON M1B 5P2 (416) 287-1144, FAX (416) 287-1204.



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...so quiet I had to doublecheck to make sure it was on. M.C., Los Angeles, CA

One of the mixer's most impressive features is the channel EQ section. The amount of tonal control is awesome.

Electronic Musician 2/94

"The mic input circuitry is the remarkable low noise design that first brought Mackie into the spotlight." H&SR (UK) 2/94

32•8 shown (instead of 24•8) because we had a cooler picture of it.

"I'm happy to report that the desk maintains Mackie's reputation for clean, quiet circuit design. Some of my tests, involving CDs, showed up the noise on the original recording quite clearly. Even without the EQ switched in, the desk displayed a very open, transparent quality."

Sound on Sound (UK/Europe) 12/93

NEW! 24•E 24-ch. expander
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"Killer, sweet-sounding, mega-versatile EQ!!!"

R.T., Los Angeles, CA

"The board's price may put its primary market in the personal studio and small project studio, but it's crammed with truly professional features. Home recordists can stay with the Mackie 8•Bus as they upgrade from semi-professional to professional gear, thanks to the board's ability to run either +4 dBu or -10 dBV operating levels. Everyone (and I mean everyone) who saw the 8•Bus wanted one, and the desire was intensified if they stuck around to hear it."

Electronic Musician 2/94

"Amazing. Beautiful. Sexy. I've been waiting for six years for someone to come out with a mixer like this." J.C., Charlotte, NC

"With excellent sonic quality, frequency response, harmonic distortion and crosstalk specs, number of inputs, plenty of headroom, good-quality mic preamps, and the upcoming automation package, the price of the Mackie 24x8 seems insignificant."

MIX magazine 2/94

"When I read about your 'quiet' fan in your power supply manual, I almost fell over. When I didn't hear it, I fell to my knees. When I brought up fader after fader and still heard nothing, I almost blacked out! Who in the world EVER realizes that audio gear must be quiet? I love you people." D.S., Palmdale, CA

"Used a competitor's console while waiting for your 8•Bus and will never use the other board again. Yours is quieter, has better mic pre's, better EQ, more logically laid out, much cleaner sound and better quality construction."

P.P., Salt Lake City, UT

"Flip... allows you to choose the signal that's fed to the channel strip and conversely selects the signal that is sent to Mix B, the powerfully featured monitor section. Yes you can still access all the gear you plumbed in without having to repanel a thing. This... effectively doubles your inputs. It's ideal for mixing situations when you have stuff playing live from a sequencer coming in on Mix B."

H&SR (UK edition) 9/94

"The back of the board has 24 submaster/tape outputs incorporating a triple bus system normalizing your submaster to tape ins on the multitrack. When you send a signal to submaster 1 output, for example, it

appears at submaster outputs 1, 9 and 17, which simplifies operations with 8-, 16- or 24-track recorders."

MIX magazine 2/94

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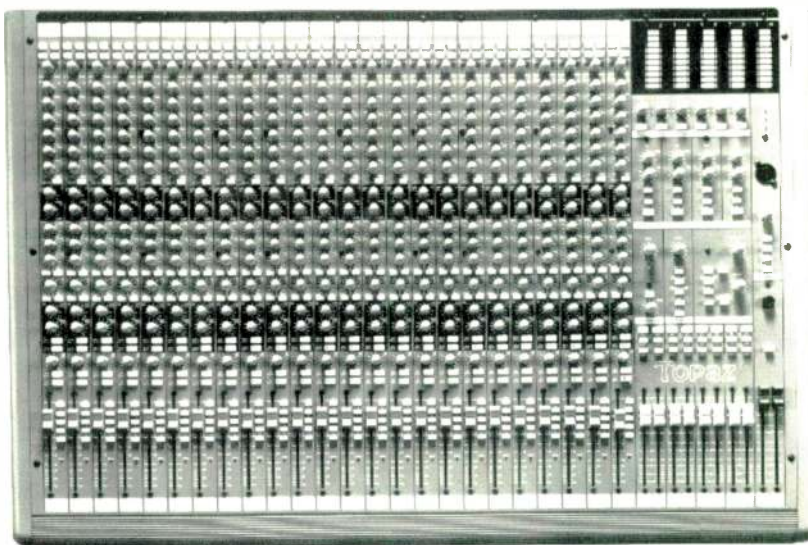
P R O D U C T
 N I W S

