

CANADIAN

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Printed in Canada
Volume XX
Number 3



In this issue
Wide Mouth Mason
Holly McNarland
The Future of Guitar
...advice from the best!



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Photo by Bryan Adams

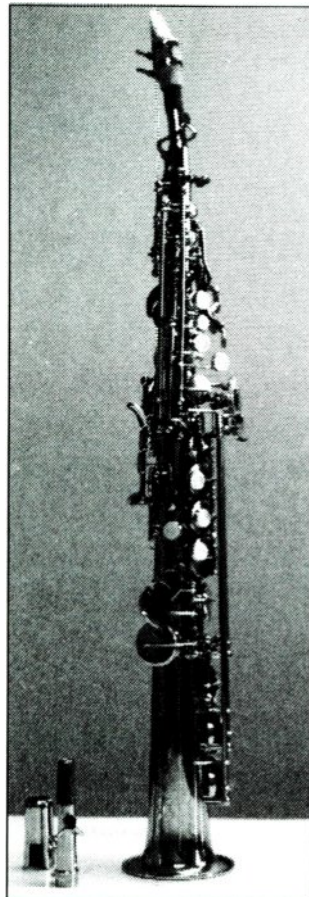
Keeping Your Band Together

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Canadian Musician is published bi-monthly by Norris-Whitney
Communications Inc. All rights reserved. Contents may not be
reprinted without permission from the publisher. Subscription rates:
1 year \$19.00, 2 years \$36.00, 5 years \$82.00. Outside Canada:
1 year \$24.00, 2 years \$46.00, 5 years \$112.00. Single copies \$3.50.
Canadian residents add 7% GST. To change your subscription address,
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postal code) to: Subscription Dept., Canadian Musician, at least six
weeks before moving. Back issues of Canadian Musician are available
in Microform from Micromedia Ltd., 20 Victoria St., Toronto, ON M5C
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return of any unsolicited material. Printed in Canada. Publications Mail
Registration No. 4666. Postage paid at Toronto, ON.
ISSN 0708-9635 INDEXED IN THE CANADIAN PERIODICAL INDEX

NWC

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23 Hannover Dr., #7, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A3
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Are Labels Really Worth It?

Dear CM,

This is just an observation on my part. I'm an independent singer/songwriter. I was signed to a Canadian label for five years (no names mentioned). I find that there's many mistakes being made both by artists and the industry. One ... I understand that when a label invests time and money in an artist, they have the right to try and make good on that investment. I do not however believe that the industry has the right to alter (putting in politely) or conform the product. After all, if any of us invest in say, stocks. We take the risk. We do not alter that stock to suit our wants. I believe that the artist should have enough belief in himself/herself to refuse compromising their art. Yet it happens all the time. Everyone knows that the music business is just that — a business. Yet that business has very little to do with my art. If I write what isn't hip, that song will never be supported by a major label. It doesn't really matter. As an artist, I survive playing gigs. I record what I want and sell what I can at those gigs. I wonder what the labels would do if NO artists signed on with them? My guess is that there would be NO label. I think artists should think about that one before courting a label to gain their attention by convincing the label that their band IS making the "scene". After all, what does it really mean? Will you still be making music after you're dumped or after you decide to leave? I do. I'm hanging on because I believe in the art. I'm not interested in courtship with a label — just an audience. Good luck to all of the musicians!

Robert Philipp, Toronto, ON

**Ed - Valid point. What would labels do if no one signed to them? What if only working for the audience or your art doesn't pay the rent?*

Too Much Spice Out There Already...

Dear CM,

I would just like to say that I am thoroughly impressed with your magazine. I hadn't known it was around until, when buying a magazine for a friend, I saw it sitting there among the *Rolling Stone* and the *Billboard* magazines. Finally, a magazine that deals with the subjects I am interested in. And where I don't have to see the Spice Girls every second page! My life is now complete — finally a magazine dedicated to Canadian music and that which makes it work. I know you've been around for a while, but with most drug and bookstores carrying mainly magazines of little useful content to me, I tend to reject these racks.

It also helped me to realize my desire to pursue a career in the music industry. I now have many new ideas on how to pursue a career in the music industry. Hats off to *Canadian Musician*. Thank you and keep up the good work!

Stacey Irvine, Winnipeg, MB

**Ed - Thanks for your input and good luck.*

Best Band On The Planet?

Dear CM,

Your magazine is great and I love it! In fact, I have a suggestion: since Sloan's new album, *Navy Blues*, has just been released, don't you think they deserve a story with lots of photos? They are the best band on the planet and the greatest four guys any interviewer could ask to meet — just an idea.

Thanks, you guys rock. I hope you realize how much your magazine helps prospering music industry students. I hope to be involved in the biz one day, and *Canadian Musician* really helps. In fact, I may become a music journalist, so I pay close attention to how the articles are written. Keep up the good work!

Kari Dykes, Winnipeg, MB

**Ed - Keep watching future issues. You may get your wish...*

Begging For Moist...

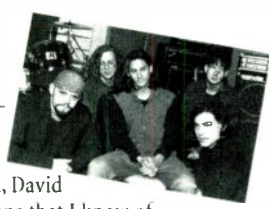
Dear CM,

Thanks so much for putting such awesome material in your magazines. You definitely know what artists to put in. Sarah McLachlan, Jann Arden. Our Lady Peace, Wide Mouth Mason and most of all, the amazing band Moist. I must say that Mark Makoway, Jeff Pearce, Paul Wilcox, David Usher and Kevin Young are by far the most amazing Canadian musicians that I know of.

I haven't seen the newest issue (I'm not sure if it's out yet) but I'm quite sure you'll have something on David Usher's solo CD *Little Songs*. If it is thank you very much. This letter is definitely not a complaint. I'm just expressing my gratitude for everything you put in your magazines. I think that Canadian music is by far the best. This magazine rocks! Keep up the good work and PLEASE keep putting tons of Moist in your upcoming issues. Thanks.

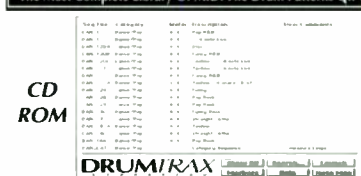
Kathryn Jones, Windsor, ON

**Ed - Sorry, no David in this issue. Thanks for the kind input.*



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BREAKS



Hit songwriter Brenda Russell (left) and UNISONG Grand Prize winner Liny Robbins (right) pictured at Music Bridge's Celtic Harmony in Dublin, Ireland.

UNISONG International Song Contest

The UNISONG International Song Contest gives songwriters an opportunity to have their songs reviewed by top music industry professionals and compete in a number of prize categories for awards including publishing contracts, cash prizes and recording time.

Each song submitted to the contest must be recorded on a separate cassette or CD and must include a lyric sheet. If there is more than one song on a submitted CD, the track number of the song being entered must be specified.

Contestants must designate at least one category in which the song will compete. Categories include Pop/Adult Contemporary, Rock/Alternative, R&B/Rap/Hip-Hop, Country/Folk, World Music, Gospel/Contemporary Christian, Latin, Instrumental, Dance, Children's, and Lyrics Only. Each song submitted must be accompanied by a separate entry form.

The fee to enter a song in a single category is \$14 US, with a fee of \$9 US per each additional category.

The first prize for each separate category is a cash award of \$2,000 US.

One grand prize winner chosen from among the 11 category winners will get an all-expense paid trip to Cuba to participate in the upcoming Music Bridge... Over Troubled Waters project, a collaboration of 50 international artists and writers.

For more information, contact: UNISONG, 7095 Hollywood Blvd., #1015, Hollywood, CA 90028 (213) 673-4067, <http://www.unisong.com>.

Hamilton MusicScene 98

Hamilton MusicScene 98 organizers are looking for bands to perform in this year's Festival showcase, October 23-25 in Hamilton, ON.

Last year's event saw more than 100 new and established artists performing on stages at the Hamilton Convention Centre and in Hamilton clubs and live venues. Copps Coliseum has been chosen as the main venue for this year's MusicScene, accommodating additional performance opportunities on five new stages.

In addition to live performers, musicians are also being sought for inclusion in this year's Festival CD.

Festival organizers are now accepting submissions for this year's event. Entrants are asked to call (905) 304-5000 to request applications for either Festival showcases and/or inclusion on this year's Festival CD. All submissions must be received by June 30, 1998.

For more information, contact: Hamilton MusicScene, 386 Wilson St. E., #202, Ancaster, ON L8G 2C2 (905) 304-5000, FAX (905) 304-5005.

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Toronto mastering and design studio Punch Media is offering a chance to win free graphic design and audio mastering for CD and cassette projects. Contest ballots can be filled out at the Punch Media's website at <http://www.punchmedia.com>, or by paper ballot at a Punch Media trade show booth.

One ballot will be randomly selected at beginning of July, with additional draws to follow once every three months.

A maximum of ten hours of graphic design time plus ten hours of audio mastering time will be provided to the winner at no

charge. All other applicants will receive promotional material from Punch Media including discount offers.

Each contest winner must use the free services provided to produce and manufacture a minimum of 500 CDs or 300 cassettes with Punch Media within 12 months of being notified of their award.

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For more information, contact: Punch Media, 76 Richmond St. E., Toronto, ON M5C 1P1 (416) 868-6633/(888) 397-8624, FAX (416) 868-0395, <http://www.punchmedia.com>.



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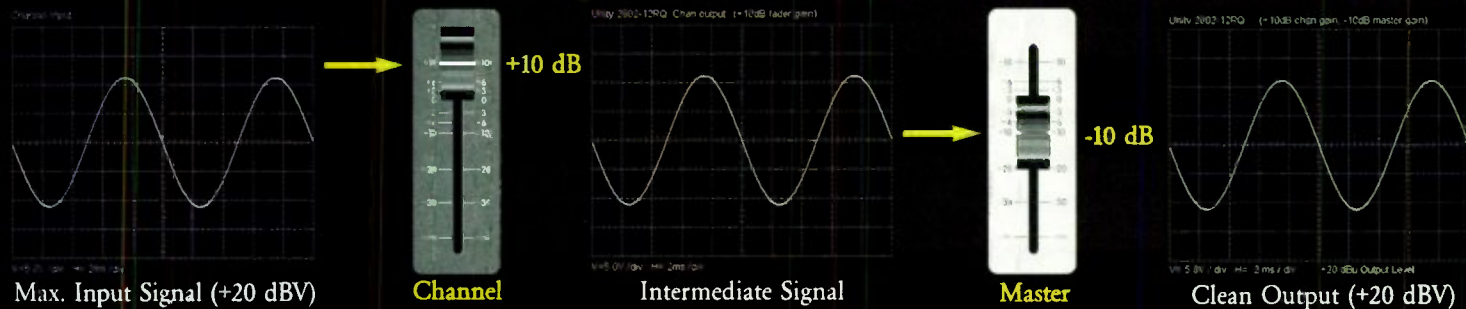
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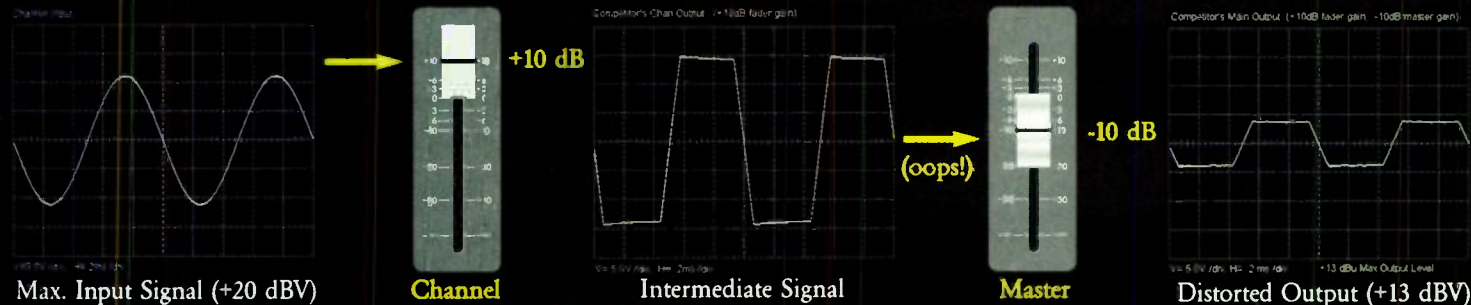
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The other guys (actual scope images from competing "high headroom" mixer)



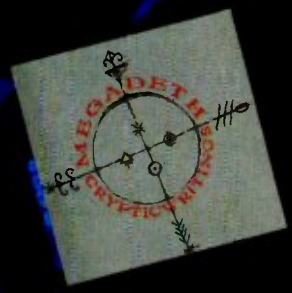
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BREAKS

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Toronto Blues Society New Talent Search

The Toronto Blues Society announces the addition of a major prize for the winners of the 1998 New Talent Search. The winning act will receive an engagement at the Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival in Fredericton, NB. This has been added to the existing prize package of a special showcase engagement during the Heineken Soul 'n' Blues Festival, July 17-19, at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre. The Harbourfront performance is recorded for national broadcast on CBC Radio's *Saturday Night Blues*.

The Toronto Blues Society New Talent Search is open to Canadian blues acts who have not made a nationally distributed or major label recording. To enter, submit a cassette or CD with three songs selected (material must have been recorded within the past two years). Make sure the recording is clearly labelled, and includes a bio, photo and contact information, including mailing address and phone number. Enclose a \$10 entry fee and mail to:

New Blues Talent Search
Toronto Blues Society
910 Queen St. W., # B04
Toronto, ON M6J 1G6

Deadline for submissions is May 16 at 5 p.m. All entries become property of the Toronto Blues Society and will not be returned.

For more information, contact the Toronto Blues Society at (416) 538-3885, or visit their website at <http://www.io.org/~tbs>.

The Edmonton Symphony Orchestra is offering an opportunity for exposure, cash prizes, and a chance to chalk up some air miles. Eight musicians will be flown to Edmonton to compete in the ESO's 1999 Canadian Concerto Competition, February 8-13, in conjunction with the rESOund Festival of Contemporary Music.

The competition is open to Canadian citizens (and Canadians with Landed immigrant status) born on or after February 14th, 1964. Of eight semi-finalists chosen to perform in Edmonton, three finalists will be selected by jury to perform in the rESOund Festival on February 13, 1999. Prizes will be awarded in the following amounts: First Place: \$5,000, Second Place: \$2,500, and Third Place: \$1,500.

Submitted works must be by 20th century Canadian composers. Deadline for entries is November 15, 1998.

For complete entry guidelines, contact: Edmonton Symphony Society & Edmonton Concert Hall Foundation, 9720-102 Ave. NW, Edmonton, AB T5J 4B2 (403) 428-1108, FAX (403) 425-0167, eso@v-wave.com, <http://www.tgix.com/eso>.



An advertisement for Rocking Horse Studios Montreal. The background is a scenic view of snow-capped mountains under a blue sky with white clouds. In the foreground, a silhouette of a person is climbing a rock face. To the left, there is a large professional audio mixing console. Two small inset photos show musicians performing: one playing a guitar and another playing a keyboard. The text 'Rocking Horse Studios MONTREAL' is at the top left, with a horse head logo. Below it, the slogan 'A WORLD OF SOUND AND VISION' is written. In the center, the phrase 'TOGETHER WITH YOU IN YOUR QUEST TO REACH HIGHER' is displayed in a stylized font. At the bottom right, contact information is provided: 'RESERVATIONS & INFORMATION 4030 ST-AMBROISE, SUITE 430 MONTREAL, QUEBEC H4C 2C7 TEL.: (514) 846-3104 FAX: (514) 937-9863'.



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Music Online

by Jim Norris



Welcome to Music Online, a regular department of *CM*, featuring news and highlights of music online including the Internet, the major online services and music related BBSs. If you have questions, comments, news, or suggestions, please e-mail them to jnorris@nor.com, FAX (905) 641-1648 or mail them to our St. Catharines office.

Finding Musicians Online

Every facet of being a working musician is a challenge but perhaps one of the most daunting areas is finding, hiring and keeping band members, backup musicians and collaborators for songwriting and recording projects. In addition to more traditional methods, the Internet is becoming a major source of quality candidates in the music market.

If you or your band has a website, create an area for attracting other musicians. You can post specific openings or even if you are not currently looking, encourage visitors to submit their bio or forward a demo tape for future consideration. If you are headhunting, you can cruise websites of other bands, musicians and songwriters and many times their qualifications are included in their website. Usenet groups are a great place to post opportunities and to make yourself or your band visible to musicians, songwriters and people in the industry. You can also identify candidates from their postings and engage in introductory conversations that may lead to an audition.

Newsgroups to check out:

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rec.music.makers.piano
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rec.music.makers.woodwinds,
rec.music.makers.synth
rec.music.makers.trumpet
rec.music.makers.saxophone
rec.music.info
rec.music.compose
rec.music.makers.songwriting
rec.music.promotional

If your provider does not offer these groups, send a request and they will usually add them.

You can also post classified ads in music- and audio-related classified areas on the Internet. Check the major search engines (yahoo.com or infoseek.com) under 'Music Classified' or 'Audio Classified' and you can place ads in many for free or at a nominal charge. You can also search through their ads for Employment Wanted. Place an ad for free at The Music & Audio Connection Classifieds at <http://musicandaudio.com>.

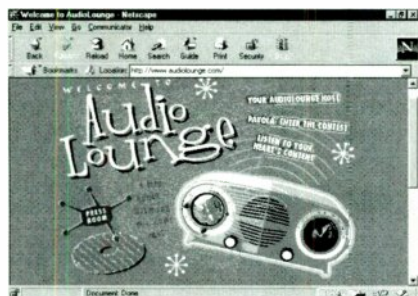
Many daily newspapers now offer an online version where you can search their listings and place classified ads.

These techniques also apply to searches for managers, agents, producers, engineers, live sound engineers and road crew. Pro audio people hang out at rec.audio.pro.

Online people searches may not take all the stress out of finding musicians, songwriters and other professionals to work with, but it is one more weapon to add to your networking arsenal.

Resources

... Telos Systems and Olympia Online have announced the launch of *Audiolounge.com*, an international network of radio stations and special programs broadcast via the Web. The network



features music, talk and sports stations from across the U.S. and is fully compatible with Microsoft NetShow. On the site you will also find contest information and company press releases. Drop by for a listen at <http://www.audiolounge.com>.

... Sabian has upgraded its website with enhanced navigational tools, new features pages and new graphic treatments. The educational section fea-

tures setup diagrams of leading Sabian endorsers. Included are expanded product news, and a monthly artist newsletter tracking player activities around the world. Visit at <http://www.sabian.com>.

... If you are searching the Web for musical products, visit *ProMusicFind* at <http://www.promusicfind.com>. Here you can search their database for musical instruments, pro audio gear, home entertainment, records and CDs, books, videos, printed music and parts. Once you have located the product of your choice, you can order it directly from the seller.

... **Canadian Standards Association (CSA)** presents its website at <http://www.csa.ca>. Featured are information on the 1998 Canadian Electrical Code, product information, seminars, FAQs, certification and testing and Management System Registration and Training.

... **Ludwig and Musser Percussion**: Products have announced their website at <http://www.ludwig-drums.com>. The site features product information including photos and detailed descriptions, Ludwig/Musser artists, promotional items, percussion events, news releases and dealers and distributors around the world.

... **Liquid Audio and Billboard Online** have joined forces to make the *Billboard* database of album reviews and audio previews available on their website at <http://www.billboard.com>. The audio portion is provided by the Music Previews Network. *Billboard's* historic archives of the last six decades are available to music fans at no charge.

... **Nielsen/Sessions Hardware** have debuted their website at <http://www.casehardware.com>. Included is complete catalogue information, information on new products and specials for current customers.

... Norris-Whitney Communications operates **The Music & Audio Connection**, the international online resource for music enthusiasts, musicians, music and audio professionals. Included are classified ads, products for sale, company showcases, discussion forums, associations, music education, music and audio resources, career information and file libraries. Updates to the site are available by e-mail or on The Pointcast Network Visit at <http://musicandaudio.com>. For more information, e-mail to info@nor.com, FAX (905) 641-1648 or call (905) 641-3471.



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Songwriters Expo
Los Angeles, CA, October 2-4, 1998
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Arlington, VA, October 17-19, 1998
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San Juan, Puerto Rico, October 22-25, 1998
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[http://musdra.ucdavis.edu/documents/ams/
ams.html](http://musdra.ucdavis.edu/documents/ams/ams.html)

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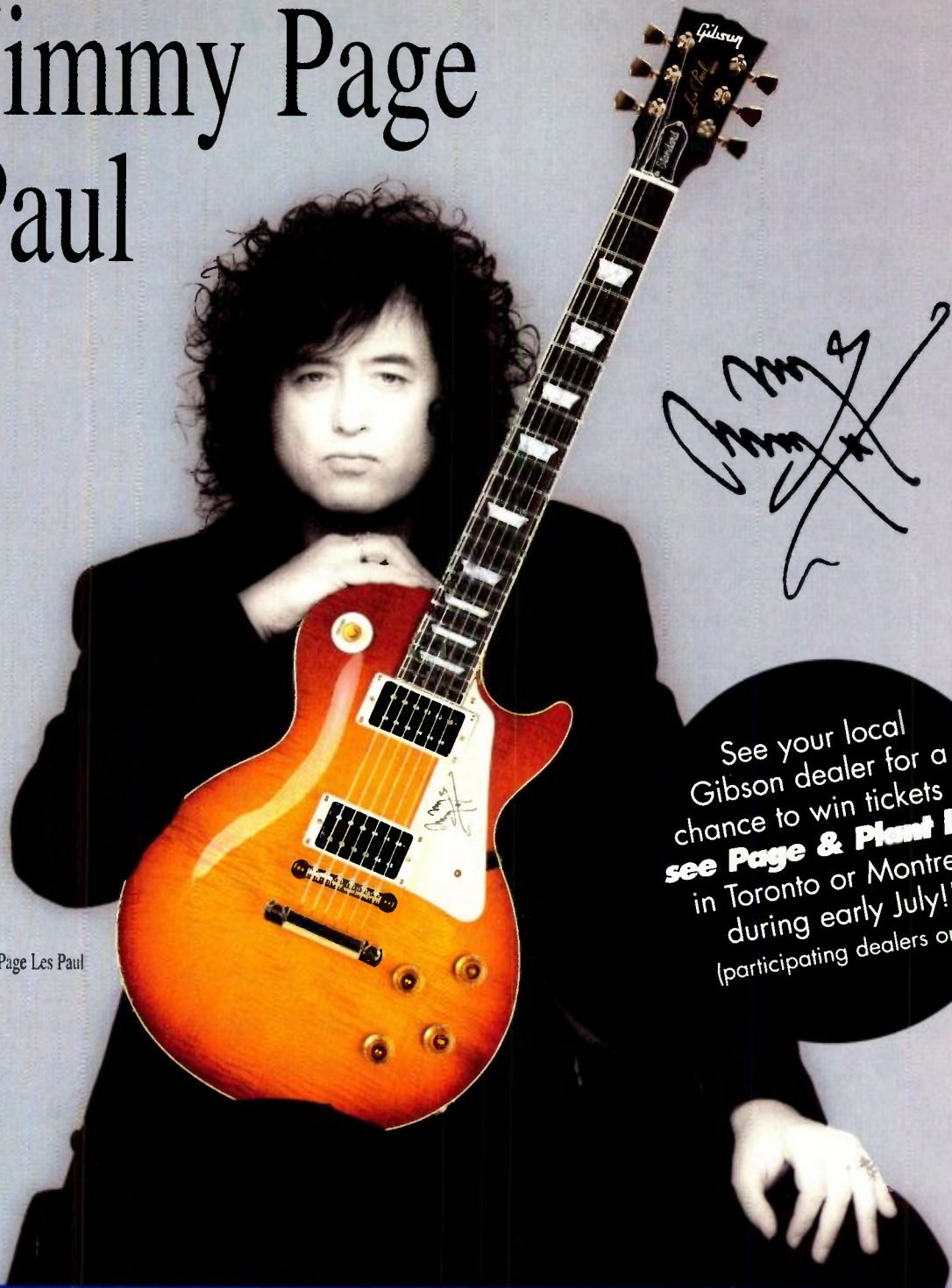
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by Andy Wyse



t.c. electronic FIREWORX

t.c. electronic has just added a new studio effects processor called the FIREWORX to their line of professional audio products. Hmmm ... a bold name like FIREWORX insinuates explosive grandeur ... The slogan on the carton it was shipped in — ‘Turn up the Heat’ — suggests something heavy is going down ... Let’s take a look through the dazzling display of lights and smoke to see how everything stacks up.

Right out of box, the FIREWORX impressed me. The unit’s appearance is very tidy. It looks solid — definitely aimed at the professional. The front panel is nicely laid out with a large 56x128 dot graphic display, input level LEDs, gain reduction LEDs, an effects keypad, a control keypad, a parameter wheel, a value wheel, and an alpha mod. wheel (with LED position indicator). A PCMCIA card slot (for storing presets) is nicely tucked underneath the in/out level knobs and the standby power touch-button. The rear panel has connectors as follows: left and right balanced XLR in/out, MIDI in/out/thru, XLR in/out (for AES/EBU), RCA phono (for SPDIF), and Optical (for Toslink, and ADAT). It also has an external control input that can use momentary, alternating, and continuous type pedals.

The operating system interface of the unit is fairly user friendly, however, very detailed. I didn’t have to do much ‘manual surfing’ to find my way around it, because the graphical display is pretty interactive. The main attraction to this processor for me is its flexibility — from the selection of effects offered to the capability of being easily integrated into any analog or digital setup.

The individual effects blocks can be placed anywhere in the FIREWORX’s “routing grid” (a grid of up to 8 by 8 empty spaces used for arranging the effects blocks, allowing practically countless combinations of routing between them).

One of the FIREWORX’s coolest features is the ‘Modifier’ page. Once the effects are routed how you like, you can assign ‘Modifiers’ to them. Modifiers are controllers that can be tied to just about any parameter of any effect (believe me, you can get pretty detailed here!). There are 11

internal Modifiers (ADSR envelopes, LFOs, pitch detectors, envelope detectors, alpha mod. wheel, etc.) and nine external modifiers which can be controlled via MIDI controllers. These are all assigned on a ‘Modifier Matrix’ page where up to 20 separate modifier connections can be made at one time. The possibilities here are tremendous. Take, for example, a patch you’ve created with chorus and low pass filter. You can have the resonance of the filter being modified by an internal LFO, the cut-off frequency being shifted by an input pitch detector, all while the speed of the chorus is being manipulated by an external foot controller. This is just a hypothetical example, but just imagine the twisted stuff you can come up with!

There is so much to say about the FIREWORX in such a little space — there are many more features that I haven’t even been able to touch on. I had only a couple of minor beefs — some of the keypad touch-buttons on the one I road-tested seemed a little sticky, and it would be nice to see some 1/4 inch connectors added for a quick keyboard (or whatever) hook-up without having to find some adapters. Being a true studio quality processor (and excellent live unit!), the price tag may be a little up there, but you are getting quite a bang for the buck. Overall the quality of effects is superb. The reverbs are very natural sounding — they can easily compare to Lexicon’s ‘verbs. The pitch shifter locks in quickly and accurately. The filters are really cool, however, they are digital so you can’t really compare them to the fatness of an original Moog filter. But they are distinct and are very flexible. It’s nice to see a product offered that has a much more versatile palate of effects — you can get pretty crazy with some of them! I’ll definitely be adding one of these to my rack.

For more product information, contact: Power Pro Audio, 3349 Bloor St. W., #24, Toronto, ON M8X 1E9 (416) 234-1226, FAX (416) 234-0824, sales@powergrp.com, <http://www.powergrp.com>.



Andy Wyse is keyboardist/saxophonist for Glueleg.

EFFECT BLOCKS AVAILABLE

Dynamics: Expander/Gate (stereo in/out), Soft Compressor (stereo in/out), Hard Comp/Limiter (stereo in/out)

Filters: Resonance (high and low cut, stereo in/out), Bandpass (stereo in/out), Phaser (mono in/stereo out), Resonator (mono in/stereo out), Resochord (mono in/stereo out)

Formant: Formant Filters (stereo in/out)

Distort: Drive (mono in/mono out), Cruncher (stereo in/out)

Vocode: Vocoder (dual in/mono out), Ring Mod. Internal (single in/stereo out), Ring Mod. External (dual in/stereo out)

Synth: Curve Generator (dual mono out), Chaos Generator (dual mono out), Noise Generator (dual mono out)

Pitch: Fixed 1 Voice (mono in/stereo out), Fixed 2 Voice (mono in/stereo out)

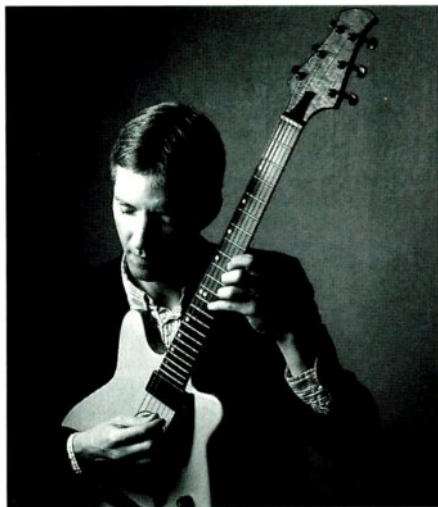
Chorus/Flanger: Classic Chorus (mono in/stereo out), Advanced Chorus (mono in/stereo out), Classic Flanger (mono in/stereo out), Advanced Flanger (mono in/stereo out)

Delay: Stereo, Dual (mono in/stereo out), Dual Three-tap (mono in/stereo out), One-tap (mono in/stereo out), Six-tap (mono in/stereo out), Reverse (stereo in/out)

Reverb: Simple (mono in/stereo out), Advanced (mono in/stereo out)

Panner: Simple Tremolo (mono in/stereo out), Advanced Tremolo (mono in/stereo out), Simple Panner (mono in/stereo out), Surround Panner (mono in/stereo out), Stereo Enhance (mono in, stereo out)

EQ: Fixed Parametric (stereo in/out), Mod. Parametric (stereo in/out)



Reharmonizations Revisited

JESU-BACH

Bach was a great improviser as well as a consummate composer; because he valued spontaneity, he encouraged different interpretations and expected his own works to be played with a variety of tempos, dynamics and shadings. Due to his open-mindedness about such things, perhaps he wouldn't object to my reharmonization of the first few bars of one of his most well-known pieces.

The *Jesu* has a beautiful melody that is diatonic in the key of G. I have retained his original line, but reharmonized it to suggest a modern jazz progression that modulates into some other keys. You will develop your own ideas about altering a chord progression by expanding your repertoire; as you memorize songs you will also be learning about cadences in a general way, and you can superimpose some of these sequences in other contexts. In my treatment of the *Jesu*, there are many parts of progressions that I've retained and applied from my learning of jazz standards.

I began my arrangement a half step below the original key centre. This is unexpected and gives a darker quality to the harmony of the melody. The line itself suggested the chords to me; once I had settled on the idea of some kind of F#, then the 11th and 11#5 chords were easy to find voicings for. I stayed with dominant sounds for most of the next bar, moving them up in whole steps (G11, A11 and B7 Alt.), then using the B7 as a III dominant (key of G) to resolve to a VI chord (Em6). I moved out of the key of G again briefly with a B♭maj6 (♭III maj In G) and also again with F major. These little modulations give some harmonic surprise to this very familiar diatonic melody.

I use some of the same devices in the second 4 bars employing some other chords outside of the original key (E♭maj, Fmaj, F# and G#m, A♭maj), but of course retaining the melody note as the top voice of each chord.

F#11 F#11(5)G11 A11 B7(♭9) B7(9) B7(9)Em6

A^m7 B♭ A♭ C A(♭5) D11(maj 3rd) C11 F A(9(5)) D9 F A♭ F#7(11)

G A(♭5) G A♭ G A♭ E7(5) A^m add9 B♭ E♭ A(5) F A(♭5) F#m45 G#m45

F A(9(5)) E♭ A♭ A♭ A♭ B♭13(9) E♭ A♭ G A♭ E♭ A♭ D13(11) G A♭ C/F# G add9/D

Hopefully my ideas will serve as a starting point for some of your own re-arrangement of well-known pieces. Learning jazz standards in general and a number of specific chord melodies in particular will supply you with the necessary materials. Have fun.

John Stowell is a teacher and clinician of jazz guitar. He has recently completed a CD with Cheryl Fisher titled Too Late To Hurry. He and Cheryl will be performing at some Western Canadian jazz festivals this summer. For more from John, check out his latest videos from New Media Printing Ltd.; Jazz Mastery Vols. 1, 2 and 3.

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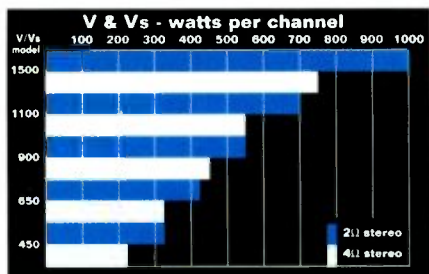
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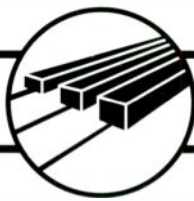
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by Andy Wyse

Creative Sampling

I remember back when I took my first sampler out of the box. A Kurzweil K2000S. It was loaded with 64 megabytes of sampling RAM and I was ready for action. Then it hit me kind of funny. I thought, now what the hell do I do with it? I had no sound library and was basically overcome by the fear of having such an incredibly flexible tool — possibly the most creative tool in music today. Here's an idea of the process I went through to build up my

als (owned or borrowed) and/or a flexible effects processor.

Once you have a sound sampled, play with it. Try routing it through your different effects. A lot of really cool sounds can be achieved by routing the simplest sound through a chain of effects and manipulating it with DSP functions. Distortion, compression, and reversing can work really well on drum and drum loop samples. A sample may



The only thing that can limit your creativity is your imagination. So keep an open mind. Don't be scared to try even the most absurd, unconventional methods for coming up with your samples.

own unique library. I hope it will help get you started with yours...

Before I start to talk about building up your library, I want to make one point clear. Both music and sound have no boundaries. There is no right way or wrong way to record or program your ideas. What it all comes down to is the result. Does it work for you? Do you feel it fits the mood of the music? Does it achieve your purpose for creating it? On to the sample monster...

Besides using your sampler's internal DSP functions (reversing, looping, transposing, time editing, etc.), a couple of things you need to have on hand when creating sounds are a good variety of tone generators and an assortment of effects. By tone generator, I simply mean anything that makes noise — such as a guitar, keyboard, horn, percussive instrument, or any other thing that can be miked (use your imagination here). The effects referred to can include a selection of guitar ped-

sound more interesting when played an octave or two up or down than when played at the sample root (the sound's original pitch). Try using envelopes and filters to shape the pitch and timbre of the sound.

I've found that some of the best samples happen by accident. You probably wouldn't have guessed that the sound used for the main keyboard motif in the song 'Dragonfly' (from our *Clodhopper* CD) is actually my guitar. I sampled myself comping a major 6th chord that was originally to be used in a different song. I reversed the sample, put it through some effects (chorus and delay), and then chopped off the beginning of it. This resulted in an attack such that when I played the sound in a pattern on a few different keys, an interesting melody was created. The main hook of a song was born.

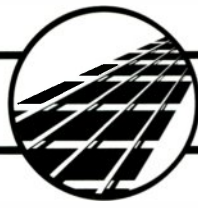
Setting up mics and getting proper tones can be pretty time consuming. If you want a quicker

approach, rather than sampling your own tone generators, you can use sample CDs or CD-ROMs. There are shitloads of them available. You can make the sounds your own by using processing to mess 'em up a bit. Your LP collection is a potential gold mine. Another good resource is the Internet. If you have access, you can find tons of samples and sound effects. Some samplers will read samples downloaded right off the web! If yours doesn't, there are utilities available for your computer that can convert between different file formats to satisfy it.

This should be enough to keep you going. And remember, the only thing that can limit your creativity is your imagination. So keep an open mind. Don't be scared to try even the most absurd, unconventional methods for coming up with your samples. Get jiggy with it!



Andy Wyse is keyboardist/saxophonist for Glueleg.



Right Hand Technique For The Electric Bass

A flexible appendage, the hand. In playing the electric bass, the Right Hand becomes the prime mover for the strings, and in so doing has responsibility for the initial timbres activated in the string.

Deciding upon RH technique will depend largely on the music being played, and the instrument of the player. The former is at once a matter of taste and propriety, and the latter a matter of practice and analysis. As for the latter, there are some practical considerations.

The first decision is where on the string to do the activating work, which requires that a look be taken at the instrument itself, pickup placement and type, and tonal response. String type is a big factor in overall tone, as is the presence or absence of frets on the fingerboard, but for the most part RH technique can be considered independently of these.

Techniques we will examine here include Fingerstyle, Plectrum, Thumb and Popping, and we will touch on Tapping and (false) Harmonics.

In fingerstyle playing, the common approach is to begin by resting the right hand above the playing area of the string (towards or over the top of the neck for a round warm tone, between the neck and bridge for a more solid 'beefy' tone, or close to the bridge for a sharp tone rich in higher overtones), finding a convenient place for anchoring the thumb if necessary, and from that rest position, staying relaxed, curving the fingers into contact with the strings. Keeping the shoulder relaxed and the elbow down, a selection of the myriad of available and inventable technique exercises can be worked through, keeping the end digits of the fingers somewhat pliable, like the bristles of a stiff paintbrush. One will discover that more digit stiffness in the bridge positions and less in the neck positions work well. As for the fingernails, generally they are kept close cropped, out of the way, although if kept immaculately trimmed and shaped, they can be used to add a click to the tone of the fingertip, but bass strings have a lot of mass and tend to make a mess of nails.

It is common practice to use the index and middle fingers in succession, and string crossing

exercises are a must, with first one finger leading, then the other, in order to develop flexibility and consistency of tone. With practice, the third (ring) finger can be made a part of the team, which is certainly not fundamental, but does expand one's options, e.g., speed playing, or having the ability to play a fingerstyle passage while holding a plectrum between the first and thumb.

Having said that, we will now take a brief look at plectrum use. The two commonly available types of plectrum associated with electric bass are the flatpick, and the thumbpick, the former being by a long shot the more popular and easier to use of the two. Due again to the mass of bass strings, heavier plectrums are appropriate. I prefer Tortex picks, ranging from yellow up to purple weights. The lighter the pick, the more picksound vs. stringsound will be generated.

As for the grasp of the flatpick, a good starting position can be arrived at by grasping an up-

Thumb and finger popping techniques are often used in conjunction with one another, and require a wholly different approach from other techniques, particularly in the position of the hand relative to the strings. The method I use mostly puts the arm close to parallel with the strings, with the wrist curved away from the strings slightly and the hand pivoting from the elbow, rotating on the axis of the forearm. The thumb is held pretty stiffly on impact, and the string contacts the outside of the thumb on the first knuckle or so. The thumb either bounces up from the string, or passes alongside it to rest on the next string, and this all happens either just off of the end of the neck or over the last few frets, depending upon the tone sought after. To pop, the middle finger and the index finger share duties, and do the popping thing either alternately with the thumb on the return stroke, the hand snapping away from the strings from the wrist. Economy of movement, relaxation, practice slowly... those usual bywords apply.

The thumb technique can be used near the bridge as well, although the hand is turned so the thumb is across the strings, and the thumb bounces from the string rather than passing alongside, and popping is not readily accessible... This gives a much punchier tone, but is a bit tricky to control.

I have seen it done with groove and accuracy, song after song.

On a general note, it is vital in RH practice and technique development to use a reference tempo, either that of a metronome, MIDI tracks, a drum machine, any steady rhythm, to retain the necessary rhythmic grounding central to the bassist's role in any setting. Start slowly, until things are sounding steady and the metronome sound becomes musical along with your playing, then pick it up until the same thing happens, on and on through to the fast end of the appropriate tempi spectrum, spending extra time in the middle zones. It's an incomparable feeling. Stay loose, stretch hands and body gently before and after playing... Good Luck!

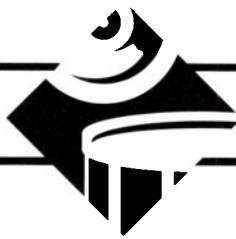


Hugh McMillan is bassist/guitarist for Spirit of the West.

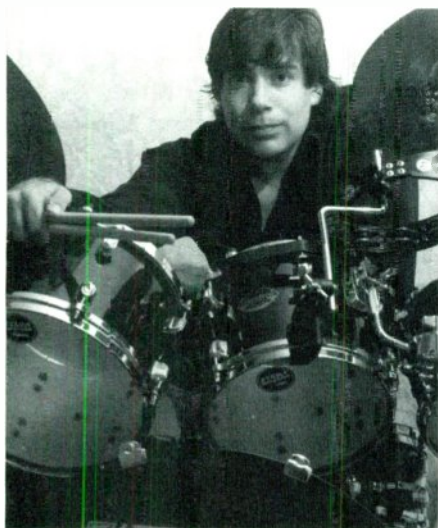
Techniques we will examine here include Fingerstyle, Plectrum, Thumb and Popping, and we will touch on Tapping and (false) Harmonics

right broomstick or similar dowel, with the thumb gently pressing against the side of the index finger's first knuckle, which is where the plectrum will be held. In actual use, the thumb closes up toward the palm, and the entire hand is pivoted from the wrist, with the rest of the fingers relaxed behind the index finger, supporting it. In some cases, the thumb and index finger will need to move freely, especially if the bass is worn low or in dextrous passages, but it ought to be noted that in protracted use the second knuckle of the index finger will experience stress, unsupported by the other fingers.

The angle of the pick to the strings will be parallel for minimizing the scraping noise associated with an angled attack, although this is only an issue when round- or ground-wound strings are used. As with fingerstyle playing, string crossing exercises are vital, leading with both up and downstrokes.



by Gary Grace



Taking It All In

Have you ever listened to Buddy Rich, Vinnie Colaiuta, Steve Gadd, Dave Weckl, or been to a Dom Famularo clinic and then had the urge to rush to your kit and practice? Of course you have! You may have also noticed that for some strange reason you suddenly play better. This is because you have become a better player after listening to some these great musicians or any player that inspires you for that matter. As long as you're taking it in.

What I mean by "taking it in" is to be a focused listener. You could say that there are two ways of listening: active listening and passive listening. An active listener would be someone whose mind absorbs whatever they hear. On the other hand, a passive listener would be one who has information go in one ear and out the other. Five minutes of focused practice, either physical or mental, is better than two hours of unfocused practice. Work towards becoming an active listener.

...when physical practice time is not available, mental practice time often is

I keep a very busy schedule in Vancouver, BC between teaching, playing and recording live for different bands, performing educational drum clinics for Sabian, Vic Firth and Tama, and working for a company out of Montreal involving musical instruments. I don't always have time to practice. Yet somehow I feel my playing is better every time I sit behind my drum kit.

When I say I don't have time to practice, I mean physically practice, with sticks in my hand. I'm constantly practicing mentally and I believe this kind of practicing is just as beneficial. When a student comes to me wanting to learn how to play jazz swing better, some of my first questions are: What jazz CDs do you listen to?

Who are some of the swing drummers that inspire you? More often than not, the student's response is silence. Although there are many great books on the market for improving swing, funk, Afro-Cuban, Brazilian ... and I do use and highly recommend certain books, this is not enough. To learn to play a particular style of music, you need to listen to that music. Only then can you develop your own sound and your own sense of expression based on the influence of your favourite artist.

I consider myself very fortunate to have grown up in a musical family. My father, Doug Grace, and my older brother, Danny Grace, are both great drummers. Needless to say life in my house was one perpetual drum lesson. While my father was talking about and playing recordings of Gene Krupa, Chick Webb, Baby Dodds, Papa Jo Jones, Louis Bellson ... my brother was influencing me with music from Steely Dan, Grand Funk, Yes, Weather Report. I would have to say that these were some of the most valuable lessons I've ever had.

Sometimes I find that I've just given a one-hour lesson to a student that consisted of absolutely no playing. The whole lesson was just talking about music. Although I may not have shown a new rhythm or some heavy lick, I know that what we may have just talked about could easily be just as important in the long run.

Don't get me wrong, don't find excuses not to practice. I do believe that technique is extremely important (just ask one of my students), and getting as much practice time as possible on the kit or a pad is needed to become a great player. What I'm saying is when physical practice time is not available, mental practice time often is. If you can learn to absorb and focus on all the music that's around you, listen to what other musicians have to say, and keep an open mind towards any new or old music you may hear, you will find a constant improvement in your playing. Stay positive and good luck!



Gary Grace is a drummer, educator, performer, and clinician in Vancouver, BC. He endorses Sabian cymbals, Vic Firth sticks, and Tama drums.

Flexibility, Note Bending Long Tones

Flexibility, note bending, and long tones are three important practice techniques that will improve your overall playing dexterity, as well as control over tone and pitch.

Flexibility

Flexibility is the underlying technique in many different brass instrument exercises. I have had students show me 90-minute exercise routines that consisted of almost nothing but flexibility. While it is possible to have too much of a good thing, doing some regular flexibilities is healthy for all brass players.

Up And Down And Up And Down And...

Flexibility on a brass instrument is just what it sounds like: the ability to move throughout the various registers in a fluid, elastic manner. Though this naturally comes into play whether tonguing or slurring, most of what we think of as 'flexibility exercises' are slurred.

Typically they maintain one valve combination throughout the line, slurring up and down from one partial to the next. Each line is performed in seven keys, on each valve combination. As the exercises progress in difficulty, the lines are expanded up and down one note in each direction, so that the line grows in a spider web fashion, encompassing more range.

And Up?

Flexibilities can be used to expand range, but I do not usually use them for this in my routine. I suggest that the upper note of a line be kept within your comfortable, playing range. Straining for the top notes in the line seems to inhibit the smooth flow between the notes in the rest of the line.

Blow Through The Line

A flexibility exercise might be termed a study in air flow. You should feel that you are blowing a continuous stream of air throughout the line, increasing the speed as you go up, and decreasing it as you go down. Allow a natural crescendo to accompany the ascending lines, and relax going down. Strive to change pitch not with your lips, but by controlling your air velocity. Flexibilities are excellent for

identifying and working to eliminate mouthcorner stretching to ascend, (smiling). Watch in a mirror. Keep your mouthcorners tucked in to your teeth, and blow faster to go up, slower to go down.

AA-OO-EE-OO-AA

The tongue arch level helps a great deal in controlling the airspeed. Use a lower position, (AA), for lower notes, and arch up (OO-EE) as you ascend.

Lip Trills & Shakes

A lip trill is a study in flexibility. It is simply the rapid slurring back and forth between adjacent notes with the same fingering. Despite the name, it is produced mainly by manipulating the air with rapid tongue arch level changes, as you might do if whistling.

To work on lip trills, play softly. Find the break point between two adjacent partials, and slur back and forth between them, staying close to either side of the break. Use little or no embouchure manipulation to change pitch, just your tongue.

A lip trill played in a wide or broad manner produces the shake (Sometimes the shakes!) It is used mostly in big band style playing.