Soundtracs Topaz 8-Bus Console

Soundtracs has introduced the Topaz 8-bus recording console. Available in 24- and 32-channel versions, Topaz features a dual-input inline design endowed with the sonic excellence and smooth, intuitive operation of the company's most celebrated consoles.

Unlike other boards in its class, Topaz delivers full 4-band equalization with dual swept mids in addition to dedicated EQ on all tape monitors. Topaz also provides Solo and Mute functions on all tape monitors, another unique feature that lets users get to the heart of the problem quickly and easily in mixdown situations.

An innovative 'Floating Bus' design allows the mixer's eight group outputs to be routed to all 24 inputs of a tape machine without any re-patching. Topaz is also one of the very few 8-bus consoles to offer the option of fully professional 12-bit high resolution VCA/Mute automation with 4,096 increments on each fader that eliminate 'zipper noise'. An optional meter bridge is available for both the 24-channel and 32-channel versions.



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

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David Chester, Chalet Studio

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Yorkville Audiopro 3400

The Audiopro 3400 power amplifier, the most powerful of the Audiopro series from Yorkville Sound, is now available. The AP-3400 delivers 1200 watts (Continuous Average) per channel @ 4 ohms making it ideal for sound reinforcement applications involving larger speaker systems such as Yorkville's Elite series EX-2000 and SW-

1000 enclosures.

The 40 lb., two rack space AP-3400 utilizes the same two-tier design as Yorkville's popular AP-3000 but is optimized for 4 ohm speaker loads. The AP-3000 output is 1200 watts per channel into 2 ohms. Features include an Energy Management System which monitors and



regulates AC current to maintain high performance from 120 volt 12 amp circuits. Toroidal power supply for low hum and lighter weight and switchable bass boost. Providing clean sound with ample headroom and rugged, reliable construction, the AP-3400 is ideal for touring professionals and installers alike.

For more information, contact: Yorkville Sound, 550 Granite Ct., Pickering, ON L1W 3Y8 (905) 837-8481, FAX (905) 837-8746.

Hipshot Bass Tuning Machine

Hipshot has introduced the Hipshot Ultra Light Mini Bass Tuning Machine. The Ultra Light is sleek and compact and is easily installed on the smallest of 4-, 5- and 6-string bass headstocks. Its design allows easy conversion from either bass or treble side applications. This eliminates the expense and hassle of double stocking.

The Ultra Light comes standard with the traditional "clover leaf" style or the more contemporary "Y" shaped key. These also can be changed at a moments notice to suit customers' needs. The Ultra Light is lighter than most other popular mini pegs, yet possesses a full size 3/8" diameter string post and a rugged full size worm and worm gear to easily handle even the heaviest bass strings. Available in chrome, black and gold finishes.

For more information, contact: Hipshot Music Products, 7726 Burnet Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91405 (818) 988- 5630, FAX (818) 988-5680.

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P R O D U C T
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Sennheiser K6 Series

Sennheiser has announced the introduction of a new line of electret microphones. This series, like its predecessor, the K3U series, takes a modular approach to bringing the user a versatile and high quality microphone system.