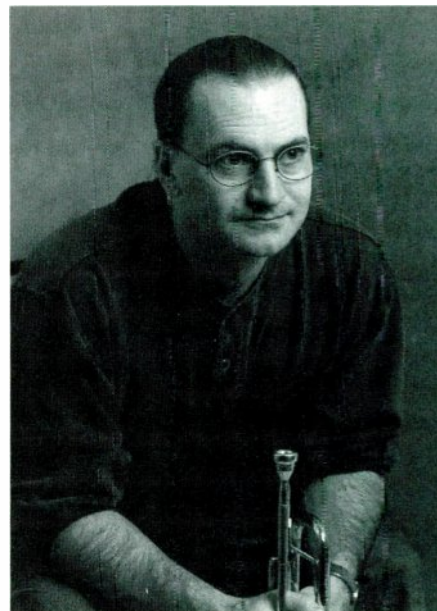
Note Bending

Note bending is the act of bending the pitch of notes without changing valves. These are sometimes referred to as lip bends, but they are produced with your air. Start by just blowing the note flatter, and then letting it return back up to true pitch. Over time you will develop the control to bend the note further and further away.

Try to make a note-bend sound like a valved pitch change — no smearing between notes. This is quite difficult, but it is possible to move chromatically down a number of half-steps. In my routine we bend the pitch down a half-step, and then let the pitch 'snap' back up. The lower the pitch, the easier it is to bend.

Why?

Our goal in all playing is to establish control over the instrument. We want to hear a sound in our head, and then reproduce what we are hearing on the trumpet. When we bend notes in the above fashion, we are making the horn play something



it does not want to play. Anytime we make the horn do our bidding, we are establishing control. A further benefit of note bending is that it improves the pitch centre. When the note is released back to the original pitch, it usually corrects any off-centre pitch that may have existed on the original attack. Listen closely to what you are playing.

Long Tones

Long tones. Ugh. The very mention of them causes most brass players to shiver with boredom. Are they boring? They certainly can be. Do they have to be? No. Should you do them? Without a doubt.

Who's In Charge Here?

If we accept control of the instrument to be a number one priority, there are potent advantages to be reaped from playing long tones. Control of the instrument is about control of our air. There is no exercise that focuses on the controlled delivery of air like a tone sustained from the beginning to the very end of the breath, starting and ending pianissimo, with a crescendo to our loudest volume in the middle. This puts our air through all its paces.

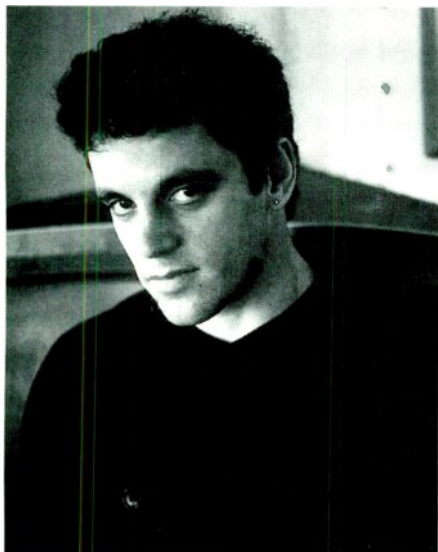
Accept that any exercise has the potential to be boring or not, depending on how you approach it. A challenge I put to students is to develop a sound that can send shivers up the spine of a listener with just one note. Have that goal in mind as you play your long tones.

Chase Sanborn is a freelance trumpet player in Toronto. He teaches privately and in the Jazz Degree Program at the University of Toronto. He can be contacted at: chasesan@idirect.com. Chase is the author of BRASS TACTICS which can be found at <http://webhome.idirect.com/~chasesan>.



by Andy Snitzer

Some Thoughts On Practicing



When I was younger, I used to practice like crazy. Once, during my freshman year in college, I went out to dinner with a group of music students. We arrived at the restaurant only to learn that there would be a one-hour wait for a table. The rest of the group waited. I went home to practice, because I was worried that the one-hour wait would prevent me from getting practice time in later that evening. Anyway, I don't practice nearly as much as I used to, nor as much as I should, but having done my fair share of it, I have a few things I can say...

1) Equipment — Before you begin practicing, take a moment to make sure that your horn is working well. If it's not, go to your local repair shop and have it fixed. Practicing on a horn that is fighting against you is frustrating, counterproductive, and is likely to lead to some bad habit that functions as a temporary fix. Along these lines, take the time to find a reed that plays well for you. Fighting an unresponsive reed can only hinder your practicing, physically and mentally. Finally, once you begin, listen to your body. If you feel like your fingers are moving through molasses, if your mouth hurts, if everything tells you that this is not your day or your moment, put the horn away. Don't force it, there will be another day. This is one

...every practice strategy needs some good balance between work and play

bit of advice I offer as a result of having repeatedly done just the opposite.

2) What to practice — Basically, every practice strategy needs some good balance between work and play. You need to shed scales for technique, you need to play long tones for your sound production, but your routine should not be all regimen. Transcribe solos, play along with CDs or the radio, just play whatever comes to mind, it's really up to you, as long as there is some left brain as well as some

right brain in your approach. With respect to transcribing solos and learning patterns, I should mention a couple of caveats. The whole point of all of this, as an improvising musician (I am assuming that you are) is to develop a style and/or sound that will hopefully one day be your own. It may seem premature to be concerned with this while you are still learning your instrument, but your practice habits actually play a role in this. I can't tell you how many times I've heard good saxophone players insert two or three bars of material, that is taken directly from a well-known player's recorded work, into their own solos. It's not that they are consciously plagiarizing. They have simply spent too much time learning other player's solos note for note. Similarly, I would never take a lick that I like and practice it in all 12 keys. Some things sound good and lay well on certain horns in certain keys, but not on or in others! Who would want the same improvisational vocabulary in all of the twelve keys? All these elements, transcribed solos and patterns, should go in your ears and come out through your horn as if they've gone through a blender. The point is to internalize and use, not to simply recite and/or insert.

3) Aiding the effort — Make tapes of yourself, and listen to them. This is an incredibly enlightening experience. You may be very surprised to hear the vast difference between what you think you sound like and the evidence on the tape. The first time I did this, as a student, I was blown away. You've all been told to practice with a metronome. I'll broaden that concept. Whether it's a metronome or a MIDI track that you've worked up or your drummer buddy who has killer time, get used to playing with a pocket. One of the biggest complaints about horn players (from rhythm section players, and they're right...) is that they stand up and solo without any real regard for time. Practice your scales against a time source, but also play free against a time source. Whatever. You'll be a much better musician and more popular with the rhythm folks if your internal clock is rock solid.

Fundamentally, you have to find your own way, in your practicing as well as in your playing. As long as you attend to both the left and right brain issues, make sure your equipment works, and take honest stock of what you sound like, you're sure to improve (as long as you keep practicing...).



Andy Snitzer is a NYC-based saxophonist who has recorded with artists ranging from Bette Midler to Naughty by Nature. He is currently on his second world tour with the Rolling Stones (he wrote this column in Brazil), attempting to write his third solo record on his days off.



The Development Of The Soundcard

Because this is a digital recording column, there is a terrible tendency to pander to the newest and the best in audio hardware and software. I don't know how many articles I have written where I have had to add the dreaded caveat "requires a very fast Pentium (i.e., faster than that turkey you bought last year) with a high-end digital audio card and SCSI hard drive running at audio-visual speeds."

This time, we are going to look at that most neglected of musical marvels; the not-so common Soundblaster PC audio card. It runs on the slowest of Pentiums. It costs about 1/4 of an entry-level synthesizer, and its capabilities may surprise you!

Historically, computer music was the most expensive and difficult means of generating sound imaginable. Massive mainframe computers, powered by rooms full of vacuum tubes strained to provide the computing power required to reproduce the waveform of a single note. In 1967, John Chowning of Stanford University began his research into frequency modulation (FM), as an economical way of producing high-quality digital sound.

Chowning's methods of FM synthesis became the basis of the music synthesizers built into the personal computers of the late 1980s. Computer soundcards with FM synthesis were a revelation for computer owners; no more bleeping PC speakers, but cool electronic music and sound effects. FM synthesis was adopted by a number of manufacturers, but through the turbulent markets of the late '90s, one company emerged as the undisputed standard: The Creative Labs "Soundblaster". (To this day, soundcards are touted as "Soundblaster compatible"; an echo of an era when a DOS game or program might or might not run with any specific hardware. With over 40 million Soundblaster owners worldwide, even Microsoft appears to be giving up on challenging the market.)

The humble 8-bit FM Soundblaster of yesterday has now grown into the 16-bit AWE 32 and 64 family, which uses the formidable EMU 8000 Wavetable synthesizer chip as its sound engine. A Soundblaster is now considered to be an audio platform consisting of a soundcard or chip set, software drivers and bundled software packages that enable PC's to produce high quality audio.

If you are a music enthusiast with a home computer, contemplating that first leap into electronic music, the point has come where a soundcard may be just the instrument that you are looking for. The current standard Soundblaster; the AWE 64, can be seriously considered as a complete entry-level MIDI and audio recording workstation, which may

be more than sufficient for the needs of many musicians on a budget.

As a basic synth and audio sampler, it is hard to beat the AWE 64 Value. Priced at a little more than \$100, the AWE 64 Value offers 16-bit audio recording at up to 44.1 kHz, 512 k of RAM, 32 voice multi-timbral capability, EMU 8000 wavetable synthesis, a powerful FM synthesizer, 16 MIDI channels, General MIDI and GS compatibility, 10 drum kits and SoundFont compatibility.

As with all of the AWE family, the card's memory can be expanded to 28 MB. It is a little noisy, and some of the General MIDI voices are better than others, but in terms of value, there is no competition.

The real powerhouse of the soundcard world, however, is the AWE 64 Gold. If you are seriously thinking of buying a soundcard to use as a General MIDI source or a digital recorder, I would recommend it highly.

The Awe 64 Gold is a much quieter card, with high quality RCA outputs rather than a dodgy stereo mini-jack. It also has 4 MB of RAM, and a 20-bit S/PDIF digital output which allows you to

If you are a music enthusiast with a home computer, contemplating that first leap into electronic music, the point has come where a soundcard may be just the instrument that you are looking for.

hook the EMU synthesizer up to a DAT. (No digital output for the wav. files, alas!) For best results, remember to install the audio card as far away from the video card as possible, to decrease noise.

The SoundFont system used by many AWE 64 programs, is a hybrid of synthesis and digital audio "streaming" which allows you to play back your own samples as customizable musical instruments. By downloading or creating samples and then controlling the playback of those sounds with events like filtering, pitch bend and modulation, the user has full run-time control over their own palette of sounds with minimum system requirements.

SoundFont technology is best demonstrated with a program such as Sseyo's revolutionary Koan software, which is written expressly for the AWE 32/64 family of synthesizers. In a similar vein, compa-



nies such as Roland have moved away from the creation of "daughterboards" for the Soundblaster family and towards "Soft" synthesizers that take advantage of the powerful EMU 8000. The Roland "Virtual Sound Canvas" VSC 55 software turns the AWE 64 into a reasonable facsimile of a mid-range General MIDI Module.

Other software based synthesizers such as the Propellerhead's ReBirth techno sequencer sound simply stunning through the card. When I have played compositions done with the ReBirth program and the AWE 64 for friends, credulity has been strained!

AWE 64 owners can also take advantage of the DRGN or Distributed Real-time Groove MIDI-Jamming software which allows musicians from around the world to jam together online through the Internet.

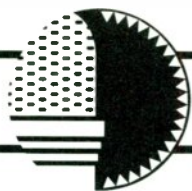
The AWE 64 comes with a nice bundle of software. "Wave Studio" is a fine, entry level audio editor, with many good features, including some basic Digital Signal Processing. "Text Assist", the Text to Speech synthesizer bundled with the AWE 64 is a marvelous program with a variety of realistic and comic voices.

The "Vienna" Preset editor allows you to turn the AWE 64 into a very sophisticated MIDI wavetable synthesizer. All of the software is very simple to use, and allows for quite impressive results. The AWE 64 comes with a good basic MIDI interface so that you can hook up a MIDI keyboard controller or control external modules without additional hardware.

With Creative Labs' recent acquisition of Ensoniq, (the synthesizer manufacturer that brought audio sampling to the masses), exciting things are surely in store for PC owners!



Paul Lau is formerly a Roland Canada Product Specialist, and presently a MIDI/Internet consultant in Toronto. He can be contacted by e-mail at docaudio@inforamp.net.



Taking Care Of Your Voice

When first asked to write this article I immediately thought back to my earliest experiences as a budding vocalist. Like a lot of people I originally wanted to be Ace Frehley, you know, a lead guitar player. Oddly enough I became a bass player. I was happy enough to be in a band at all but the other guys kept forcing me to sing. At first they thought they'd throw me a bone and let me sing one. Soon they had me singing all the difficult stuff. Next thing I knew I was the lead singer and it's been that way ever since.

I remember seeing other bands and being blown away by the singer's range or power. Whenever I had a chance to ask them what their secret was they never had much to say. I would silently curse them thinking they were hiding some Zen like secret that they couldn't possibly share with

you use it, the stronger it gets. Like a muscle, it needs rest as well. The more you sing the more comfortable you become with what you can and cannot do. You'll probably find that over time your range will increase and your staying powers improve. I've also learned that you are born with the voice you're born with. Sure you can improve on certain things like range or pitch, but it comes down to being comfortable and confident in the voice you have. When I was young I adored The Clash and I wanted to be Joe Strummer. You know, that hoarse, slurring, slightly off key thing. But every time I opened my mouth I still sounded the way I do. I'm sure Joe wasn't too concerned about his pitch or range but that's sort of the point. Whatever voice you're given, whether it's Bob Dylan or Pavorotti, make the best of it you can. Here's a scary story for you, my faithful readers. Years ago, before Age Of Electric, I lost my voice. Not for a

Whatever voice you're given, whether it's Bob Dylan or Pavorotti, make the best of it you can.

the likes of me. It really did seem as if there was some kind of voodoo ritual required in order to sing the way I wanted. It's normal for singers to fall into bizarre patterns of behaviour for fear their voice will give out on them. Most of these rituals are generally common sense — plenty of rest, don't smoke, if you do take it easy, avoid drafts, blah, blah, blah...

What it means is, although you're the lead singer and get a lot of the attention, you can't indulge in it or you'll pay the price. Basically no fun. Believe me, sometimes I wish I was the bass player and my brother was the singer so I could enjoy the fruits of my labour without fear of consequence. I have learned that your voice is a muscle. The more

week or two but for six months to a year off, Doctor's orders. All I wanted to do was sing and now I was completely incapable. Of course this was my own fault. I wanted to sing like a bird every night and still be the last one up at the party. After a year of this I developed nodes. I went to see a specialist who held my tongue and stared down my throat while I made some goofy eee eee, ooo ooo, aah aah sounds. He then put a tiny camera down my throat and filmed my vocal chords while I made those same ridiculous noises. Afterwards the doctor showed me on a monitor the little growth on my vocal chords that was causing me all this discomfort and prescribed time off. Time off! I was rock and roll singer. I did not know the meaning of the

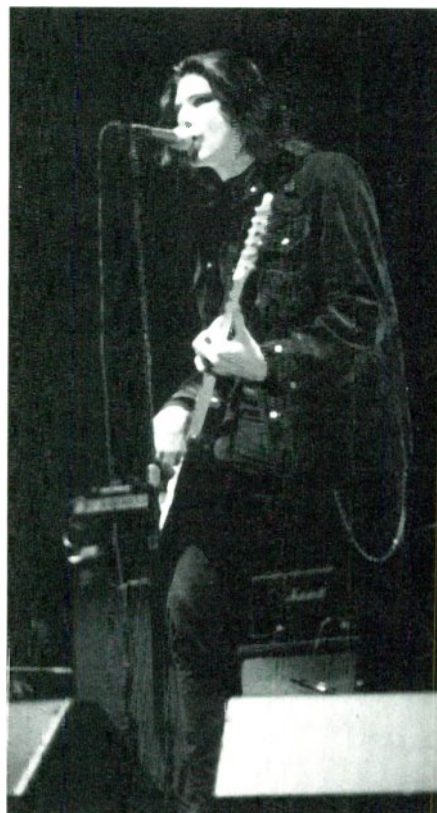
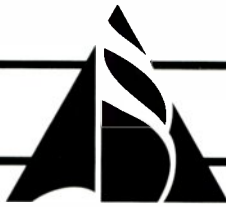


photo by Jeff MacKay

phrase. Well, I came to learn it. I spent close to a year off writing songs, getting myself clean and lo and behold, like the petals of the rose, my voice got a little stronger every day. Once my voice returned I was back on the road. It is tough to get the rest you need on the road. If you have trouble sleeping in a moving vehicle you'd better rethink your career choice. Always remember you're a rock and roll singer not a monk so don't live in fear. Your voice will let you know when it's getting tired. And when it does don't smoke as much that day and avoid rooming with the guy in the band who is the party magnet. Of course when your voice is fatigued or you have a cold, you have to handle it like a true pro. If you can't hit that high note then try something else. It's better to let people think you're just playing with the melody than blow the big note. That always sucks. Have fun, just be aware. I know I still have a tendency to be the last one at the party but in this case try to do as I say and not as I do.



Todd Kerns is vocalist/guitarist for Age of Electric.



What Type Of Writer Are You?

There are, in my opinion two types of songwriters. One is the craftsman. He plans out what he wants to sing about and pre-conceptualizes the musical style he wants to perform the song in. Then there is the intuitive writer. He or she sits down in front of a blank piece of paper and hopes that something meaningful flows out of their pen. Similarly, they sit with a guitar or at the piano and pray for a visit from their musical muse.

I place myself basically in the latter camp but I do acknowledge the importance of craft, especially conceptualizing which I learned from working with Todd Rundgren. When you are putting together an album, he thought it was important not to put conflicting or contradictory ideas on the same disc. Every record should have consistent themes. That was how I wrote for *The Pursuit Of Happiness*. I'd write a bunch of songs and if some of them were headed in a certain direction, I'd chase after them. They'd reveal what I was preoccupied with at that point in my life, so I would lodge that in my brain and when my muse came along I would be in (loosely speaking) a pre-arranged mind set.

The biggest difference between writing for *The Pursuit Of Happiness* and my solo record, *Summer's Over* is that when you have a band, it's important that everyone has something to do both in the studio and on stage. The songs that ended up on my solo disc didn't require a very elaborate musical backdrop so it seemed appropriate to do it myself. *Summer's Over* is basically entries from my journal. I sat in cafés and wrote stream of consciousness.

...when you have a band, it's important that everyone has something to do both in the studio and on stage

Eventually something inspired would start to flow and begin to organize itself into verse form. There were two very important things occurring in my life during the time I wrote most of these songs. One I was very unhappy and two, I was on a spiritual quest, so there was plenty to talk about. When I was finished I'd start the second part of the process which was to hope that the lyrics suggested the kind of musical treatment that would best represent them.

Usually it was pretty minimal since I didn't want there to be a lot of noise cluttering up the sentiment of the lyrics. Stylistically I was able to be fairly unbridled. If a song felt folksy, I went folksy, if it seemed like it would come alive on a cheap keyboard, that's what I'd write on. So there is no stylistic centre to the record which is something I DO NOT RECOMMEND to all you aspiring songwriters. One good thing about writing for a band is that however wide you make the parameters while you're writing, the inherent "sound" of the band will bring everything into focus.

Writing for myself meant I could be a little more self-indulgent. I didn't have to worry about the band saying "What is this crap?" I was free to make as big a fool of myself as I wanted to knowing that I would only be humiliating myself and not my long-suffering bandmates. Being self-indulgent is, in my opinion, a good thing for an artist. However there are conditions.

One of the major problems with what I'm calling the intuitive school of writing is that a lot of people who write this way do not always know what their songs are about (this has happened to me). It's important that when you finish a lyric that you go over it in your mind and make sure you mean what you are saying and saying what you mean. This is where a little of the craft aspect can be invaluable. Another danger is believing that your every little thought is precious and deep. A lot of writers claim to write from 'personal' experience, as if that is all they need to legitimize themselves as artists. The fact of the matter is that EVERYONE has personal experiences - that doesn't make them good songwriters.

You have to be able to express your thoughts and feelings in a manner that is of some interest to others and (hopefully) in an artistic and original way. Though some bands have become successful singing about nothing, generally speaking if you're too obtuse no one will be able to relate to you and if you're too clichéd, you will sound corny and EVERYONE WILL LAUGH AT YOU. Be on guard for boring or sappy sentiments. If your prose gets too purple, your rhymes too mushy or obvious,



you'll have to step back and figure out how you can express yourself with more finesse. Musically do the same thing. Often when I'm listening to the radio or hear a CD for the first time I can anticipate the next chord or melody line BEFORE it happens. Be unpredictable. Sometimes the best route is not the obvious one.

One of my goals on *Summer's Over* was to be as honest as I could. I think there is a natural tendency with many writers to present themselves in a relatively flattering light. Even the rise of 'nouveau losers' is the same impulse turned on its head. Well, I wasn't going to project anything other than the reality of my current situation. I highly recommend this approach to young writers because it will take you out of the traditional rock and roll vernacular. If you are truly honest, you'll begin to speak in terms that aren't the popular lyrical clichés. You might even say something ORIGINAL and wouldn't that be fun. You may not have a hit record this way but you will grow as a writer (and person) which is its own reward.



Moe Berg is singer/guitarist for *The Pursuit Of Happiness*, and has recently release a solo album titled *Summer's Over*.

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by Karen Bliss

The converted mini school bus is hot, cramped and smelly. Singer John is snoring again; bassist Eric is whining about missing his girlfriend and calls her from every truck stop. Drummer Noel is driving and keeps tapping out rhythms on the steering wheel as if it was his snare. Ahhhh. You, the guitarist, have had enough. The decision isn't if to quit; it's who to kill first.

Keeping a band together is not easy. Some don't get past rehearsing in the basement; others implode after album two, the so-called "sophomore jinx"; some bow out gracefully; some grow bored and put on a suit and tie; some cling desperately to life as sales drop and one original member is left standing; some burn out, some fade away, some rust... Only a select number of bands defy the odds and keep going and going and going, often against their better judgment.

When should a band throw in the towel?

"For me, when it's not fun anymore," says Ian Blurton, former singer and guitarist with perennial "indie" rockers Change Of Heart. The Toronto band signed to Virgin Canada in its 12th year and called it quits this year, for no other reason than it was becoming "a hassle" maintaining an existence.

"I quit school when I was 16 because rock n' roll was so damn fun," explains Blurton, "and if it's not fun, then it's not worth it because you don't make a lot of money being in a band like Change of Heart. It's a real hand-to-mouth existence, so if you're not having fun, then it's like, 'Oh, I can make more money working in McDonald's.'"

Alas the dreaded "Mc" word, reason enough to persevere.

The highs of being in a band are great, no doubt about it, the fans, the travel, the applause. The bigger the band, the bigger the perks. But how do you deal with the lows? The external problems — losing a record deal, getting ripped off by a shady club owner, management mis-representation — are a drag, but you deal with it en famille, as a group. It's the internal problems that drive a stake through a band's heart.

Take the following: a bandmate isn't showing up to rehearsals on time; your singer refuses vocal lessons although he sounds like a howling coyote; the whole band's wearing over-sized pants with the crotch at the knees, but your drummer's still in spandex with mile-high hair; a member is going through a divorce and his tears are rusting your whammy bar; another wants to be home to cele-

brate his son's graduation - from kindergarten!; your bongo player's mainlining heroin and pawning your gear to pay for it; you've been sleeping with your back-up singer and now she pulls a fit when any nubile groupie hands you her phone number.

Like any lesson in life, dealing successfully with such situations has a lot to do with personality and temperament, tolerance and cooperation. And, like any relationship, communication is key — and friendship. A band is like family. But if it's not working, then remember that **THIS IS YOUR LIFE**; no matter how close you might be to the person, if they're holding you back, not gelling musically or pulling their weight, then you must explain the problem and if it doesn't get rectified within a probationary period, then you have no other choice but to lower the axe. This isn't personal; it's business.

Notorious Vancouver punk band D.O.A. has gone through the gamut of crises and obstacles — drugs, deaths, record deals, no deals, wives, kids — but singer/songwriter Joe Keithley (aka Joey Shithead) has kept the group going for 20 years, with the exception of a 20-month hiatus in 1990.

We had short-lived break ups, where we'd be fighting," Keithley says. "One time Chuck



Biscuits demanded a plane fare home from Waco, Texas, and we just laughed at him. He phoned the record company in Vancouver and they laughed too. Then, he said, 'I guess I don't want to quit after all.' You realize you're a long way from home, it's better to stick with your friends, even if you hate their guts."

While members have come and gone in D.O.A., Keithley pumps oxygen into its veins because his original philosophy has never changed. He still gets the same charge out of playing punk that he did 20 years ago and uses it as his soapbox to rant and rave against the injustices of the world. "People should stick to their style, even if it's not currently in vogue," he advises, "because every time a musician tries to chance a style, it's like a dog trying to catch its tail — he'll never catch it. You have to stick with what you believe in. That's not to say you don't experiment or change. Do what you like and sooner or later, the world will become your oyster."

Even if you feel like you're beating your head against the wall, and can't get a break, because everyone is line-dancing and you're dangling from ceilings, that's not necessarily a reason to quit. "What people have to remember is that these music trends, or so-called

pop phenomena, go in cycles, every 10 or 15 years," notes Keithley. "We just went through the second apex of punk rock and probably in five, 10, 15 years we'll go through another one."

Vancouver's 54.40, now in its 18th year, set goals for itself at every conceivable level in order to stay together and move forward. Isolated from the hub of the Canadian music industry in Toronto, when the guys first formed the rock band, they had to ensure that either a gig or recording session was on the horizon, so they weren't sitting idly by for something to happen, and, therefore get discouraged.

"In Vancouver, we'd only play every other month," recalls bassist Brad Merritt of their beginnings, "so there'd be this huge let down, this huge gap in time, so it would be hard to get the energy to write songs or practice. You'd have to say, 'After we do this big show opening up for whoever at the Commodore, we're going to go back and write four songs and then we're going to do a demo, and then when we get going on that, we'd get another show booked.' You always have to have something to look forward to.

"Every day that goes by you can decide whether or not you want to be in the band or

not, so it's important that you decided not to think in those terms," he encourages. "It's important that you think, 'I'm going to be in this band for x number of years or records.' We always said, 'We're going to make 10 records.' That way, when you wake up in the morning and go, 'Oh, I don't really like Neil (Osbourne) today,' or whatever it is, 'I think I'll quit,' you just keep toughing it out because you have all these records to make."

Merritt confides that the band used to have what they'd call "future history" meetings at which they'd discuss what they wanted 54.40 to be doing in a month, three months, one year, five years. "There was this collective visualization of where we wanted to be," he explains. "We'd concentrate on things that we had control over. You couldn't control whether someone bought your record or whether someone showed up at your show, but you had control over whether you were going to be a band or not. I used to say, 'No one can put us out of business; the only one that can put us out of business is us.'"

Chris Murphy, bassist and co-vocalist with Halifax-formed Sloan, flat out admits that the pop/rock band put itself temporarily out of business when in-fighting resulted in a much publicized break up in December of '94. "For

me, I started touring with Super Friendz and you want it to work, you can't expect the record companies, anybody ever over that

Keeping Your Band Together

Keith Scott and Dave Taylor

Two members of Bryan Adams' band that have toured extensively with him are guitarist Keith Scott and bassist Dave Taylor. We sent the following questions to both Keith and Dave. Here are their unaltered responses:

CM: How did you come together as a band? Did you know each other before auditioning?

Keith: Bryan and I knew each other and I was the first guy he called when putting a touring band together.

Dave: I've known Bryan since 1974 and Keith since 1980. I joined in 1982. Mickey and Tommy were with other bands but always played on the albums. They joined as they became available.

CM: Have side projects or session work ever cause a problem? Were there ever any projects that had to be cancelled because of a tour or any other kind of work for Bryan?

Keith: The only time I ever had to cancel was when I was in the hospital to have some cysts removed. I quit the cysts as a side project right away.

Dave: Working with Adams has always been my priority. When we are not touring my family comes first.

CM: With so many solo artists changing band members every album, what has been the appeal to stick with Bryan and keep at it?

Keith: I've put a lot of myself into this and I just want to see that we keep going.

Dave: Loyalty breeds loyalty and over time becomes something more. That's the way it is I

can't explain it.

CM: Have there ever been any incidents where you have come close to quitting the band? How was the incident handled and has it happened often?

Keith: There were some M&Ms backstage once that were the wrong colour. I got over it.

Dave: Twice. Once when my wife was pregnant with our first child the tearful phone calls were too much and I had been with the band six months. The second time I was losing my mind after two and a half years of almost non-stop touring. Both times clearer minds prevailed and time took care of the rest.

CM: Do you keep in touch when not in the studio or on the road? Like an extended family of sorts?

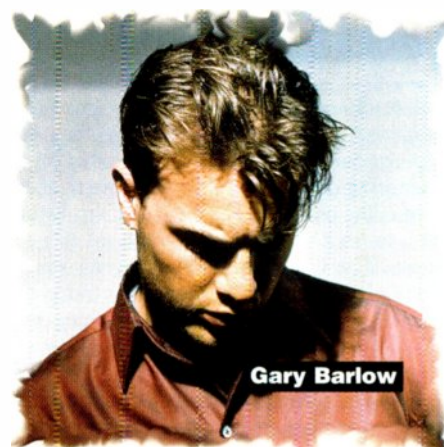
Keith: We used to more than we do now. It's better to be apart because you're in close quarters for so long you need some "decompression" time. Seventeen years later you can be apart and come back and it's like nothing has changed.

Dave: When not on the road we stay out of each other's way. Time at home is precious.

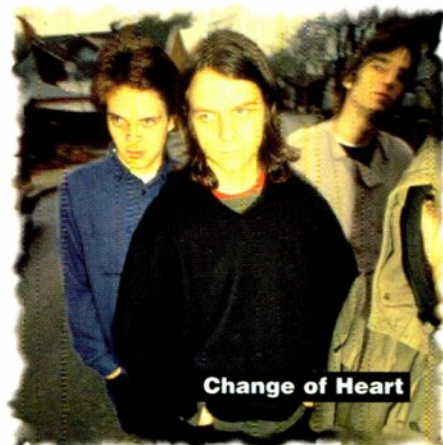
CM: When problems have occurred, whether they have been personal or professional, how were they handled? Do you hold band meetings? Quiet meetings with just the people involved?

Keith: We don't have a lot of problems personally so it's usually pretty easy going. I think it's easier when one person is making most of the decisions and everyone learns how to fit into that picture. Once I fired everyone but they showed up the next day anyway.

Dave: The few problems we have are calmly discussed with the people involved. If you want a solution, there is one.

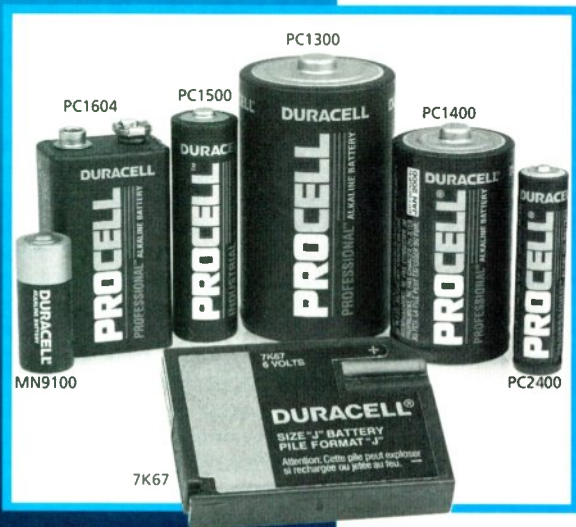


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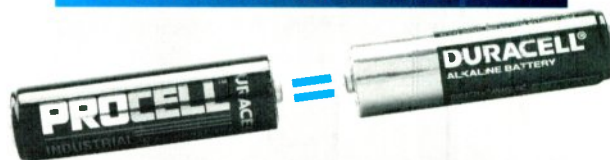
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He says that for problems other than a band member not pulling his or her weight or seeing eye to eye, that your band is your family in every sense of the word. If there's a death in the family, you forget recording, you forget the show; if it's "trivial" like you're suffering from burn-out, you're not feeling well or you got dumped, then your bandmates will

do what they can to be supportive, but not to the detriment of the band.

"If anybody in our band has a problem, you should be able to turn to one another," says Tanna. "When you have a band, they're the only ones you trust. I can't think of anybody else I spend more time with than the guys in my band. They might as well sleep here. If I have a problem I will go to them before anybody. I think they'd do the same. If you break up with a girlfriend, it's not important in the big picture. Everybody will help you get through it but it's not going to change the rest of your life. The rest of your life is your band."



Karen Bliss is a Toronto-based freelance writer

continued from page 36

it in because Jag and brother Christian write all the music and, therefore, define the band. Now, bassist Bruce Gordon and new singer Brian Byrne are both involved with the writing and they're all traveling in the same musical direction.

"If somebody wants to wear a dress onstage and the other guys want to be normal, you've got a problem," Tanna says. "You have to look at the situation you're attacking and take the best route — what's best for the band. It's all about principle. It's not like if we make a change we might not sell as many records. I don't care if we do. We have to be in a room and feel we're making the best music we can."

While other people wondered if I Mother Earth could replace such a charismatic frontman with someone with equal star power, Tanna says, "We knew we would find a guy but for us, we had to think, 'Is anyone gonna like the guy? Is he cute? Is he this and that?' So we got Brian and he's a nutbar and he can sing. That's the beautiful thing. Our music can go anywhere now, and that's what's good for us."

I Mother Earth has always done what's best for the band. Early in the band's career, in the middle of recording its first album, *Dig*, the group was faced with the difficult decision of firing a band member because of his substance abuse. "We had been friends for so long that you tend to let things go longer than they should," explains Tanna.

"Being in a band, you only have a short

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Wide Mouth

Dynamic Groove

by Sarah Chauncey

It's 2:00 on a Sunday afternoon, a bitter and windy Toronto day, very unbecoming to this El Niño winter. Lee's Palace, hauntingly grim under regular house lights and reeking of smoke that holds memories from the night before, is slowly filling with young aspiring musicians for whom 2:00 is still afternoon, not morning. The audience talks among themselves until almost at once, they reverently fall silent. Wide Mouth Mason's Shaun Verrault, a slight man with the presence of an old soul, is taking the stage. Not "taking the stage" like he did last night, mesmerizing a packed house of adults with a wailing guitar and voice, but sitting plainly on a chair, in front of a single mic, on the otherwise bare proscenium.

For the next two hours, the Saskatoon native will casually impart hard-earned guitar wisdom — far more than any 24-year-old has a right to know — to the rapt audience. In a gentle voice, more like a soothing confidant than like Canada's latest national guitar hero, he'll say things like "The most interesting things happen when you figure out what you're most afraid of," and "You can tell the way B.B. King brushes his daughter's hair at night by the way he touches his guitar." In an era of arrogant musicians who aren't too keen on talking to the plebes, Shaun is the anti-ego. [See *The Future of Guitar* in this issue] Several hours later, in an upscale diner, Shaun reflects on the short years that have brought Wide Mouth Mason from playing to "three drunk hockey players and two chickens" in rural Alberta dives, to opening for the Rolling Stones at Skydome.

When the trio first began performing together, they had to hire a "ghost" guitarist and pretend to be a quartet, because club owners didn't think three people could make enough noise. They traveled the Prairies in a beaten-up van and were heckled on sight. Once they released their independent EP, *The Hazarene* and caught the attention of Warner Music Canada, everything changed. Today, instead of being harassed by drunk two-bit hockey players in rural Alberta, Shaun has struck up a sort of mutual admiration society with the Ottawa Senators' star forward, Alexei Yashin. Instead of dragging their gear into nameless dives, they have roadies to help them load into Skydome. Life is good. But it hasn't been a cakewalk for the three friends. It irks Verrault when other musicians say to him, "Gee, it must be nice to be where you guys are." Wide Mouth Mason is talented, to be sure, but they also work their asses off and have paid enough dues to last several lifetimes. In addition to having to prove themselves as musicians, both bassist Earl Pereira and drummer Safwan Javed, who are of Filipino and Pakistani heritage respectively, consistently encountered racist comments. The band took the reactions as a challenge, Earl explains. "Even when we were in small, really rural places with a lot of rough crowds, we would

Wide Mouth Mason

take it upon ourselves to say, 'As much as you hate us from the moment you saw us, we're going to make you like us.'" That attitude has served the band well, from their earliest days busking on the street, up through playing small stages, then clubs and now, concert halls and stadiums.

The threesome have known each other since childhood; Saf and Shaun first played together in a grade-school concert band ("doing eighth-notes on a snare drum, where everyone else is playing "Hot Cross Buns" over top of it," Saf recalls wryly). Although their paths interlaced a bit in high school, it wasn't until university that the band futrely-known as Wide Mouth Mason came together.

Well into his twenties, Shaun still looks like he belongs in high school. With short brown hair atop a slender build, clothed inconspicuously in muted Gap colours, he reminds you of your best friend's kid brother. Until he opens his mouth. In a gentle, almost innocent, musical Prairie cadence, he speaks wisdom that doesn't seem possible for anyone under the age of

photograph by Jeff Mackay

400 to know. He thinks laterally rather than literally, wrapping his mind around ideas like ivy, and following his thoughts requires a visual mind. "It's not prickly purple enough," is a typical way he'll describe a song in progress. "It's too smooth orange right now."

Although he's only been singing for five years, Shaun began playing guitar at age 10. Fourteen years later, he's poised to inherit the title of Canada's most renowned guitar player since Alex Lifeson. With the slightest touch, he can make his guitar sing like Stevie Ray Vaughan, ache like Clapton, belt guttural blues like B.B. King, shriek like Satriani or even thrash like Eddie Van Halen.

Shaun is the most visible and arguably the most talkative of the three. But in order to fully understand Wide Mouth Mason, you have to understand that their music is a braid-

ing of three distinct styles and backgrounds. Woven together intricately, paper-thin blues layer criss-crossing upon paper-thin jazz layer, a 100 times over, the trio braids a full, unique, grooving sound that permeates every crevice of a venue and every cell of each listener.

Earl

The youngest of the trio at 23, Earl is lanky, with high cheekbones beneath a swath of blue-black hair that's perpetually falling over one eye. On stage, it seems not so much that he's playing an instrument, as that the bass is a different part of his body, one with which he happens to communicate with extremely well. He speaks in that soft Prairie cadence, one almost identical to Shaun's, ending every sentence with an upturn, as if to ask "you agree, don't you?"

Tricks and Techniques

One of the big audience-pleasing gimmicks in a Wide Mouth show is Shaun's playing guitar with his teeth. Somewhat surprisingly, he's sustained relatively little dental damage, but he may slow down on the gimmick "for my teeth's sake." Now kids, this is something you probably shouldn't try at home — at least not without an oral surgeon standing by — but here's the scoop on technique: "I'm just pushing with my front teeth against the strings." When it's pointed out that the upper jaw has no independent motion (and the writer attempts to demonstrate said principle, gathering strange looks from restaurant patrons), Shaun laughs. "You just move the guitar. It's all cheating."

Verrault's other signature move is his one-handed playing. It looks impressive and drives crowds wild, but Shaun points out, the principle behind it is fairly simple. "It sounds different, because there's no attack and then sound; it's more like it just comes on. If you're going to play with one hand, it works best to play on one string, because you can slide up and down it and not have to impact the next string." In terms of technique, he says musicians should remember to think creatively about their relationship with their guitar. "You think, okay one string," he explains. "All I have is one string to work with. You play little games with yourself sometimes. I'm only going to play on the E string and the B string, that's all I can do. So if I want to go lower, I have to go down the neck, and if I want to go higher, I have to go up the neck. Just to see what you come up with. Not as an exercise, to do 'I'm so bored with these songs that I have to do this,' but just to go, 'What would I come up with if I did that? What would I come up with if I could only play a string, and then leave one that I don't play and then play the next one.' Shaun emphasizes the importance of not viewing such endeavors as homework, but as experiments in creative growth.

That's not to say that one-handed playing is easy. Like everything else in Wide Mouth Mason's repertoire, the technique has been practiced often enough to give the illusion of being effortless.

"You kind of have to get your personality out there — what works for some people might not work for others, but that's what makes it interesting," Verrault clarifies. "Some people like to pick everything, others like to pick very little. Others use their fingers. Rather than say 'I'm one kind of person, one kind of player,' I'd rather just go, 'Well, I'm going to dabble in all of them,' and then from something in there will come out something that might be my own eventually."

Earl comes from a musical family — his brother, also a bass player, was touring nationally by the time Earl was in grade school — and he was tagged as "the entertainer" early on. "My earliest childhood memories are of being at a wedding, or a pot-luck dinner, with everyone waiting for me to do something," he recalls. "Dance, sing, whatever — entertain people. It's always been expected of me. So I'd either do a little Michael Jackson dance, or I'd lip-synch, or I'd play a song." In high school, Earl picked up the guitar, "not because I really liked it, but it was a good instrument to write with." He and some buddies started a band, but there was one problem: four guitarists and no bass player. Earl figured, *my brother has a bass, I might as well give it a shot.* To his surprise, he enjoyed the instrument, felt a connection with the grooves. Over the next few years, he played around in various '80s cover bands, but he admits to having felt "kind of lost," thinking, "I really like this instrument, but the music I'm using it for doesn't really have much purpose." The emergence of grunge helped to broaden his perspective a bit. "There was more groove and rhythm involved," he says now, "but it still wasn't my thing."

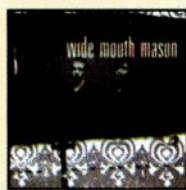
Earl's epiphany came in the form of *The Commitments*, the 1991 pseudo-documentary about an Irish rock band. In the movie, the band covers numerous Motown songs of the early '60s, and Earl remembers going, "wait a second, I know these songs. Why do I know these?" Turns out, they were all the songs his parents used to play while Earl was growing up. So he tore through their vinyl collection, pulling out every Stevie Wonder, every James Brown, "every album James Jamerson ever played on, which would be any Motown album. It didn't sound like anything I'd ever heard before."

After several buying sprees at local record stores, Earl took his new finds to Shaun and Saf, who in turn had been bringing in their own favourite music. "I was surprised that a lot of it they'd never heard of. They never heard of Wilson Pickett or Otis Redding, they'd only know 'Sitting on the Dock of the Bay'. Stevie Wonder, they only knew the hits." Earl realized that the music which filled him with passion wasn't too far removed from that which Shaun was embracing. "Shaun had us listening to all this hard-core blues, thanks to guys like Jimi Hendrix and Stevie Ray Vaughan and Eric Clapton, and I listened to that and went, 'that's not too different from what I'm listening to.' Just what I'm listening to is sort of progressive form of blues." Ultimately, any form of music that can make Earl feel "that unexplainable feeling" is what drives him, be it Gladys Knight or Rage Against the Machine.

Earl credits Shaun with both pushing him and teaching him musically. "Without him pushing me up until this point now, I wouldn't be nearly where I am as a player, or know what I know musically."

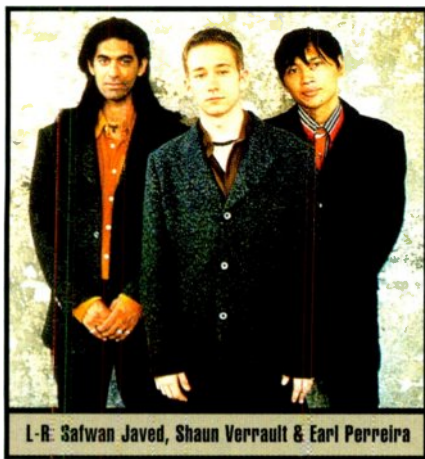
Saf

Over the phone from Saskatoon, Saf apologizes profusely for being late, but he was out



The Groove Thing

Bassist Earl Pereira and drummer Saf Javed are the groove team behind Wide Mouth Mason. With a combined passion for R&B, reggae, jazz and world music, it's no wonder that WMM's songs get people moving. The two musicians are equally passionate about their choices of hardware: When it comes to Earl's preferences, he's straightforward. "I'm a Fender guy. I've always been; I love the warmth of Fender sounds, they're just so heavy." His main piece is a Fender Precision Light, exactly the same as a traditional FP but lighter because he has a bad back. "It's just so reliable. It has the right sound right away. When we're sound checking, I sound check for maybe nine seconds, and they go "okay." It's always just right." On the occasions when a song or setup calls for an acoustic bass, Earl turns to his Gibson Epiphone, a big-bodied instrument that gives him a "big, bassy tone." Says Earl, "It reminds me of like a traditional Philippine instrument bass, a big Spanish-sounding one." Gibson Epiphones are traditionally used in recording, rather than live performance; the only other contemporary musician Earl knows who uses one live is Darrell from Great Big Sea. Saf is big on using Canadian-made products. Given a choice between Big Business and a smaller organization, he'll always choose the latter. "There's a lot of companies making some big money [on drums], and if I'm going to pay big money, why would I give it to people who already have so much." To that end, he uses Canwood drums, "made by a farmer who lives in Lloydminster, on the border of Saskatchewan and Alberta." The farmer "was a player himself — he may still play — and he also makes sound equipment. His thing was, I don't like the way a lot of this stuff sounds, so I'm going to make it sound the way I want it to." Canwood drums are made from Keller shells, the same high-quality shells used by the bigger-business Gretsch and Slingerland. Supporting another, albeit larger, Canadian company, Saf uses Sabian cymbals and — for lack of Canadian-made sticks — ProMark 747s. [for information see *The Future of Guitar in this issue*]



L-R: Safwan Javed, Shaun Verrault & Earl Perreira

Photo Courtesy of Warner Music Canada

when he was 14, where he studied with experienced jazz players and learned about jazz history.

In high school, Saf dropped music for sports. "It was really weird — the one thing that was real challenging for me all my life was athletics — I'm not the most athletic person — and for some reason, I really enjoy sports. I think it was a psychological, subconscious thing. I wanted to be good at that, that nothing else mattered." But he kept listening to music, absorbing one genre after another. "It would start with — there was a big hip-hop phase in the beginning, like remember LL Cool J and Public Enemy and when Run-DMC came out, all the early stuff, I thought it was the greatest stuff there was." Pause. Deep breath. "And then a lot of jazz, a lot of Coltrane and Miles Davis, specifically, but playing basketball with some buddies in sub-zero weather. He speaks with a rapid-fire, almost breathless earnestness. "I was born in PEI, and then when I was six months old — my parents were from Pakistan, and they kept going back and forth — and so my mom was still working in Pakistan and my dad was working in PEI, so six months old, I went home to Pakistan and lived there till I was three-and-a-half or four, went back to PEI till I was six-and-a-half, then came to Saskatoon." Okay, childhood covered. He used to return to Pakistan every few summers, but one of the difficulties with being in *The Next Big Thing* is that you can't really say "I need to go away for a month." "You lose the momentum," he admits.