The series' backbone are the K6 and K6P powering modules for "AA" battery or phantom power operation respectively. Capsules available for this series are the ME62, ME64, ME65, ME66, ME67, MKE2-60 and the MKE102-60. The ME62 and ME64 are omnidirectional and cardioid capsules ideal for interviewing situations, the ME66 and ME67 are short and long shotgun microphones for more directional pickup and the MKE2-60 and MKE102-60 are omnidirectional lavalier microphones. The ME65 is a supercardioid head that has the classic handheld look for on-camera interviews. Their ability to take extremely high sound pressure levels and their low self noise and high signal-to-noise ratio make these microphones ideal for any type of situation ranging from outdoor interviews to indoor concert recording. This series can be purchased one piece at a time or all at once in an attractive carrying case.

For more information, contact: Sennheiser (Canada) Inc., 221 Labrosse, Pointe Claire, PQ H9R 1A3 (514) 426-3013, FAX (514) 426-2979.



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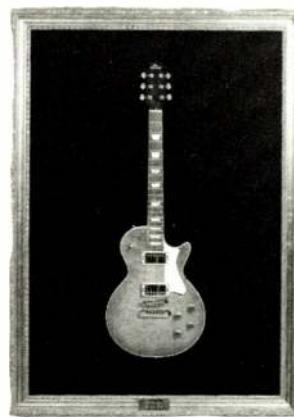
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Samson Stage 33 Wireless

In order to ensure problem-free RF reception over greater distances, Samson engineers have developed Microprocessor True Diversity technology (patent applied for) as part of the new Stage 33 Wireless system.

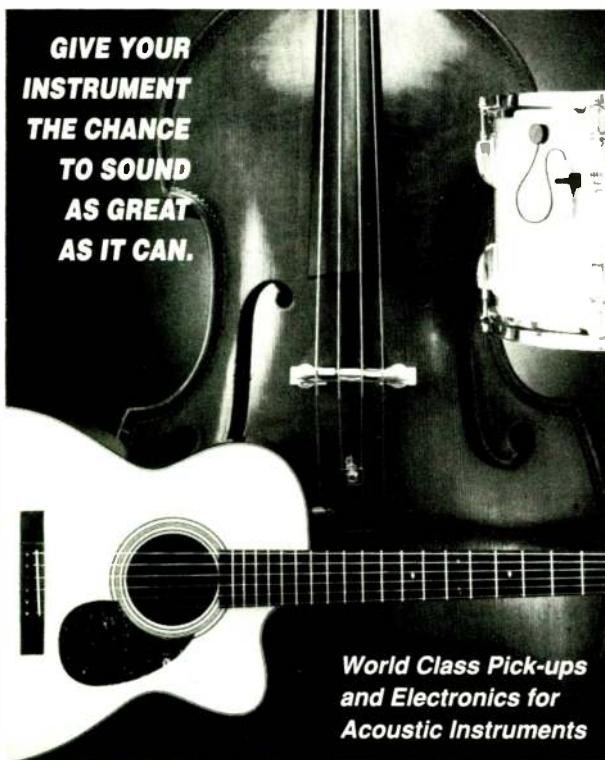
This new computer-controlled circuitry constantly scans incoming signals from two antennas at very high rates of speed and discretely chooses the optimum RF signal for perfect reception in any situation. Microprocessor True Diversity empowers Stage 33 with the performance-for-price that distinguished Stage 22, Samson's most popular wireless system.

Built-in dbx Noise Reduction provides ultra-quiet performance and excellent audio quality for a variety of applications. The high-quality HT-3 handheld and CT-3 belt-pack transmitters include an array of on-board controls such as Power On/Off, Audio On/Off, Mute and Audio Sensitivity. As with all Samson Wireless systems, the Stage 33 is available with a variety of popular mic elements.

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

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— moist

STYLE: Rock CONTACT: Moist, PO Box 355, 1195 Davie St., Vancouver, BC V6G 1N2

Now that the dust has settled in the Seattle feeding frenzy, where are all the A&R reps going to go next? If they're wise, they'll cross the border to Vancouver and get Moist.

Moist is David Usher (vocals), Jeff Pearce (bass), Mark Makowy (guitar), Paul Wilcox (drums) and Kevin Young

(keyboards) and they have been making a major impact on the independent music scene over the past few months. They've crossed the country twice in the past year, recently signed with EMI Music Publishing and are in heavy rotation nationally on radio and video.

Moist's 11-song *Silver* CD is best described as an alternative to Alternative. Their music is stylistically diverse, intelligent and sexual. By combining rock, power-blues guitar riffs and some impressive pop harmonies with (yes) grunge, this band has successfully crossed the barrier between "alternative" and "mainstream". "Push" is a straight-ahead rock number with driving guitar riffs and passionate vocals that rise and fall with a trenchant intensity. Where "Push" is passionate, "Believe Me" is insidiously sensual. It is slower — almost soulful — with a Delta R&B sensibility. The elemental bassline and '70s-inspired organ-like keys coupled with the emotional urgency of Usher's lead vocals show a musical maturity not often seen in a year-old band. "Break Her Down" provides an almost voyeuristic view into personal relationships. Again, it is the combination of passionate vocals, burning guitar and pounding drums that give this song its characteristic Moist edge.

Moist has tapped into the emotions and concerns of the twenty-something post-boomers with an intelligent, sensual and creative voice. This is a band that a generation can follow for years to come.

RICK COLBOURNE & HARD POETRY

STYLE: Hard-Folk CONTACT: Frantic Muse Productions, PO Box 93558, Nelson Park Post Office, Vancouver, BC V6E 4L7 (604) 681-1353.

"Words with attitude" is how Rick Colbourne describes *Hard Poetry*. Passion, conviction and strength also come to mind when listening to this Don Ramos-produced ten-track release.



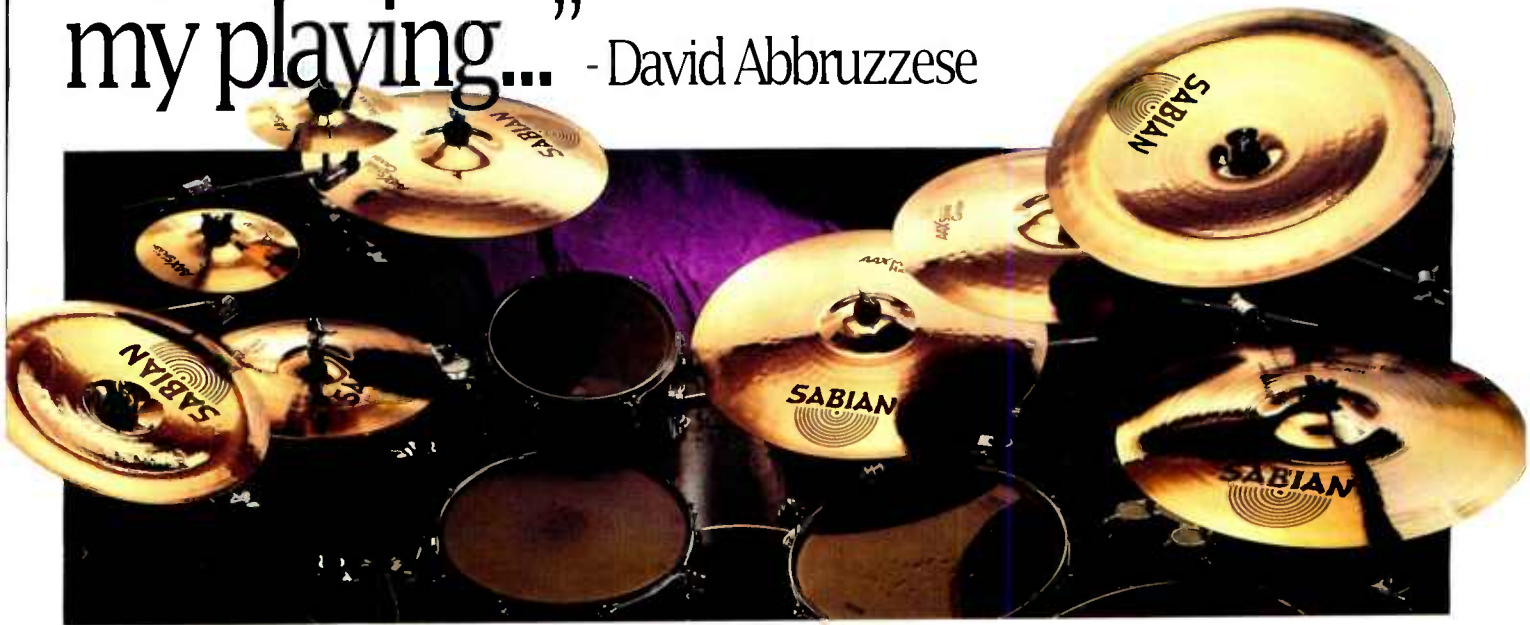
Rick Colbourne & Hard Poetry have a decidedly Canadian sound. It is that curious blend of acoustic rock tunes with equal doses of folk and blues and a heavy reliance on honest lyrics and harmonies. It is very versatile and listenable — you know, Canadian!