Like Earl, Saf's musical awakening came in the form of a Beatles movie. He doesn't remember exactly which one, but "it was the one where Ringo's on stage with his drums and Ringo gets all mad — and from that day, I thought "cool, drums!" Like millions of kids, he began bugging his parents for drums. Unlike 99 per cent of those kids, his parents re-oriented. Once he got the basics down, Saf joined a school band, featuring the aforementioned hit, "Hot Cross Buns". Luckily for Saf and Shaun, "we had an alternate program as well, where you get to join stage bands, jazz bands. That's how I really started getting into it, and jazz was my first sort of insight into any rhythmic drumming." Fascinated by jazz, Saf attended a province-sponsored jazz camp


other guys, too. I got into Terrence Blanchard and the Marsalis brothers, just everything I could." Pause. Another breath. "I wasn't conscious of it, but sure, whatever you're listening to impacts on how you play and on the creative side of you. All of those things were definitely getting incorporated into what I was doing, especially a lot of the groove line stuff."

Although Saf has taken "a couple" of tabla lessons, he doesn't consider himself a true tabla player. "People ask me if I can play tablas, and I say, I can play maybe a beat or two, very simple stuff, but I'm not very good, and I haven't been trained, so

I'm not going to call myself a tabla player. Because I know what it means to learn that — it means living with an ustad [master], for like ten years." Saf pauses to collect his thoughts. "The real tabla players in the world, the ones that are good at what they do, those guys spent years and years and years honing their skill, learning about the history of their music." Given the chance, he says, he would take a year and just study tablas with an ustad. "I would like very much to be schooled in that. It becomes so important to you when it's part of your own identity."


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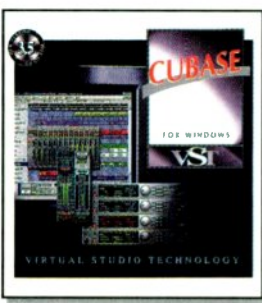


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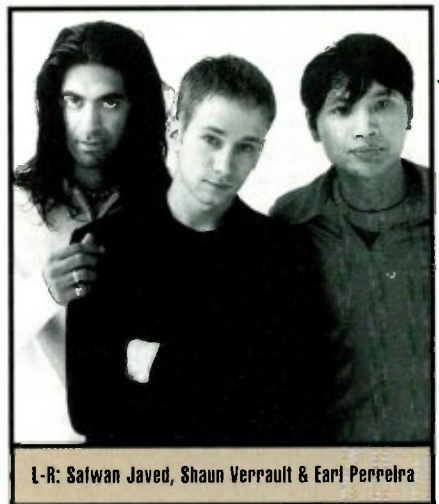
Once the three landed in university together, each began sharing "his" music with the other two, and they began to find common ground among their favourites. "Becoming close to them opened me up to a whole new set of things," recalls Saf. "Like Shaun opened up the door to the whole blues thing, which to me was a foreign thing. And BB King — when he introduced me to BB King, I freaked out. I thought he was Santa, or even more — some kind of saint." As though still lost in that initial elation, Saf continues. "Then Earl introduced me to Stevie Wonder, Wilson Pickett and Otis Redding, but I hadn't really listened to anything beyond "Mustang Sally" and "Midnight Hour". So Earl brought stuff over, and that stuff just blew my mind, too, because I couldn't believe where the groove was coming from. It's something that you couldn't imitate, no matter how hard you tried." Saf still believes that the ultimate music is that which is indescribable. "I think that's what good music does to you, it always makes you go "how did they do that? How does that happen? I don't understand!" It's beyond your mind to conceive of what's going on. It's not understandable, and that's why it's its own language, I guess." Saf eagerly introduced his bandmates to reggae beyond Bob Marley, as well as the immense language of jazz he'd accumulated.

But WMM isn't a "melting pot" band. "When we're writing songs, we never ever think "let's write a blues song, so we can acknowledge Shaun, who's the biggest blues fan

in the band," and then "Let's write something Saf gets to yell in, in his mother tongue." [a reference to "My Old Self", in which Saf does a mid-song rant in a combination of Arabic and Urdu] Or something since Earl's family really liked the Beatles." Verrault attributes the band's diversity to the fact that the three members all like different styles of music. "We play music that we like, but it just so happens that we listen to so many kinds of music that [all our ideas blend together]. If I was listening to one thing all day, and it kind of made me think of something, and Saf was listening to something else," the by-product is a marriage between the two, plus Earl's input. "I mean, if I was playing all three instruments, to use "This Mourning" again, the bass line wouldn't have been this sort of reggae-ish thing that Earl plays — I would never have thought of that. And the drums wouldn't have been half as cool as what Saf did."

When they started out, the trio "caught hell" for their mixture of sounds. The music industry is known for wanting to pigeonhole bands, and WMM isn't one to be fitted into a little box. They pride themselves on playing "what we like to play" rather than kowtowing to public desires. And based on the response, their fans appreciate their honesty. So much, in fact, that the band's debut album leapt past gold and is racing towards platinum. The normally-fickle industry, too, has honoured the threesome with two Canadian Radio Awards and a Juno nomination.

One of the biggest benefits of not getting on the lemming bandwagon, Shaun points out wryly, is that, "Whatever we do, we'll sound like



L-R: Safwan Javed, Shaun Verrault & Earl Perreira

us." He points to Fishbone and Prince as examples of artists who are diverse and dynamic, ever-changing. "I like being surprised. I'd rather not know what someone's going to do. It gets boring if you can listen and go 'all right, next they're going to do this.'"

Process

Diversity is the key, not only within the band, but also for Shaun personally. When it comes to songwriting, he prefers using different paths and techniques for each piece. "I don't want a formula, even though it's good to keep at it as much as you can, I don't want it to be always vocal idea first, or music idea first. I like how it surprises you, and sometimes it'll be complete-

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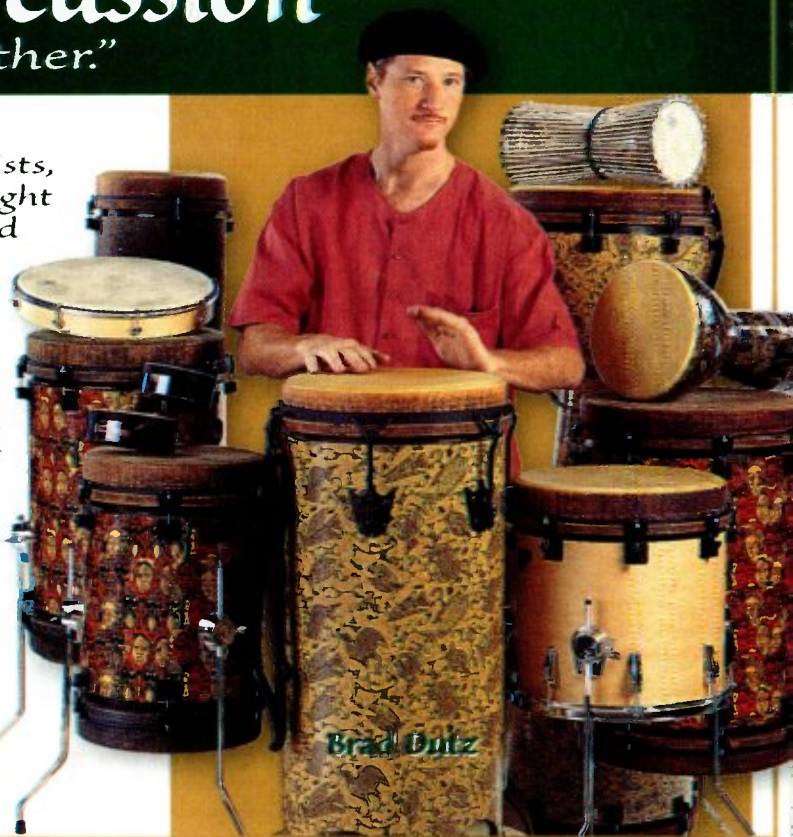
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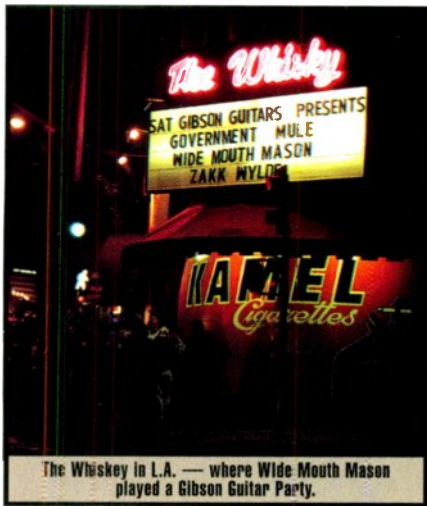
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The Whiskey in L.A. — where Wide Mouth Mason played a Gibson Guitar Party.

ly different, and you'll have no idea that you actually have a song until you realize you've been humming the same thing for a week, and you figure it out, and out it comes." He also doesn't take credit for lyrical ideas all the time. "Sometimes, I'll have a conversation with Saf, and he'll say something that really makes me think, and then who am I to say that I wrote those lyrics? I just kind of put them in order."

Where Shaun is the idea-man, Earl is the arranger. Shaun will toss off a riff, then think *oh, that sucks* and never play it again. Five months later, Earl might turn to Shaun and say, "Can you play that thing you did like five months ago, cuz it doesn't suck, and if you did this, maybe it could be something." It's not till then, Shaun admits, "I'll realize that it was a good thing."

Earl admits, "I'm terrible with coming up with ideas. I used to love drawing, but when I'd draw, as a kid, I'd just draw by looking at something and making it a little bit different and a little bit better, to me, and then drawing it and saying "oh, that's the way it should have been," and I do that with our songs sometimes." It's typical of bass players throughout history, he recalls, to be the arrangers, the midwives for songs, as it were. "I think it's mostly cuz I'm in the middle. Which is the kind of person I am. Saf's way over to the percussion/rhythm side, and Shaun's way over to the melodic side, both of them cross over, but me, I'm sort of stuck in both."

It's not just how each song is arranged, Verrault insists, that affects how people perceive the music, but also how the songs are ordered on the album. "I'm glad "Midnight Rain" did so well. But to me, it sounds like it does because it's between "My Old Self" and "Tom Robbins". The one sounds good because the other is there. People wouldn't get the sensitivity of a "River Song" if it wasn't next to something really heavy." The dynamics that are so important within the infrastructure of Wide Mouth Mason's songs are equally important when you listen to the album as a whole.

Into the Future

The prairie boys are keeping busy, what with their rising popularity, opening for the Stones and all. But they're also looking forward to heading back into the studio to record another

album. Earl can't wait to get back to "dipping into the creative part" of recording. Their self-titled album, he says, was "pretty much putting songs down that we've been playing forever and doing it as quickly as possible, because we've got to go tour." It was a "huge learning process," in terms of learning how a big studio works, but he feels "it wasn't as creative as making our independent album."

This spring, the trio will begin preproduction on a new album, which essentially means "just getting our basic ideas down before we get our fourth set of ears," according to Earl. While they haven't yet decided on a producer, the criteria will be "somebody who will mostly inspire us to play the songs, not write the songs for us." All three seem to agree that while they want to have basic ideas before laying down tracks, they

also want to leave plenty of room for improvisation. "I just remember recording as doing whatever we wanted to, to songs that weren't songs yet," recalls Earl. "Instead of recording songs that we've played and we know exactly what they're like."

They'll work on the album over the summer. It's doubtful the finished product will be released in 1998, but at the pace these guys are going, "you never know," says Earl.

And with Wide Mouth Mason, you really don't.



Sarah Chauncey is a freelance writer who has worked extensively in both the Canadian and American music industries. She is the former producer of "Break This," a MuchMusic USA profile show about bands breaking in the States

E-SERIES

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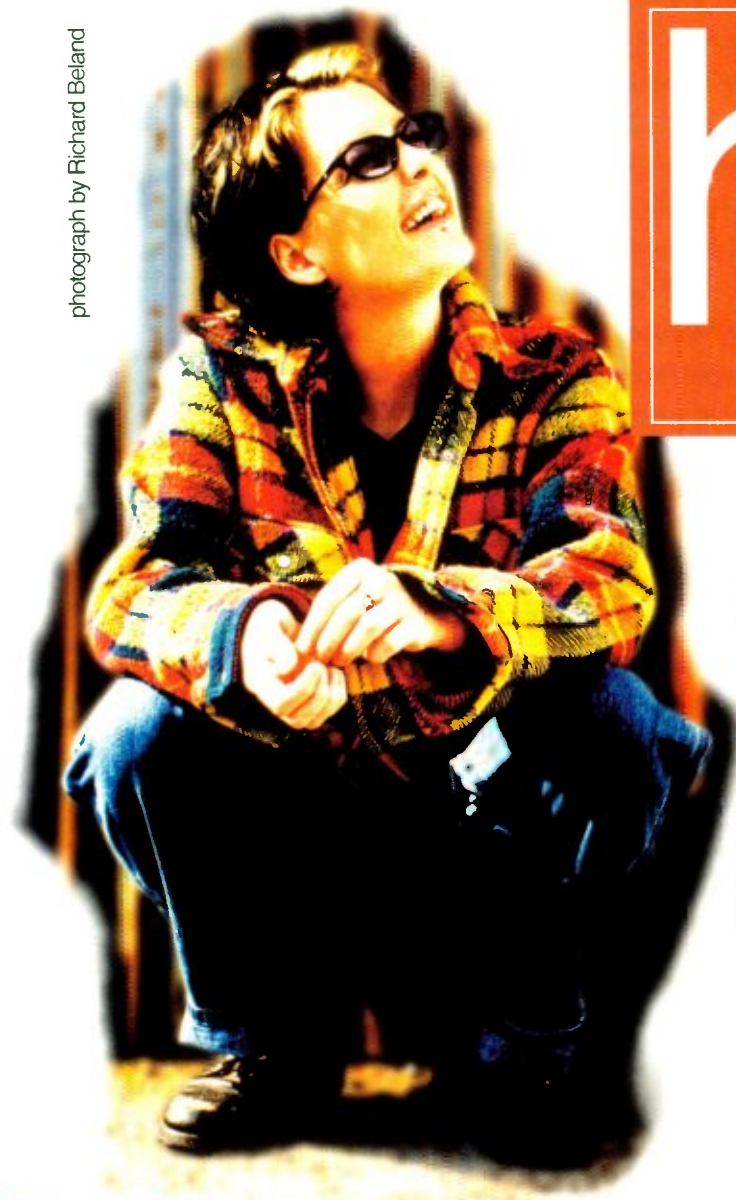
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hollyr

A woman on the move

by Sarah Chauncey

McNarland says is direct and certain, but also she commands attention by speaking in a voice so quiet it's almost a whisper. Except a whisper would be louder.

Background Stuff

Born in Manitoba, McNarland was two when her parents split. She and her siblings, along with their mother, Faye, moved every couple of years. "She had to go where there was work," the singer explains, drawing a verbal map of the family's travels from The Pas to Brandon to Portage and finally, to Winnipeg. "I grew up moving. Like, every year we moved to a different house, different school. Every few years, we moved to a different town. Even once they settled in Winnipeg, the family changed houses every few years, a pattern that would imprint on Holly for years to come, marking her as a permanent nomad.

Holly learned to sing at a young age, soon performing in clubs, accompanied by her mother on guitar. She describes her mother as a supportive hippie who introduced her to old folkies like Simon and Garfunkel. When she was 15, McNarland's boyfriend taught her a few guitar chords, and when she was old enough, she began

Holly McNarland has a habit of clutching her clothing while she's performing. It helps keep her grounded and balanced, she explains. Which is a good thing, because otherwise, she might just float away in the river of attention she's been garnering. A hugely successful major-label debut, *Stuff*; heavy rotation on MuchMusic; specialized attention from MTV; two Canadian Radio Awards and a Juno for Best New Solo Artist are just the beginning. This woman's on her way up.

McNarland is a sleek powerhouse of a woman whose mere aura commands respect, despite the fact that, offstage, the singer herself is somewhat shy. Although, for the most part, she is extremely articulate, she named the album *Stuff* because of her propensity for ending sentences with

the noncommittal phrase "y'know ... and stuff."

In early March, McNarland played to an overcrowded Canadian Music Week audience at Toronto's Reverb. Her show was the ticket of the night, and rarely has the small venue at the corner of Queen and Bathurst been so jammed, seething with swarms of industry types and fans alike. The air was so hot that most of the audience had stripped down to tank-tops, so humid that anyone unfortunate enough to be wearing glasses spent the evening wiping steam from their lenses. It must have been excruciating on stage, but Holly appeared oblivious. Commanding the room with her notice-me-now presence and mesmerizing voice, McNarland delivered her passionate lyrics in an assertive yet vulnerable, belting howl.

Off stage, however, belting — or howling, for that matter — is far from Holly's cadence. "Soft spoken" is an understatement, at least in a literal sense. What

mcNarland

waitressing in clubs, hitting the stage for a set following her shifts. The wandering bug hit again when she was 19, and McNarland headed for British Columbia. Two years later, in 1995, MCA Records (now Universal) signed Holly to a long-term deal and agreed to distribute her six-song indie CD, *Sour Pie*.

Sour Pie gained McNarland a lumping into the “angry young woman” category, alongside Alanis Morissette (who she sounds nothing like) and Liz Phair (who is a more accurate comparison). She has occasionally been likened to Ani DiFranco, but in truth, their only similarity is percussive guitar playing. Critics called her “sex-obsessed,” because of her directness in songs like “Mr. Five Minutes” and “Cry and Cum.” She quickly became tired of people focusing on the sexual in her music, but — in one of her most oft-reprinted quotes — she admitted, “I guess people just like talking about sex.”

Within two years, McNarland was one of Universal’s top priorities, opening for Live on part of their 1997 Canadian stint and highlighting, if not headlining, last year’s Edgefest tour. She relocated to Toronto, turned down a spot on Lilith Fair, toured constantly and won one of the headlining spots at MuchMusic’s SnowJob last winter. She just can’t stop moving.

Writing Stuff

When the time came to write new material for *Stuff*, McNarland’s first official major label release, she had trouble focusing. She’s a mental nomad, as well as a physical one, confessing a common stumbling block: “I want to go out and play all the time.” So, following the dream of writing in isolation, she packed up her mother’s guitar, along with some minimal equipment — along with her beloved Jack Russell terrier, Owen — and headed to Galiano Island for a two-week writing retreat. “I think that’s what I have to do to get myself working.” The romantic idea of being in the woods on a creative retreat soon gave way to the paranoia of being alone, being in the dark — and the realization that, at heart, she belongs in the city. Despite the difficulties of being cut off

from so-called civilization, McNarland was able to write enough songs to fill the album. Even the difficult stuff — like a really badly-timed yeast infection — became creative fodder for songs — in that case, “The Box”.

The music on *Stuff* reflects the paranoia and claustrophobia Holly experienced. There’s something about it that makes your neck tense up, your chest tighten involuntarily. The lyrics are intense, as anxious as they are angry, the drumbeat and bass groove unrelenting.

“Numb”, the first single off *Stuff*, was



photograph by Richard Beland

inspired by McNarland’s reaction to the movie *H*, not — as some rumours suggested — her own personal experience with heroin (she’s never used the drug). The song, which was the second most added single at radio the week it was released, grew out of the fear McNarland experienced living in Vancouver. In a city with a well-documented and exploding heroin problem, Holly began to fear taking Owen for a walk, afraid he’d step on a discarded needle and hurt himself.

As confident as McNarland appears to be on the outside, she’s not immune to the inner critic that plagues all artists. Yet she’s managed to find a way through it, noting in an interview with *id* magazine that “You can’t second-guess yourself. As soon as the paranoia kicks in, you’re in trouble.” She admits to being bashful while writing the songs, and she won’t play them for anyone till she feels they’re ready. Then, she says, “I just have to keep playing it.” Her mother still plays an integral role in Holly’s life, encouraging her daughter when self-doubt strikes. “When I write something, first I call my mom. And she’ll go ‘It’s great!’ and I go, ‘I don’t know, maybe I’ll show some other people.’” Even with positive feedback, she admits, “It takes me a while to actually go to rehearsal with it, and show the band at sound check or something. I’m really shy about it — I’m always shy at first about the songs, I still am. I get self-conscious.”

The best solution to self-criticism, Holly says, is to keep creating. “When you’re writing, you just have to go,” she insists. “Sometimes you think ‘Man, that’s stupid’ — it’s a given ‘that’s a dumb line, it’s dumb, forget it.’ So what if it’s dumb? Write another line. Just keep going. She did, and look what happened.

Recording Stuff

“I like moving around,” Holly reiterates, raising a well-manicured eyebrow (raising one eyebrow is a mannerism she’s perfected). “I’m still moving. Can’t stop.” No kidding. True to her nature, *Stuff* was recorded in three studios. Starting in her then-hometown of Vancouver, McNarland and crew began the process at The Armory, an upscale sort of place that featured a \$4,000 cappuccino machine (hey, when you’re working long hours, these amenities are important). The band then made its way down the West Coast to San Francisco and Los Angeles. Just for good measure, the mixing was done in Miami.

Holly first worked with producer Dale Penner on *Sour Pie*. She admits she knew next to nothing about what exactly a producer did. “It was like ‘Sure, he’s the producer — I don’t know what he does, but

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World Radio History

sure.' I just write the songs, and I sing them, and this guy comes in and says he's producing.' She was pleased with the result — a straight-up album with no technical frills. So when deciding on a producer for *Stuff*, she returned to Penner. She was seeking "somebody I was comfortable with, and I'm definitely comfortable with Dale. He's just really easy." She adds, "I still really am learning what production is; you don't just automatically know. I pretty much have a good idea now, but I didn't [always]."

What's most notable about the production of *Stuff* is that you don't notice the production. The finished product is clean, straightforward and direct. Like McNarland. "I'm very proud of the fact that the album's really, just basically me. My influences." She doesn't get too involved in the arrangement of songs, leaving that to the musicians in her band. "The guys, they just did their own parts. I didn't go, 'Play this.'" McNarland is proud of the sound. "It's really straight-up, you know?" she asks rhetorically. "Like when you play live, it's the way it is on the album. It's all decent music. It's straightforward, honest music."

The big guest star on *Stuff* was ex-Pixies guitarist Joey Santiago. McNarland has long been a Pixies fan, and when she kept saying she wanted a "Pixies-like guitarist," a friend suggested she try and get the real thing. And she did. "When I first met him, I was shaking," she admits. "I was so nervous. After a while it was like — he's a great

guy, really mellow, doesn't talk much, really shy. Very humble — really humble, humble guitarist, always asking 'Is that okay? Is that all right?' I'm like, "Man, you have nothing to worry about." She was amazed that someone with Santiago's talent would be so self-deprecating. "I think people who are talented are people that are critical. As



photograph by Jeff Mackay

Holly at her Canadian Music Week performance.

soon as you get to a point of 'That was awesome, I couldn't get any better,' maybe you should stop. He did a really good job."

Chick Stuff

Despite her success — or perhaps because of it — McNarland is paying a price for being a confident, competent woman. "A lot of people out there think I'm a bitch," McNarland says thoughtfully, "and that is a

hard thing to deal with." Let's get something straight. Holly McNarland is not a bitch. She is a strong woman who knows what she wants, and like many women in the industry, she has to be extremely firm in order to be taken seriously. Guys, especially those who would rather see her as a "babe" don't always take that too well. "Sometimes it's hard to try and get respect, to try and have people — not really do what you tell them, but respect you. Sometimes it's hard." One of the ways around the trap is to be direct and simply lay down the law. "No bullshit — this is the way it has to be. This is the way it's going to be. And sometimes, if a man's secure with his masculinity, with himself, then he's cool with it." But as often as not, men still want to see her as a sex object.

Indeed, almost all the men I know, their first reaction to the name "Holly McNarland" is "babe." Not "amazing voice." Not "incredible stage presence." Not "hard-hitting songwriter." But "babe." And yeah, she is a babe. But she's also an extremely bright, directed woman, and in business — which is what this is — that comes first. It's a struggle, sometimes, for McNarland to get men to stop sexualizing her. "I think with some guys, it's like they can't be friends with a woman," she sighs. "They can't *just* be friends, they have to fuck. I think it's weird." She pauses and chews her bottom lip in what has become a trademark habit. "I've got a lot of guy friends who I have no desire to sleep with

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whatsoever. And I think it's sad, cuz they're missing out — there's a lot of great women out there who could be their friends, and they're completely missing out on a whole different thing." She also acknowledges the Catch-22 faced by most women who try to stand their ground: "The thing you have to understand is, you're damned if you do, you're damned if you don't. But you know what? They're gonna think you're something — you're either one thing or many things. So what? There's a zillion people out there, and you can't be loved by everybody."

Like many women in the industry, McNarland is surrounded, day to day, by men. "I have a lot of men working for me, but when it comes down to it, I have final

say. If they can't handle that, they don't stay." And a few haven't. But now, a few years into this thing, she's got a group around her that she's pleased with. "The people that I've hired now, they're hired, but they're my friends — it's like, they don't have a problem with a woman in charge of things. Especially the band — they're just so cool, because they're secure people, secure men, they don't have a problem with a woman. That's all it comes down to. They don't call me "honey" and "sweetie" all the time." With a smile, she adds, "Everybody that works for me is great. Hope to keep it that way."

Holly has one major piece of advice for women who are aspiring musicians. "Try and write your own songs," she encourages.

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Web Stuff

Forget units sold, awards won, weekly spins and gross ticket revenues. The true test of a successful artist is how many web sites are dedicated to her. And those who are deemed really cool have a "web ring," which is just a bunch of links to various like-minded web sites. "The Holly McNarland Web Ring" boasts 14 sites, not including the official one (www.hollymcnarland.com), and is growing every day. So for those who can't get enough "stuff," check out these web sites:

Warren's Holly McNarland Page
<http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Paladium/9828/main.html>

Holly McNarland (Jennifer Gunderson)
<http://pw1.netcom.com/~jennig/holly.html>

Holly McNarland's Stormy Page
<http://www.angelfire.com/ak/hollymcnarland/>

Fear Girl's Holly McNarland Page
<http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/Quad/9767/mcnarlan.htm>

The Force of My Ability
An Unofficial Holly McNarland Page
<http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Studio/4718>

Melanie's Holly McNarland Stormy Page
<http://www.aei.ca/~mvvideo/sourpie.htm>

Holly McNarland by JagNet
<http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/2435/holly-mcnarland.html>

Logan's Holly McNarland Page
<http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Backstage/6357>

Great Ghu's Holly McNarland Page
<http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Underground/9861/gholly.htm>

coward: a holly mcnarland page
<http://www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/venue/1511>

HAM — The Holly McNarland Fan Club
<http://www.angelfire.com/ak/hamclub/index.html>

Twisty Mirror
<http://hollymc.home.ml.org>

The Box
http://members.tripod.com/~Glitter_Girl/holly.html

Stuff That Rocks
<http://www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/underground/9011>

Sunny and Carmen's Tribute to Holly McNarland
<http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Arena/1115/>

Gear Stuff

All right, already, you're saying, so what do they play? Without further ado, here's the current lineup of Holly's band, along with all their nifty equipment info.

Holly McNarland plays a Gibson J200 acoustic with a Fishman pickup piezo, Fishman pre-amp, played through a Shure wireless system.

- a Collings acoustic that she rarely uses; it's her backup guitar. On both guitars, she uses Martin medium strings.

Tony Volcic sits behind Ayotte drums, with Vic Firth 5As in his hand. The whole rundown:

- 22x18 kick, 16x16 floor tom, 12x13 tom, 10x8 tom, 12x7 snare

- his cymbals: 20" vintage Zildjian, 22" Sabian China w/rivets, 17" Zildjian A-custom crash, 15" Ufip crash, 14" Zildjian A-custom hi-hats, 12" Ufip splash, two 8" Sabian splashes, 6" Zildjian splash

- Tony has an Anti-Endorsement for Ufip: "They break all the time." He says they cost way more than Zildjian or Sabian, and they only last him about a month. Buyer beware.

Les Cooper is the guitar guru of the band. Filling awfully big notes left by Joey Santiago on the album, he plays a custom Furlanetto, made by The Guitar Clinic in Hamilton. He calls it "the Telecaster I always wanted but could never afford." The Furlanetto has three different pickups: on the bridge, a P90 Gibson, on the middle, a Fender Lace Sensor, and on the neck, a Fralin. He uses D'Addario strings.

- a Paul Reed Smith McCartney model, which he says is "like an old Les Paul."

- a Fender Strat from the early '80s. He plays it "flipped upside-down," because the guitar is left-handed and he's not, but he loved it anyway.

- another Furlanetto custom

Les has a unique setup: "The guitar goes into a splitter box. It comes out of the splitter box, and one side goes into a tuner; the other side goes into two Bernie Raunig pre-amps, which goes to a Voodoo Lab tremolo pedal, which goes to a volume pedal, which goes to a Matchless Chieftain amp. There's a thing coming out of the speaker output of the Chieftain, a red box, that splits the signal. One goes right back into the amp; the other side goes to another tube pre-amp, and that tube pre-amp goes to a Lexicon MPX1. When it comes out of the MPX1, one side goes directly to a DI, and then to the board. The other side goes to a power amp, and then out of the power amp into a speaker, a Bag End, and so I hear my effects on stage through the Bag End speaker. The FOH guy mics the Matchless and the Bag End, and then he combines all three — the direct signal, the Bag End signal and the Matchless signal." What he's trying to do is to get his guitar right into the amp, but in order to do something that sounds so simple, the process winds up being kind of complicated.

Mark Pullyblank, bassist, plays a Fender jazz bass through Ampeg B410. He uses medium Ernie Ball strings

- On the album, Mark's bass was run through a series of Ampeg SVT amps, the same ones used on Neil Young's *Ragged Glory* album.

"I think that it's really important that it's yours. You can collaborate, but start out, — if you're young and you're starting out, work your ass off. It's a lot of work, but just keep writing. Try and do it yourself. Believe that you can write a song."

Future Stuff

McNarland is still a woman on the move. After a year and change in Toronto, she's moving back to the West Coast. "I actually bought a house in Vancouver, so I think I'm gonna be stuck there." Her new (dare we say permanent?) abode is on a street lined with Heritage homes — a rarity in the ultra-modern, built-up coastal city. Because

she has a big house, though, she may be able to balance her need for isolation while writing with big-city benefits (like nearby drugstores). Could this be the end of her nomad-like existence? Nah. With the success of *Stuff*, it's a sure bet that McNarland will be on the move for years to come.

Y'know. And stuff.



Sarah Chauncey is a freelance writer who has worked extensively in both the Canadian and American music industries. She is the former producer of Break This, a MuchMusic USA profile show about bands breaking in the States.

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FUTURE of GUITAR

"Cavemen used to pick up sticks to hoard wood from the fire just in case it got extra cold. And then they put strings on it and they called it Rock 'n' Roll."

—vintage guitar dealer, Ed MacDonald of Tundra Music

For this year's focus on guitar, Canadian Musician has chosen to bring you what the musicians who are out playing and recording for a living think will be the future of guitar playing. We asked them about playing styles, favourite guitarists, what gear they're currently using, what gear they would like to see produced in the future. The answers vary greatly, just as much as the playing styles, gear selection and opinions of each guitarist questioned. What role will the recording studio play in shaping guitar sounds to come? How has the Internet affected playing the instrument? Read on and see what the pros predict will be next...



KIM MITCHELL

I'm kind of like a guy who's happy with what he has, sort of one of those guys who's happily married and doesn't really look around. There's not a whole lot of gear that comes out — it's all basically the same to me when it comes down to guitar stuff. There's distortions, there's choruses, there's different amplifiers. What I would like to purchase is a SSL bus compressor and an Eventide 3500 Harmonizer just for the sound man out front. Those are two expensive high-priced items that I'd like to have, but as far as guitar stuff goes, the stuff that comes out now, I mean, other than the hard drive recording that's available now, just as far as amplifiers and stuff like that, I'm a pretty satisfied guitarist. I open up magazines and I see the new stuff, but I'm not obsessed with trying out gear. I think at this point in my age, even, I hope I've settled into something. Believe it or not, it's usually the older stuff.

I would love it if Marshall would come up with a twin 12 closed back cabinet, just for obvious reasons — for the size of it, for flying, because we do a lot of flying, sometimes they're smaller stages and sometimes you just want to jam. Sometimes you're going to go

to a session and you don't want a big 4 x 12 but want that Celestion closed back sound. Most twin 12 cabinets are open-backed, so I wish they would come up with a really good sound, you know, someone has to research and develop it because of the size and the dimensions, but I wish they would do that.

My gear starts with a Marshall JCM 800 100-watt head, and the settings are fairly dull — don't have it very bright. There's not a lot of treble. I like sort of a duller sound to it. And then I have the vintage reissue 4 x 12 cabinets, 25-watt greenbacks. My pedal system's just a BOSS overdriver, a BOSS foot pedal compressor that I use to lower the volume and clean up the sound. They have an old grey prehistoric BOSS chorus thing that they don't make anymore that has a preamp in it — I don't know the model number of it. From there it comes to a sort of mutated version of a Strat — it's a Strat body with a neck that was bought off the wall at a store, and it has the guts of a Gibson G47, all the pots and electronics and pickups. It's kind of like a Gibson with a Strat body. It was just built from stuff lying around in a drawer and put together one day. So that's my main guitar, and then I have a standard Stratocaster

Sunburst and a Godin Classical and a Gibson J1, sort of a three-quarter sized acoustic bass on stage. It's kind of honky sounding. There's no bottom and no real top. It's just like for bashing away on stuff. That's kind of my stage setup and I use an (old or Dolby) EB wireless system. It works great.

I had an old Gibson guitar and then they didn't like the guitar, so I just took everything out and I just put it in a drawer for a couple of years. And then the guy who worked on my guitars said "Why don't you buy a body and a neck that you like, and I'll put something together for a spare." So he did that, and I remember taking it to the first gig and the sound man's going "Oh my god, this is ridiculous! This is great!" So ever since then, I've sort of used it. I've had people try to copy it, but it just doesn't have the same response. It's just one of those things.

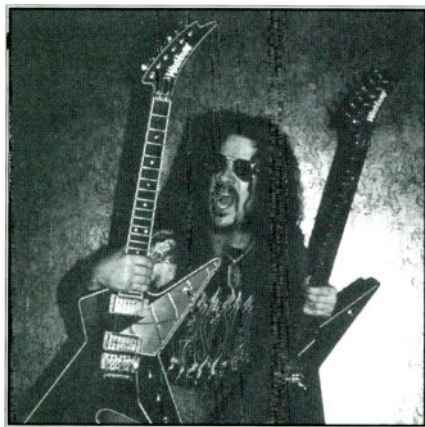
Upcoming Players & Styles

I like the guy from Wide Mouth Mason. He's got a lot to be proud of as a guitar player. He plays with his heart and his balls rather than his head. He knows more than three chords. He has the same qualities that Eddie Van Halen and Jimmy Hendrix had, from the standpoint that music just kind of flowed out of those guys. They didn't think about chops. They didn't just go "watch what I can do." They just kind of played; the music came through them.

As far as the music I listen to, I really like the Pat Matheny *Imaginary Road* album. But to limit myself to one style, I would have to say that there's really good and well-performed and well written music in every sort of genre. As a musician, I recognize that. I can sit down and listen to a Vince Gill singing a tune, a twangin' away country thing, because he's a great musician. He plays great, writes great, sings great, so I appreciate that as a musician. I can sit down and also rock with a band like Moist. I'm all over the road. I love some of the new stuff, the Chemical Brothers, I mean, I'm open to anything. I'm blessed with having a 12-year-old son who's into some of this new stuff. Another one of my favourite albums is Puff Daddy and the Family. I start to realize the coolness of someone who raps well, the rhythm behind, which rap stands for: Rhythm And Poetry. Some of these guys, rhythmically, are doing more interesting things than I've heard drummers do. From that standpoint, I can get into it. The ironic thing is that my 12-year-old son's favourite album right now is AC/DC's *Back in Black*.

The last thing a plumber wants to do when he gets home is fix the pipes. A lot of the time I get away from guitar music. I listen to piano, or I listen to the ringing in my ears, generally. I get exposed to enough guitar playing throughout the day. As a guitar player, that little 25 per cent of me always has that one ear

cranked, even though someone might be speaking to me about something, if there's guitar playing on, I'm still hearing it, and checking it out.



DIMEBAG DARRELL of Pantera

If you could approach any manufacturer and have them make you any product, what would that be?

Look forward to seeing the new Dime guitar called "The Culpit". It's a totally wicked looking, sounding, playin' axe coming soon — also the Dimebag signature Randall amp. This amp will blow you away — all ya need is a guitar and a cable. Trust me. It's a Monster.

I share a great relationship with Washburn and Randall. We've worked super hard on making all of my personal guitars and amps as bad ass as possible and they are now available to the public. Check 'em out. I think you'll dig it.

Describe what equipment (in detail) that you have in your current set-up. What's been your most recent purchase/addition to it?

Randall RG 100 head, MXR & Furman EQs, Dunlop Wah pedal, Digitech whammy pedal, Rocktron gate, Samson Wireless, Washburn Dimebag Darrell Signature Series guitars with D.R. strings.

Who is the most promising guitar player you have seen/beard perform in the last year?

Rusty Burns, the guitarist from the '80s band Point Blank. He's got a new band called Bigfoot Johnson. He's killer. I go to watch him rip every chance I get.

He's very unique. He plays a right-handed guitar upside down left-handed. That means his little string is on the top of the neck and big string on the bottom. It's a trip to watch him play none the less, but the main reason is his ability to truly play the shit out of the guitar. Everything about his style, feel, tone, etc. is honest and played from the heart, and that's very rare these days.

Where do you see guitar playing, soloing, effects going? What do you think the next trend will be?

All killer guitar players and all true killer

guitar playin' will always be the root of stability. A trend is just that — a fucking trend, and trends do not last. So look forward to another strong honest Pantera record in '99 — Slam On... Long Live Real Music!

JAGORI TANNA of I Mother Earth

Gear

When it comes to new equipment, I think that this is a very exciting time for guitarists. We find some manufacturers trying to recreate guitars and amps from 30 or 40 years ago, and other companies trying to reinvent them. I'm a big fan of both schools of thought, however, as one gives a player convenient access to sample fantastic vintage tones, and the other, some hope that the perfect tone has not been found yet and is still up for grabs! It boggles the mind that after so many years, the struggle still goes on to improve upon what was done in the past, and there is no end in sight! The next step for guitar manufacturers, as their supply of choice wood thins out, is to find alternative woods or composite material to continue on with. This could either be an interesting or dismal time for a guitarist as older instruments will be beyond expensive and new guitars might be made of chipboard! I think I'll hold on to my Strats just the same thank you!



Playing Styles

I think that playing styles, for me anyway, fall into one of three categories, these being; the 'amazing', the 'vibey' and the 'horrible!' 'Vibey' and 'awful' might sound similar to some people but there is a big difference. Somebody with a 'vibey' style doesn't have to be brilliant technically speaking, but can still make an impact melodically or sonically. The 'horrible' category kind of speaks for itself! Playing styles have changed so much ever since 'alternative' rock hit the mainstream, and it is kind of scary. The recipe for today's kind of success doesn't really require superior musicianship as much as it does a good video! Kids that are just starting out, look up to a whole different set of musicians and for the most part, not because of some guy's guitar playing abil-

ity. They can turn on the television and see that you don't have to be an incredible musician to make it happen, which kind of downplays the basic need to excel, and lowers the standard. But don't get too depressed, there is some good to be found! As the emphasis has totally been taken away from individual instruments, everything still hinges on the most important thing — the song. I'll take a good song or great musical idea over anything else, amazing guitar player or not! I do think that some bands are finally starting to shed this anti-guitar hero mentality, and entering into an era with more and more players feeling an honest need to present a fresh approach to this whole thing. I find myself enjoying some of the newer guitar playing styles out there lately as they compensate any rusty chops with imaginative parts and tones. A player can separate himself from the herd with imagination as much as virtuosity. It will be interesting to see where it's going!

Soloing

Soloing doesn't seem to have much of a place in today's popular music, I know this first hand from the countless editing we had to do on our own music for radio and television! Turn on the radio lately and let me know if you hear any music that includes a guitar solo. I truly believe that soloing has a place in today's music, and stubbornly refuse to let go of it as fashion dictates. The only players who have ever told me that soloing was uncool or passe, admittedly never got the hang of it! A solo is that one short time a guitarist has to put his/her undeniable stamp on a song, (as long as it's not one of those massive, self-indulgent, over-bearing kind of stamps!). I think you have to be mature enough to keep the song in mind first, park your ego and ask yourself if the tune even needs one in it, this is tough to get a grip on sometimes! I find that I always think first about introducing more of a band type solo, like a musical interlude, before I think about a guitar solo. If and when I get to solo, or when I hear a solo, I like the supporting music to be different and interesting so that the odds of redundancy are greatly reduced. It doesn't always work but hey ... I said reduced not eliminated! I'm always up for hearing a good solo, though I am getting a little worried that I'll always have to go back to my old record collection to hear them! We need some new blood to further push that envelope the same way that it was 30 years ago. All that healthy competition definitely changed the face of music and pushed musicians to their very limits. Even though I wasn't even alive then, I miss them good ol' days!

If you could go into the factory of your favourite guitar/amp/effects company, what would you ask them to build that you've never seen before?

I would probably end up at the Gibson factory and ask them to build me an exact

replica of a vintage Fender Strat, just to be a pain! I'm actually pretty content on a stock Strat. I think that Strats tend to lose a bit of their character when you mess around with them too much. Some companies are definitely building "improved" versions of Strats, but miss a bit of that ugly character inherent in Fenders. I'm still trying to find that magical one though... (hint hint!)

Every time I dream up guitars, they seem to look a lot like Fenders or Gibsons. Although I had an interesting dream the other day about a Paul Reed Smith, a donkey and a Volvo...

SCOTT IAN *of Anthrax*

I'm using three Marshall JCM 2000 heads. Two for heavy, one for clean. Three stacks of speaker cabs with old 80-watt Celestions. I've got the Samson Synth Six wireless, a Rocktron Patchmate with the controller for switching between amps and effects. I've got a Digitech whammy pedal, a Vox wah, a Quadverb and Rocktron Hush noise gates. My guitars are my own Jackson signature model. The 2000s Rule! Oh, I've also got a TC Electronic Booster/Distortion pedal. I use it in the Boost mode in front of the two crunch sound heads.

Who is the most promising guitar player you have seen/beard perform in the last year?

Paul Crook. Paul plays with us on tour, and solos on four tracks on the new record.

Why would you pick this individual over others?

Paul is an amazing all around guitar player. Rhythm, lead, whatever, he's got it all. He plays great solos very fluid, and is very in touch with the emotion that a solo needs to fit a song. He also can play the shit out of the blues, classical, be-bop, anything. He is the ruler!

What guitar gear have you seen recently released that you would you like to add to your set-up?

Brian Setzer model Gretsch. Malcolm Young model Gretsch. Ace Frehley Les Paul. Jackson polka dot Randy Rhoads model. A drum set.

I'm lucky enough to deal with the companies I do. They take very good care of me and they do make me what I want. Jackson and Marshall are what I want.

Where do you see guitar playing, soloing, effects going? What do you think the next trend will be?

Lynyrd Skynard style, three guitars wailing. Bring it back!

NICOLE HUGHES

of Scratching Post

I play a Les Paul Standard through a Mesa Boogie Dual Rectifier head and Rivera 4 x 12 cabinet. I use a BOSS noise gate pedal (to cut down on that unwanted Mesa Boogie howl-

ing at loud volumes) and an Arion floor tuner.

I recently bought another Les Paul Standard to have as a backup guitar. It's not like the Standards are the greatest Les Pauls or anything but it's just that I find them to be relatively lightweight and comfortable to play. That's important 'cause I'm a weakling! Plus, nothing beats the look of a Les Paul and it sounds great through my setup.

Who is the most promising guitar player you have seen/beard perform in the last year?

Am I allowed to say Tom Scholz from Boston? Does it count if my obsession with him has grown over the last year? I hear something new every time I listen to Boston. I went to see them play live for the first time ever this summer and I spent three hours in total awe of his talent. His playing sounded just as good live as it does on the albums.

Why would you pick this individual over others?

I pick Tom Scholz because I honestly believe him to be a true genius. Anyone who writes riffs and melodies that you can listen to thousands of times and yet still pick out something new, something you've never noticed before, is a genius in my books. Every time I listen to the first Boston album I get swept away by the layers of guitar harmonies.



What is your favourite style of guitar playing that you have listened to lately? What was interesting about it, and what drew you to it?

I've just been listening to a lot of metal lately. Sort of re-discovering a lot of '80s metal that I was never a fan of the first time around. I wasn't a metal kid. I've been listening to Iron Maiden and my most recent purchase was Cinderella *Night Songs* (here's where everyone loses all respect for me). *Night Songs* has some great riffs that are very spacious and leave a lot of room for the vocals to sort of dance around them.

What guitar gear have you seen recently released that you would you like to add to your set-up?

I haven't really seen anything lately that grabs my attention. The only things I'm ever really interested in are guitars. My goal is to have a giant guitar collection like Rick Nielsen from Cheap Trick. I'm on my way (I also have an Epiphone Flying V and a Paul Stanley Signature Model Ibanez Iceman). I'm always on the lookout for cool guitars. I guess next on my hit list is one of those Les Paul

double-necks. They look so amazing!

If you could approach any manufacturer and have them make you any product, what would that be?

I guess I would approach Mesa Boogie or Rivera and have them develop an amp that sounds even heavier than the one I'm using right now. The Dual Rectifier sounds heavy but I'm still craving something more. Maybe I just have to run a few of them through multiple cabinets to get the sound I'm looking for.

Where do you see guitar playing, soloing, effects going? What do you think the next trend will be?

I really do see everything getting progressively heavier. You can hear it even in a lot of the generic sounding stuff on the radio. Everyone is turning up the guitars more and more. I recently do think metal and hard rock are going to make a giant comeback in the next few years. That's what the kids want to hear. They want to be rocked!



SHAUN VERRAULT

*of Wide Mouth Mason
by Sarah Chauncey*

Wide Mouth Mason's Shaun Verrault has always been conscious of working towards a different sound, not following the trend, and that philosophy follows through to his instrument choice. "I'd always been a Strat player for a long time, but I'd worn mine out, and there's so many young Strat players, that I didn't want to get thrown in that group." Using the creative thinking that has brought him this far, he thought, what other kind of guitar can I play that's more diverse, even. In a chance encounter, "I found this Nighthawk hanging on a wall, a used one, and I thought 'what a goofy-looking guitar.' Plugged it in and I got so many different sounds that I fell in love with it right away."

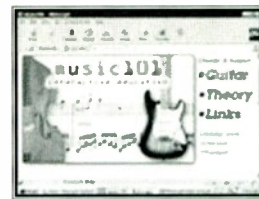
An outstanding performance at the Montreux jazz festival last year landed Shaun an endorsement with Gibson guitars. Because of his slight build, he had a specific request. "Gibson always made guitars that I liked the sound of, but a Les Paul's too heavy for me, and a 335 was too

big for me. So they started making different versions of them, and we got to do a tour of the factory to see all these different things in Nashville. That day, after we did the tour, they surprised me by giving me a Les Paul that was hollowed out in the middle a little bit, so it was a bit smaller and lighter, and I really liked it." Since then, Gibson has made a few scaled-down guitars for Shaun. "I don't know if they built them for me so much," he says, "but the only person I've seen with one is Wynona Judd. I don't know if they're out in Canada. Most of the guitars I have are only just coming out of their factory."