Lead vocalist/guitarist Rick Colbourne is a multi-faceted character singer. He looks much like an urban militant but his appearance hides his poetic nature and diverse musical abilities. With the musical accompaniment of Bill Briscoll (bass/vocals), Ian Noble (drums) and Janine Bracewell (guitar/vocals), *Hard Poetry* add a simple acoustic depth with pleasing harmonies that characterize the sound of this release.

While much of *Hard Poetry* focuses on the social and political issues of the day, Rick Colbourne attacks these issues with a humanistic touch that gives each song a hopeful slant. The strident romantic musings of songs like "I Cry Out" offer a release from the heavier, issue-oriented tunes of social consciousness. "I've Got Desire" gives a brief glimpse of Colbourne's vision and creativity that hits the listener in a very personal way. Perhaps this explains why the track has been featured on the full-length Canadian film, *The Lotus Eaters*. The west coast and the film industry have embraced the simple sounds of Rick Colbourne & Hard Poetry. In a short time, the word will spread nationally on this multi-talented group.

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“Having SABIANS on both sides of my setup has really opened up my playing...” - David Abbruzzese



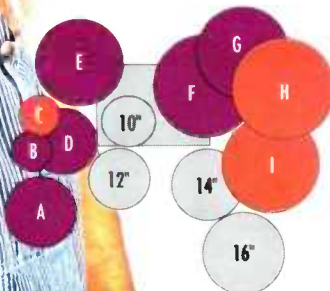
“SABIAN cymbals are a huge part of my sound. Pearl Jam music is really rhythmic, so rather than play a lot of drum fills, I splash and crash lots of accents or play heavy on my Ride and Chinese cymbal to tie everything together. I really like the contrasts I get by mixing up the small Splashes and 14" AAX Mini Chinese with the bigger Crashes and AA Chinese. That mix of small and big is really dynamic.

The 20" AA Chinese is a total contrast to everything else. It's so raw... like a guitar in over-drive. Just hit it - there's a real change of

focus. It's great for riding, or crashing to start or finish a fill.

You can see that I've got the 8" AA and AAX Splashes and Mini Chinese by my Hi-Hat. Having cymbals on both sides of my setup has really opened up my playing... I'm doing lots of two-handed cymbal patterns and fills, like rolling from the snare to the Hi-Hat and up to the Splashes. Or nailing the Mini Chinese and the snare at the same time... what a great sound.”

For more info on SABIAN cymbals and the setups of leading drummers, see your SABIAN dealer or contact us directly for your free copy of this year's SABIAN NewsBeat Catalog.



- A 14" AAX Mini Chinese
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- E 17" AAX Stage Crash
- F 20" AAX Metal Ride
- G 18" AAX Stage Crash
- H 20" AA Chinese
- I 19" AA Medium Thin Crash



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