Shaun's other guitars include a Gibson Blues Hawk, which is similar to a Nighthawk, except "it's hollow and has F-holes like on a violin. And different pickups. On a Hammond B-3 organ, there's those knobs you pull out or push in to make different harmonics accentuated — that's what this thing does." Next in his collection is a hybrid Les Paul and Les Paul Junior: "It's kind of a bastard Les Paul," he explains, "Because it has a top on it like a Les Paul, but the body shape is like a Les Paul Junior. And then the pickups are like a regular Les Paul, but the bridge is like a Junior. And the neck is something else. So it's a weird one." Gibson hollowed out the body to lighten the instrument, "but it still has the sound I want," says Shaun. His most recent acquisition is a 335, which is a scaled-down version of a Color 336.

When it comes to stringing, Verrault has definite preferences. "I like really big strings, kind of far away from the neck. If you hit a string, the whole idea of it is for it to vibrate and then have the magnetic pickups pick up the vibration. If it's really close to the neck, it'll be smacking against the neck and the frets, and it won't have as much room to move. So it won't go for as long, so if you make it farther away, it gives it more play. And you can hit it really hard if you want, or really soft, and I find I can get more expressiveness out of really big, heavy strings, because you can pick them really lightly, but if you start hammering them, it's not like they break or bend out of shape and bend out of tune." He uses strings that range from 10 to 52, quite a bit thicker than the standard 10 to 46, so that his bottom strings can be relatively heavy.

"More and more, I find good tone is about [picking], and less about what kind of pedals you have," Verrault explains. "It can be all in your hands — you can do things to make it sound more violin-ish, just by where your hands are. There's like a sweet spot, even within the space between two frets where, if you put your finger within those millimeters, in a different place, it can just resonate better for some reason." He suggests playing around with each guitar and figuring out what sounds best to you. "Different ones bring out different kinds of playing. On some of them, the strings go through the



Guitar On The Internet

by Jim Morris

If you have access to the Internet, you will find a wealth of guitar-related info. If you're not online, shame on you.

World Wide Web

A search in Alta Vista (<http://www.altavista.digital.com>) on the word 'guitar' yielded 1,778,620 pages. Obviously there's a ton of guitar stuff on the Web. Here are a few clues where to start.

Most major guitar manufacturers have web sites — some of them excellent. You can find many at Yahoo (<http://yahoo.com>) under Business and Economy: Companies: Music: Instruments: Guitars and Bases: Manufacturers. If you know the name of the company, search by name in any of the major search engines.

Guitar instruction abounds. One of the best is Music 101 at <http://www.music101.com>. For other education sites, look in Yahoo under Entertainment: Music: Instruments: Stringed Instruments: Guitar: Education.

Many well-known guitarists and bands featuring great guitarists have their own sites. Start in Yahoo at Entertainment: Music: Artists: By Instrument: Guitarists or check the Ultimate Band List at <http://www.ubl.com>.

If you are looking to buy or sell guitar gear, try the music classifieds on the Web. You can browse existing ads or place one yourself usually at no charge. Search Yahoo with 'Music Classified' and you will find several dozen. Visit The Music & Audio Connection classifieds at <http://musicandaudio.com>.

For an extensive collection of guitar books, visit Music Books Plus at <http://musicbooksplus.com>. For guitar tab search in Yahoo under 'Tablature'.

This is a very small sample of what's on the Web. Most guitar sites also have links to other guitar sites. With a little patience and some time investment, you can assemble your own bookmark folder full of your favorites.

Newsgroups

Usenet newsgroup allow you to read, answer and post your own messages or questions on guitar related issues. Ones to visit are alt.guitar, alt.guitar.amps, alt.guitar.effects, alt.guitar.lap-pedal, alt.guitar.rickenbacker, alt.guitar.tab, rec.music.classical.guitar, rec.music.makers.guitar, rec.music.makers.guitar.acoustic, rec.music.makers.jazz and rec.music.makers.tablature. If your provider does not offer any of these, they will usually add them upon request.

Mailing Lists

You can subscribe to 'guitar' related mailing lists where you read messages and post responses. You will find these lists referred to in the Usenet groups or at many of the guitar websites. If you visit Liszt (<http://www.liszt.com>), you can search under Mailing Lists using keyword 'guitar'. My search yielded 11 lists.

IRC Chat

Chat allows you to have live discussions with other guitarists from around the world. Visit Liszt and look under IRC Chat using the keyword 'guitar'. To chat, you will need Chat client software — a Windows version called mIRC can be found at <http://www.mirc.com>.

Best of luck in your guitar search on the Net. If you have any questions or comments, send them to jnorris@nor.com.

Focus On The Most Important Musician On Stage.

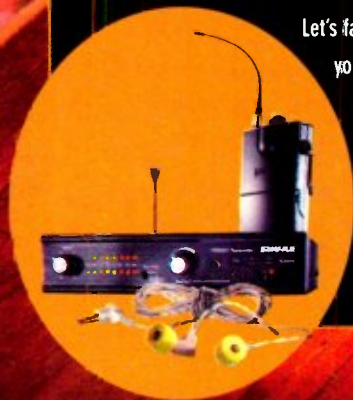


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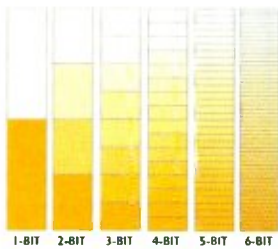


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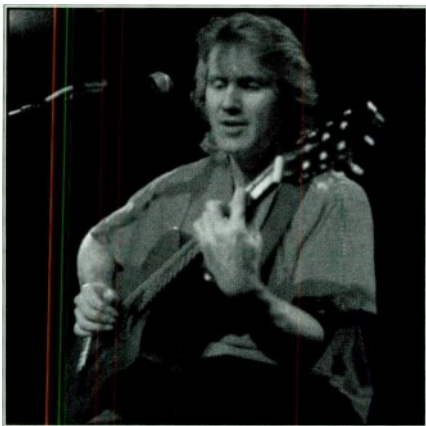
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ALESIS

body, then come out over the bridge and go across the neck, so they're really level. But on some of my guitars, the bridge is raised up a bit, so the distance from the body to where the strings are is a bit higher, and you play differently." Each guitar will give you a different sound and feel, and you'll learn what works best on which guitars. In a philosophical moment, he adds, "Some people say that guitars have different songs in them. If that one doesn't write a good song, then put it down and pick up another one."

Many guitarists are fanatical about the different picks they use. Shaun has found both an economical and creative way around the high cost of picking — he uses one fairly heavy pick, but he holds it differently for various songs. "I figured out I can get the same effect as using a light pick by holding it really gingerly, so it flops around in your hand," he says. "If I want a really heavy sound, I can just hold it tighter, closer to the part that touches the string."

[for a full story on Wide Mouth Mason, see page 40]



RIK EMMETT

Current gear: Yamaha guitars - Electrics - solid bodies - Pacifica (a 6 and a 12): the 6 string Pacifica is from the custom shop, a 3 pickup "Strat"-ish model: rosewood fingerboard, Sperzel machines, Warmoth compound radius neck, just customized with the biggest jumbo frets I could get — It's got a vintage vibrato but I haven't been using it lately — hate what it does to the tuning. For semi-acoustics - AFS 1500 and SA 2200: jazz archtops - AFX 1500 and AFS 2000. The AFS 1500 wins for playability: the AFS 2000 still has the best sound, for me. The AFX (Lawrence Taylor designed, I believe) is a good compromise, with the added benefit of the bridge transducer pickup to give it that modern edge. For amps, I have a Fender Blues Deville and a Fender Blues Deluxe: I also have a Marshall JMP 1 with a Marshall Valvestate 40 watt, which I use in conjunction with a Roland GP 16 and a mongrel 2x12 open back cabinet with G12T-75 Celestions. For recording, I sometimes use a ZOOM 9030. I just got a BOSS ME-30 pedal board, for small clinics,

quick sessions, and direct recording options as well. I just put Fishman Hot Matrix pickups into my Laskin classical guitar, and my Yamaha L-55 6 and 12 string acoustic guitars: I also purchased Calton Cases for the 6 & 12, and I'm saving up to get one for the Laskin.

Who are the most promising guitar players you have seen/beard perform in the last year?

1. Badi Assad, from Brazil
2. Luis Salinas, an Argentinian — scary good.
3. Closer to home, I went to see Jesse Cook and there was a lot to like about what he's doing — his popularity will only grow.
4. I am ashamed to admit that I had never heard of Peppino D'Agostino — a friend from Cincinnati turned me on to his stuff, and it blows me away.

Why would you pick these individuals over others?

For future success and popularity? I'll pick Badi, because she is unique, female, very "international", she sings, she's not afraid to play the "sexy" trump card. For musicality, I would call it a toss-up between Salinas and D'Agostino: for home-grown, Jesse. For rock, by the way, I haven't heard much lately that has really impressed me: but I admit that I do not devote much time and energy because my time goes to other things, and other styles — but I liked the progressive Radiohead-ness of the Zuckerbaby single, where the video had the guy jump off the roof into the airbag, and I quite liked the guitar playing in that tune (Andromeda) P.S. I quite enjoyed both the latest Pat Metheny release and Robben Ford.

What is your favourite style of guitar playing that you have listened to lately? What was interesting about it, and what drew you to it?

Well — the 4 artists mentioned above (not including Pat and Robben) are hybrid stylists, to varying degrees — they play with "electric" technique and passion on acoustic guitars (or, in the case of Salinas, a George Benson-esque Les Paul electric as well as an acoustic). There is a great deal of open-mindedness in their approaches, and plenty of "world" influence in their respective music. D'Agostino and Salinas are technically quite awesome. Pat Metheny is a unique spirit and also a creative, adventurous musician who makes his sense of wonder very accessible in his music: it makes him irresistible. Robben Ford has a great tone, a confident, sure, singing, powerful touch, (along the same lines as Clapton in full flight, sort of) and a nice little streak of West Coast jazz hipness to his blues.

What guitar gear have you seen recently released that you would you like to add to your set-up?

I definitely want to check out the Korg 301dl Dynamic Echo — reviews have been glowing. And I've got dibs on one of the new Line 6 combo amplifiers coming in soon — many amps & digital effects in one portable package — now they're talking!

I've also recently started using the D'Addario Pro Arte Composites, the EJ-46C Hard Tension set of classical guitar strings — the basses are great once they're worn in a few days, but the jury's still out on the trebles. I'm giving them the full box, 10 set trial period to see if I can adjust.

If you could approach any manufacturer and have them make you any product, what would that be?

I have suggested to Yamaha that I would love to see a Gibson Chet Atkins or Godin-style classical electric in their line, with the full 2" nut and the no-feedback solid body design ... so far no luck. I'd also like to get a wide, thin fingerboard on a steel string acoustic, so that wider string spacing would accommodate fingerstyle playing more.

Fantasyland? You know how armrests are starting to show up on acoustics? I'd love to see someone design an acoustic with the same ergonomic comfort of a Strat's body sculpting on the back and on the upper bout. I'd love to see a Telly that had the same neck-into-body angled pitch that Gibsons have, the same bridge height off the face as a Les Paul or 335, as well as the body sculpting of a Strat. Now, THAT would be comfortable to play — it would wrap around you and the strings would present themselves to your hands, high off the face of the guitar!

Where do you see guitar playing, soloing, effects going? What do you think the next trend will be?

Ha! I don't want to make predictions: think I'll just stick to making music. We have seen the wheel of fashion cycle through a period where virtuosity was discounted, and many pop music emperors without clothes were celebrated. The deconstruction of rock & roll seems to have completely bottomed right out: but I've been wrong before, and will be again. I remember when Bob Dylan was blown away by The Beatles "because they know all their fancy chords". Maybe it's time for some artists to try and make pop music more musical — maybe it's time for Much Music and radio programmers and the industry to begin to nurture and promote and support musicians who are trying to be more musical. Maybe it's time for young wanna-bes to stop trying so hard to be rock stars and start trying to be better musicians. Maybe, maybe, shmaybe, baby...

JENNIFER BATTEN

I use an Axon Guitar Synth and Roland JV1080 Sound Module.

Who is the most promising guitar player you have seen/beard perform in the last year?

Michael Bianco — Indy Tapper From Florida.

Why would you pick this individual over others?

Creativity.

What is your favourite style of guitar playing that you have listened to lately?

Strunz and Farrah — it's an ear break from rock and creates a different mood.

What guitar gear have you seen recently released that you would like to add to your set-up?

Digitech Talker.



If you could approach any manufacturer and have them make you any product, what would that be?

A synth that could be bent with a Digitech whammy pedal.

Where do you see guitar playing, soloing, effects going? What do you think the next trend will be?

More into exotic sounds via techno.

THE GANDHARVAS

Jud Ruhl and Brian Ward

So what's your favourite style of music you listen to, in terms of guitars players, and also your favourite style to play?

Jud: I like listening to old blues stuff. It's pretty intimate really, stuff like Mississippi John Heart. While he's picking he ends up playing two different lines. He's sitting there picking one, and he's playing bass notes with the other. I love listening to that music.

Brian: A lot of folk stuff. Fingering picking

Who's your biggest influence in terms of technique?

Jud: I'd have to say Jimmy Page, for sure. He's a slot master, but he's tasty.

Brian: I don't have any. Most of my technique originates from when I started playing ten years ago, and I've just carried it through.

So who would be one the most groundbreaking guitar players in your guys' eyes?

Jud: Junior Brown. He's just doing chickin'-picken' country twang. It's unreal. It just blows me away.

What's your favourite guitar, and why?

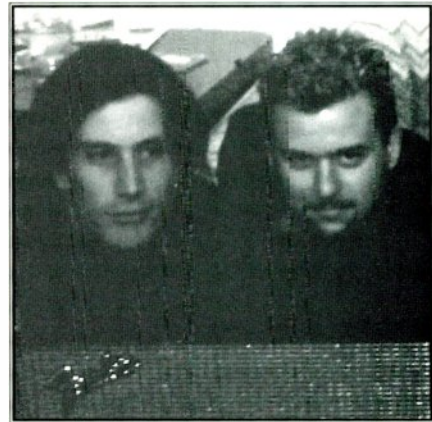
Jud: Well, I only own two. I only own two guitars. My favourite one of the two is my Les Paul Classic.

Why do you like it?

Jud: I like the maple top. It's a little

brighter, more sonic sounding, and it just plays like a dream. I have a Custom too, and I like the Classic much more. Now my Custom's backup. I hardly even pick it up anymore.

What are your favourite amps and pedals and effects? What are you guys using now? What would you like to have?



Jud: Right now I'm using a Marshall 800 and a 900 running stereo. I would like to replace one Marshall with a Hi-Watt. Marshall has a certain sound. It's great for live, because it really cuts, but I'm looking for a smoother, slightly over new sound. There's a certain tone in a Marshall. I can't get rid of it. It's irritating me after a while, so a Hi-Watt, they sound beautiful. They're great sounding for a semi...

Brian: Right now I have a Peavey 5050

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John Albani On Recording Guitar

Who is the most promising guitar player you have seen/heard perform in the last year? Why would you pick this individual over other players?

I recently had the pleasure of hearing local Nashville musician Tom Shinness. Not only does he play acoustic and electric guitars, but also specializes in rare instruments such as the Harpguitar, nylon and steel string Zither and Mandocello. It was very refreshing to hear someone use these instruments with conventional digital delays and other effects through amplifiers in a totally live solo performance. He currently has released 2 independent CDs and has a third on the way.

What new things have you done or heard of being done in a studio with a guitar that are breaking new ground?

One of the coolest things I've heard was at a Pro Tools show here in Nashville. The company Line 6 was demonstrating its new TDM Plug-in called Amp Farm. The suggested price of \$500 U.S. is still only about half the cost of most amps and gives you a multitude of sounds simulating a Fender Twin; Fender Blackface Deluxe Reverb; Fender Bassman; Marshall JCM 800; Marshall Plexi; Marshall JTM45; and Vox AC 30. The plug-in also includes programmable EQ modelled from the original amps' tone controls. The Amp farm has the best speaker simulator I've heard and you can use all the above mentioned amps at one time. This saves you from buying all these amps with the purchase of one plug-in. For more information check out the Line 6 web site at <http://www.line6.com/57ampfrm.htm>.

What is the best recording (in terms of guitar playing — sound, technique, style) that you've heard lately and what makes it stand out from the rest?

I'm still amazed at the amount of talent among guitarists here in Nashville. Solos and licks performed by these players through clean Fender amps would in the past not have been dared unless masked by distortion. One such player with incredible sounding records is Vince Gill. He plays very intricate and moving solos making them sound effortless. It's no wonder Dire Straits was trying desperately to get him to join the band before his solo career took off.

What role does a recording studio play in developing guitar playing in terms of new techniques? Is the studio going to be used in a creative way more often? As opposed to recording something that was written outside the studio?

With the quality of home recording constantly getting better, I'm seeing a new trend which is resulting in a much more affordable approach to recording. Bands can now concentrate on experimenting at home or in project studios with top quality gear (thanks to new technologies) without a \$1500 per day clock ticking allowing for much more creative freedom. These tracks can in turn be merged seamlessly with the album being recorded at the professional studio.

Where do you see guitar playing, soloing, effects going? What do you think the next trend will be?

I see the hard disk/Pro Tool TDM scenario of computer based recording being an incredible creative and affordable system. The options are endless and expandable and interchangeable between all who choose to go this way. It is quickly becoming the preferred method of choice for recording among the new bands and producers of today.

tube amp, and it sounds good. I do like it, but still I wouldn't mind, if I had my choice, a Chieftain, an Atlas Chieftain, or an Ampeg, I li-Watt, different sounds. I'd probably settle with a JCM-900 Marshall head for my distortion sound.

What effects are you currently using?

Jud: I have one — a rotovibe. I use it way too much.

Brian: I have several effects — a Digitech whammy pedal, digital delay, chorus, dynamics filter, a tremolo pedal, and compressor, and a couple of rack units. That's pretty much the extent of it. And an EBow, actually.

Well, if you could go to your favourite amp or guitar manufacturer and tell them to make you something, is there something they're not making that would like to see,

what would that be?

Jud: Yeah, there is. I talked to a guy last night, actually, who had one of these, but, I guess the guitar sucked, but I would like to have a fader switch that could go in between the bridge and the neck that you could mix the two together. I don't like just playing on the neck because it's too bassy, and I don't playing just on the bridge pickup because it's a little too harsh and treble. So I'd like to be able to mix a little bit of the neck pickup in with most of the bridge pickup. I'd also like to be able to do a power brake that so I can whine on the amp without it affecting my tone.

Brian: Nothing I'd like crafted. Pretty much happy, right now.



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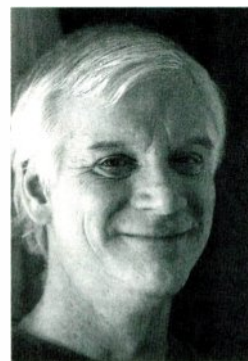
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Mixing Techniques For Recording

For this issue's Recording column, Bruce Bartlett has taken on the task of answering a question he was asked:

"I'm recording with some good mics. I set the EQ flat on my mixer because I heard that a flat setting gives the most natural sound. Still, my mixes don't sound natural. They sound like you turned up the bass and turned down the treble on a stereo. Why doesn't flat EQ sound good if I'm starting with good mics? How should I EQ my tracks during mixdown so the final mix sounds standard or correct?"



First, do your monitors make all recordings sound that way, or is it just your own recordings? If all recordings sound bassy and dull, try placing the monitors farther from the wall to reduce the bass. Experiment with tweeter settings. Maybe it's time to upgrade your monitors. Let's assume that only your recordings sound bassy, even with flat EQ. Here's one reason: When you mike a singer or instrument very close with most cardioid microphones, you get proximity effect — the bass is boosted. For each instrument that sounds too bassy, turn down the excess bass on your mixer. That is, turn down the low-frequency EQ to the point where the sound you monitor is natural. If you mike an acoustic guitar close to the sound hole, the tone is very bassy there. Put the mic farther away, where the fingerboard joins the body. The tubby bass will disappear (Fig. 1).

One cause of weak highs is the Fletcher-Munson effect. Suppose you record a loud rock band and play it back at a less-than-live level. As discovered by Fletcher and Munson, we hear less bass and treble in a program played softly than the same program played loudly. So we need to compensate by boosting around 4 or 5 kHz.

Cymbals produce less highs (treble) overhead than they do out front. So when you mike cymbals overhead, they tend to sound dull, and might need some high-frequency boost at 10 or 12K to compensate.

Use whatever EQ it takes to match the sound of CDs played through your monitor speakers. For rock music especially, flat EQ sounds lackluster.

Often the tracks need a lot of upper-mid or high-frequency boost to get the bright, punchy sound we're used to hearing on records.

There are no correct settings or standard settings; just crank in whatever EQ sounds right to you. Play a CD whose sound you admire through your monitor system. The song on the CD should be similar in style to what you're mixing. Play your mix at the same time, and switch between the CD and your mix with their volumes matched.

Do they have the same amount of bass, mids, and treble? If your mix sounds muffled or dull compared to a good CD, crank up the highs from 5 kHz to 10 kHz until your mix matches the CD. If your mix sounds too bassy, turn down the lows around 100 Hz (or maybe turn down the bass track) until your mix matches the CD.

Try to get the instruments to sound good in the studio before you mike them. Then getting a good sound will be much easier.

For example, try new drum heads, new guitar strings, or different pickups. Also, try to get the sound you want with mic choice and mic placement rather than EQ.

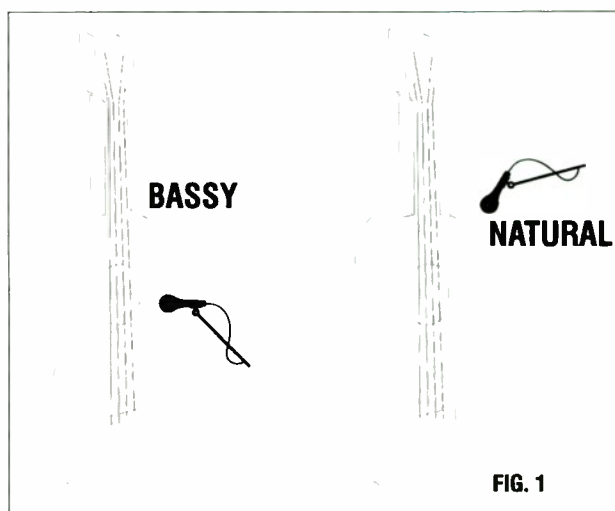


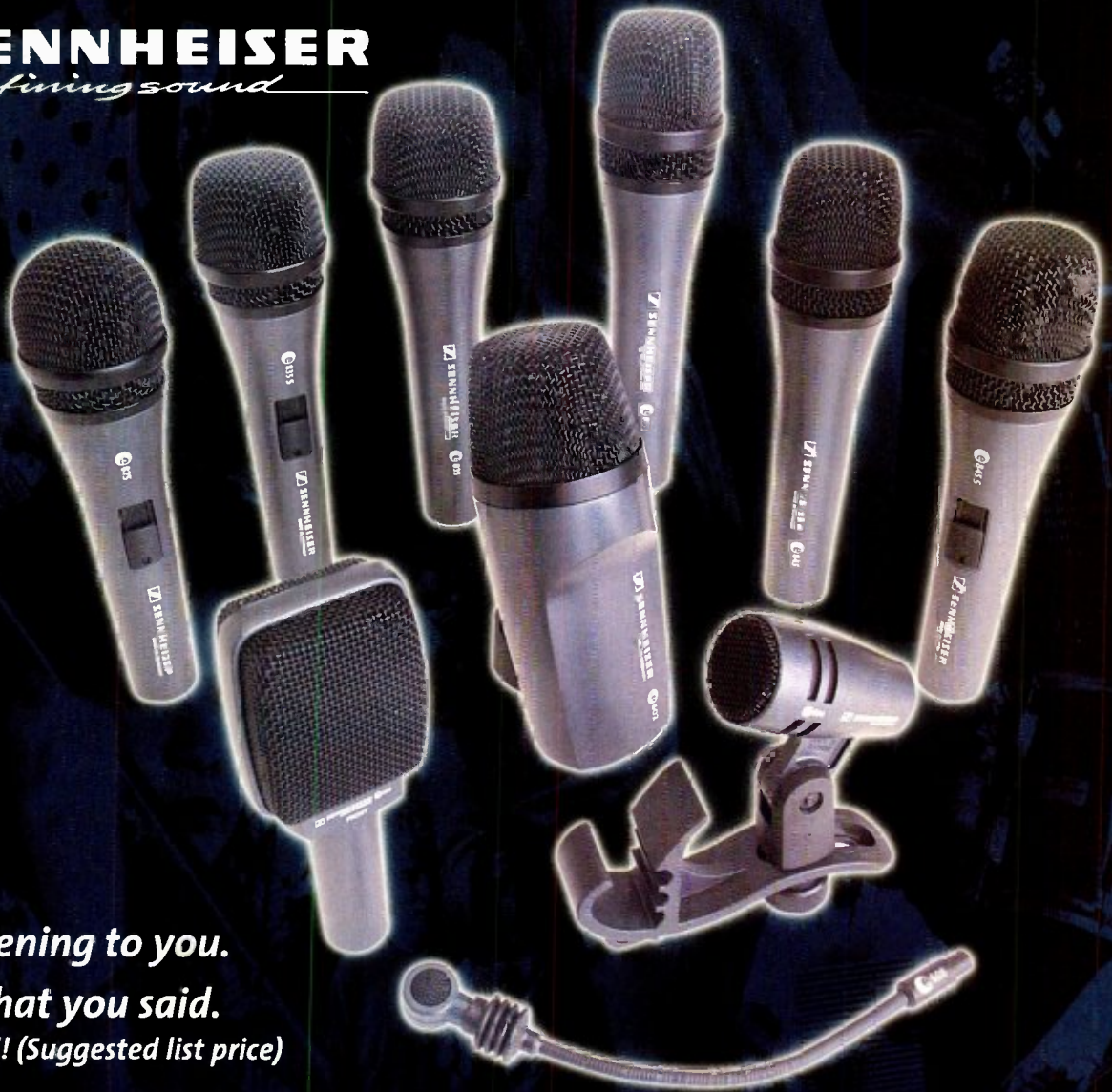
FIG. 1

Use condenser mics on cymbals and acoustic guitar because condensers tend to have better high-frequency response. Dynamics are good for guitar amps and drums. Of course, you can use whatever mic sounds good to you.

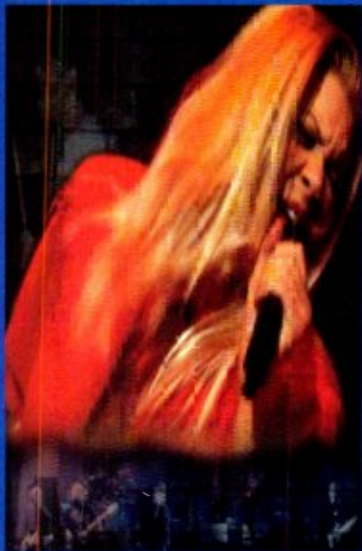
Summing up, if a flat EQ setting doesn't sound right, there's some problem that you need to compensate for. Maybe its mic placement, or the Fletcher-Munson effect. Just do what it takes.

Bruce Bartlett is a microphone engineer, audio journalist, and a recording engineer and can be reached at mail@nor.com

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by David Norman

Dealing With Bad PAs On The Club Circuit



As a long time engineer who has mixed everywhere from small clubs to television to arenas and amphitheatres, I'm sure that most of you live sound engineers will relate to this article.

Before the tour even begins, make things easy for yourself and your act by doing these small things and *believe me, your life will be much easier in the long run.*

1. Buy several mic cables and make yourself a drum loom (snake) and label both ends (i.e. Kick, Snare, Hats, Rack, Rack 2, Floor, Overhead L, Overhead R). Even if you're in a venue that has a limited number of channels, at least you know that YOUR mic cables work. This will take the guesswork out of the clubs' mic cables working or not. This also saves you time by not having to run individual cables for each channel. Everything is already loomed up and ready to go and the in-house engineer will love you for this because it's less work and cabling for him. Plus he gets to go home a little earlier at the end of the show instead of wrapping up all of those mic cables!

2. Rack mount as many direct boxes as you can to keep your stage clean and already have mic cables run and labeled for these as well. On my current tour, the only thing I need from the venue is one direct box, 2 Shure SM-57s for guitar amps and 3 condenser mics for my hats and overheads for the drums.

3. Carry your own drum and vocal mics if at all possible! With these at least you know from night to night what your drums and vocals are SUPPOSED to sound like. A little consistency is always a great thing. For your vocal mics, sharing germs with all of the other acts who may have come in contact with the in-house mic is not a good thing. If you have to use the in-house mics, I strongly advise carrying a small bottle of Listerine to clean these mics before your act takes the stage.

4. Carry drum claws for your drum kit. Along with your own drum mics you can cut the amount of your setup and teardown time in half by not having to position mic stands (and many clubs don't have a lot of stands).

5. If at all possible, carry your own FOH (or monitor rack). Many clubs don't have enough comps or gates, so by carrying your own, you can be one step ahead of everyone else. Carrying your own reverb or delay unit will also add consistency to your show.

6. If you know of a particular club that is notorious for bad sound, go over a little earlier than everyone else and spend an extra hour or so tweaking the system, filtering out bad cables, bad channels on the console and pre-wire the stage before the band comes over for load-in. This little bit of extra time can mean the difference between a REALLY bad sounding show and a show where people will compliment you on what a great job you did with the sound.

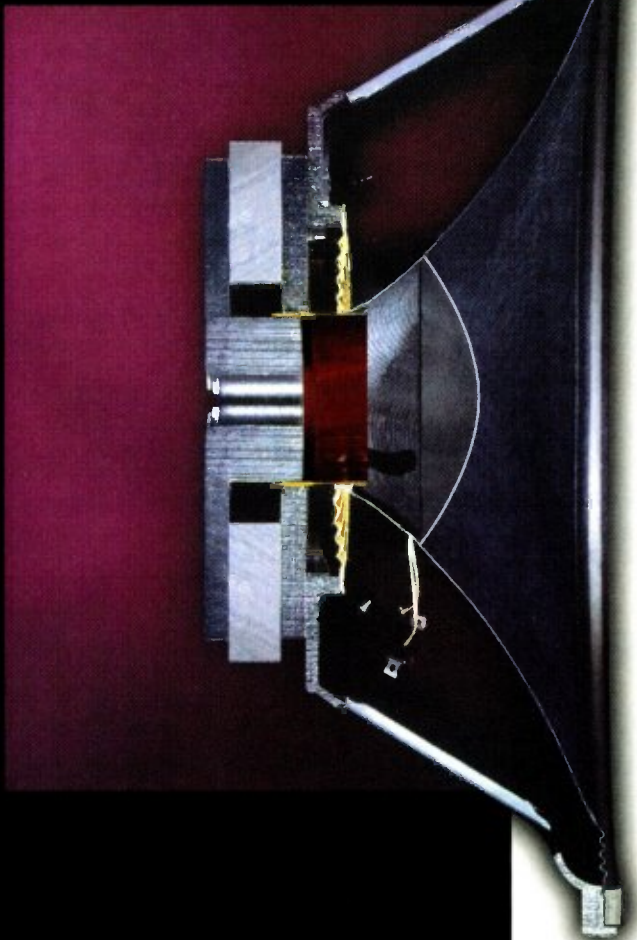
7. Fax to the venue's in-house engineer well in advance your CURRENT stageplot and input chart. If at all possible, get that person on the phone and inquire about the sound system and ask about bad channels on the console, are all of the monitors working, etc. This will save you headaches before you show up and you'll know what to expect.

8. NEVER bitch and moan about what a shitty system you're mixing on. Nine out of 10 times, the in-house engineer has heard it all before and it's usually out of their control as to what to be able to purchase for the system's upgrade.

9. If you see problems with the system and you have the patience and time, by all means jump in and fix those problems. The in-house person will love you for it and the next time that you roll through, they'll remember you for it and your day will go MUCH smoother!

David Norman has Tour/Production Managed and/or mixed such acts as The Neville Brothers featuring Aaron Neville, Arrested Development, Peabo Bryson, Michael Hedges, They Might Be Giants, Susanna Hoffs (The Bangles) and many others. He's currently Tour/Production Manager and FOH Engineer for WORK/Sony artist, Mary Lou Lord. You can contact him online at David994@aol.com.

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Crossover Network. Yamaha's crossover network—the device that splits the signal to the woofer and the horn—uses components with tolerances that exceed your needs, just to set your mind at ease. Plus, our crossover protects the driver from burnout.

Rugged Cabinets. As you move from gig to gig, your speakers must be able to take a pounding and still look and perform like new. Club IV speakers feature carpet covering over a tough shell; so no road rash and you look good every night. Moreover, a heavy grill protects the driver, steel handles make carrying easy, and a pole socket offers simple mounting.



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dbx DDP Processor



The DDP Digital Dynamics Processor from dbx combines gating, compression, limiting, de-essing and more functions into a single 1U programmable digital package.

The DDP's backlit display uses a combination of graphics, characters and icons designed to make the unit user friendly. With extensive metering, users can monitor all parts of a signal — input, internal processing and output, with peak and VU, as well as gain reduction for both sides of the stereo image. A high-resolution graph displays and composite out-versus-input plot of the audio signal, providing a physical representation of the compression curve. When changes are made to any parameter, the display immediately updates the processing curve in realtime to reflect those adjustments. Optional AES/EBU or S/PDIF digital outputs may be added for extra flexibility and compatibility with 48 and 44.1 kHz formats. Offering a wide dynamic range through 24-bit A/D and D/A converters, the digital-ready DDP also features dbx's Tape Saturation Emulation, which provides overload characteristics of analog tape with the distortion of most digital input systems.

The back panel of the DDP features both XLR and 1/4" balanced ins and outs, while a wide-ranging gain control on the front panel allows for either +4 or -10 operation. The processor's gate features

the traditional controls for threshold, ratio, attack, hold and release. Limiting is available from -60 dB to 0 dB, with adjustable gain, attack and release parameters. Compression controls include threshold, ratio, gain, gain, auto, attack, hold and release. Variable de-essing is offered between 800 Hz to 9

kHz, while ± 12 dB of constant-Q EQ is available across the full frequency span of 20 Hz to 20 kHz.

For more information, contact: dbx, 9629 Clement St., Lasalle, PQ H8R 4B3 (888) 595-3966, FAX (800) 790-2000, info@soundcraft-canada.com, http://www.soundcraft-canada.com.

A Wake-Up Call for Pro Audio

3:28



Roland HP Digital Pianos

Roland introduces the HP line of digital pianos. All instruments in the series feature furniture style cabinets, built-in effects and 88-note hammer-action keyboards.

The HP-136 is fitted with two headphone jacks designed for use in lessons, duet playing, as well as silent practice. Also equipped with two headphone jacks is the HP-236, which features a built-in metronome, three gold pedals, and MIDI and serial computer interfaces.

The HP-245 model, with 64-voice polyphony, features a built-in two-track realtime sequencer, a metronome function, microphone input with echo and a stereo sound system.

The flagship model of the HP series, the HP-555G offers a three-track recording system, and a built-in 3.5" disk drive. Editing functions allow players to edit notes and music files. When using SMFs with lyrics, the GP-555G will display words on a built-in LCD display.

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



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Microtone/Brainwave Generator

Serious Composer Music Software has released the Phi-Music Microtone/Brainwave Generator software for Windows 95.

Phi-Music comes with over 40 different tunings ranging from Phi (the "Golden Ratio") — to ancient Greece — to Bali — to the sound of the atomic elements of the periodic table. Now it is possible to hear not only the sound of hydrogen and carbon, but also the resonance of the Earth and 128 of our planet's natural harmonics. Phi-Music also allows users to create an unlimited number of scales of their own creation.

One of the most unique features of the new software is the capacity to alter human brain waves. As users play their electronic keyboards connected to the computer, Phi-Music sends out slightly different frequencies to each ear over stereo earphones. These tones create a slight pulsing effect in the head that researchers indicate changes the listener's state of consciousness.

For more information, contact: Serious Composer Music Software, PO Box 18041, Asheville, NC 28814 (704) 254-7160, FAX (704) 253-4573, info@seriouscomposer.com, http://www.seriouscomposer.com.

Ampeg Horizontal Bass



Ampeg has released the new hand-made Horizontal Bass, a modern reissue of the 1960s four-string thumper.

The scroll headstock and neck of the AEB-2 and AUB-2 fretless reissues is carved from solid maple, unlike the plastic end caps sported by the original models. A brass nut has replaced the aluminum string space of the '60s model. Today's AEB-2 and AUB-2 have a 35" scale, an inch longer than the original. The Western Ash body is available with a sunburst, black or natural polyurethane finish.

Other features on the Horizontal Bass include an ebony fingerboard, Schaller tuners, a brass bridge and chrome or gold hardware. An optional padded bag or hard shell case is also available.

For more information, contact: St. Louis North, PO Box 52, Pickering, ON L1V 2R2 (905) 668-2585, FAX (905) 668-2018.

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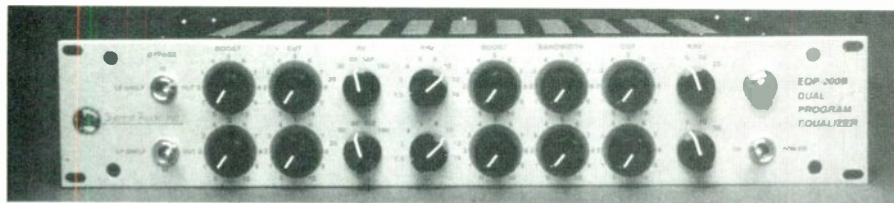
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Summit Audio EQP-200B EQ



Summit Audio announces its release of the EQP-200B dual program equalizer.

The EQP-200B offers a new low frequency 6 dB per octave shelving filter starting at 50 Hz which is selectable with a bypass/in/LF shelf toggle switch. The low frequency boost/cut section is enhanced with the addition of 180 Hz to the existing frequencies of 20, 30, 60, and 100 Hz. The low frequency section offers separate boost and attenuation controls capable of 16 dB boost and 20 dB of attenuation. The high-frequency boost section is enhanced with the addition of 1.5 kHz to the existing frequencies of 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, and 16 kHz. The high frequency boost section has a variable bandwidth control, allowing flexible contouring of the filter. The high frequency cut section offers attenuation shelving filters at frequencies of 5, 10 and 20 kHz.

The dual program EQ unit offers silent in, in/LF shelf, and bypass switching operation for each channel of the passive equalizer. Gain loss for the passive EQ circuit is compensated for by a vacuum tube amplifier, yielding a warm sound. The input is an electronically balanced XLR type with an in-

put impedance of 40 kW. The output is electronically balanced using discrete 990 operational amplifiers. The output impedance is 75W. Total harmonic distortion of the unit is less than 0.05%. The noise floor is better than -95 dB relative to 0 VU

(which corresponds to +4 dBu).

For more information, contact: Sonotechnique, 248 The Esplanade, Toronto, ON M5A 4J6, (416) 947-9112, FAX (416) 947-9369, sales@sonotechnique.ca, <http://www.sonotechnique.ca>.



Stedman LD23 Vocal Microphone

Stedman introduces the LD23 large diaphragm low impedance dynamic microphone. The microphone's super cardioid polar pattern exhibits off axis rejection to allow for greater stage volume as well as reduced pickup of surrounding instruments and speakers.

The LD23 employs an internal wind filter to eliminate excessive pops during close up vocal applications. The frequency response of the LD23 exhibits a slight rise above 3 kHz to give

increased presence to the subject. The output of the LD23 is low impedance and will provide best results when used with a balanced low impedance mixer or preamp. The body of the LD23 is cast from a heavy metal alloy to reduce handling noise and is finished with a non-glare durable hard coating.

For more information, contact: Stedman Corp., 4167 Stedman Dr., Richland, MI 49083 (616) 629-5930, FAX (616) 629-4149.

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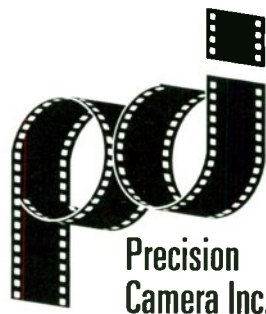
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Yorkville PowerMAX Powered Mixers



Yorkville introduces the new PowerMAX console powered mixers which provide four channel built-in amplification delivering up to 2,100 watts. Amplifiers are configured to handle 2 x 400W @ 4 ohms for mains and 2 x 275W @ 4 ohms for monitors.

PowerMAX mixers include Mid frequency sweep (100 Hz- 8 kHz), switchable hi-pass filtering, Aux send (post EQ and fader), Mute and Solo switching, phantom power and easy access top-mounted input/output jacks with flexible patching. Cooling is maintained by two 80mm variable speed fans.

The PowerMAX16 includes 12 mono mic/line balanced channel inputs and two stereo line level channels (13-16) while the PowerMAX22 has 18 mono channels and two stereo channels (19-22).

For more information, contact: Yorkville Sound Ltd., 550 Granite St., Pickering, ON L1W 3Y8 (905) 837-8481, FAX (905) 839-5776.



Donnell Soundhole Mini-Flex microphone

Donnell expands its line of Mini-Flex microphones with the release of the model #128 Soundhole microphone. The Soundhole mic uses a miniature condenser microphone attached to a flexible gooseneck which attaches to the edge of the soundhole with a padded hook. The gooseneck permits the mic to be positioned inside or outside the soundhole (underneath or above the strings).

For more information, contact: Donnell Enterprises, 24 Parkhurst, Chico, CA 95928 (800) 585-7659, FAX (916) 893-4845.



G&L ASAT Guitars with Tremolo



Having turned down requests for the option in the past, G&L is now offering ASAT guitars with a Bigsby tremolo. According to the company, getting the action right had proved difficult in the past when fulfilling special orders. However, G&L R&D has engineered a solution by creating a shallow route in the top of the body to recess the Bigsby and the tune-o-matic style bridge. The Bigsby tremolo is available on the ASAT Special, ASAT Deluxe, ASAT Semi-Hollow and ASAT Deluxe Semi-Hollow models.

For more information, contact: Power Music Marketing Ltd., 3349 Bloor St. W., #24, Toronto, ON M8X 1E9 (416) 234-1226, FAX (416) 234-0824.

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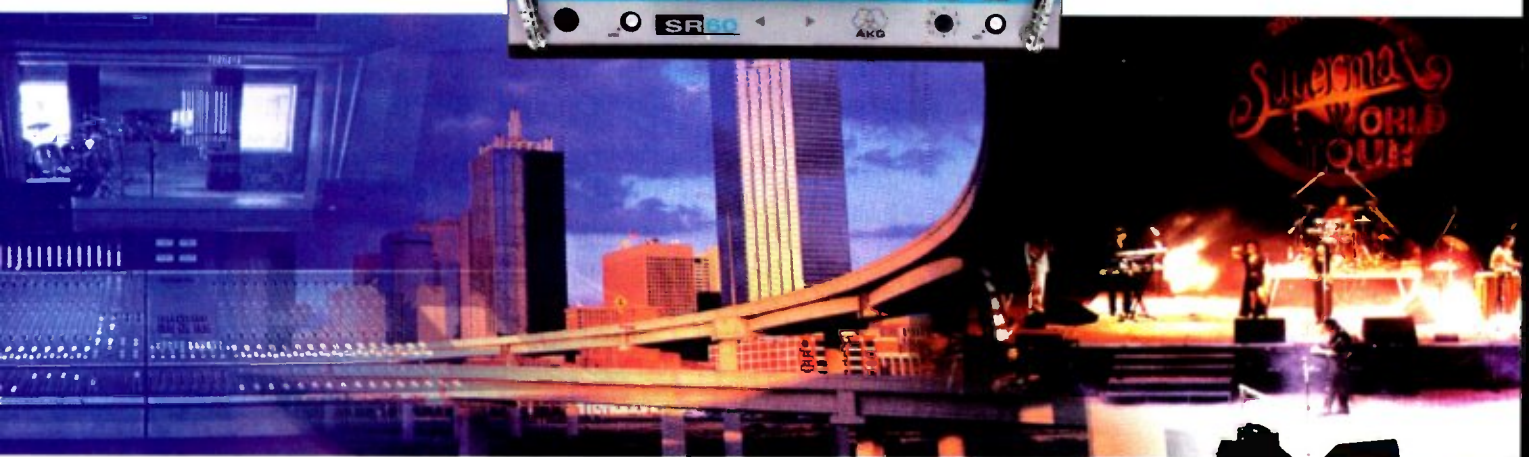
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Singers, guitar players, lecturers, clergy, in fact anybody who is standing in front of an audience, are discovering what top studio musicians, engineers, and producers have known for years: AKG, a leader in studio microphone and headphone technology for more than 50 years, now offers its amazing sound quality in affordable wireless systems. That's because AKG has gone on the road with its new wireless system, the WMS 60.

The WMS 60 is a VHF system that offers microcontrolled antenna

diversity for superior selectivity and reception. Available in handheld, portable bodypack and instrument configurations, its standard features include an LED battery strength indicator, an output volume control and adjustable squelch to eliminate interference. Best of all, the WMS 60 offers the most user friendly frequency selector for operating multiple interference free systems. So before you appear in front of an audience again, remember AKG studio quality wireless systems are priced light enough to carry on the road.



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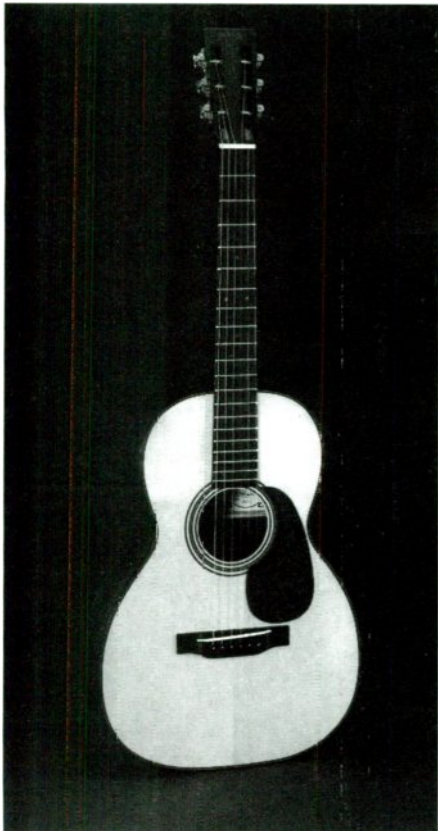
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HOT GEAR

Martin 00-21 Golden Era Guitar



Martin & Co. introduces the 00-21 Golden Era small-bodied slotted-head 12-fret acoustic guitar. The Golden Era is crafted with an Adirondack red spruce top. The back and sides are bookmatched from selected East Indian rosewood. The centre ring of the rosette is inlaid with fine herringbone marquetry complimented with herringbone back purfling. The solid genuine mahogany modified V-shape neck is hand-shaped with an old style pointed heel.

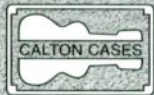
The Adirondack spruce top braces are 1/4" height and delicately scalloped. The unbound ebony fingerboard has abalone square inlays at the 5th, 7th and 9th frets. The body is finished with polished lacquer and the soundboard is aged with a subtle toner.

The interior label uses genuine Martin antique artwork, each being personally signed by Chairman and CEO, C.F. Martin, IV.

For more information, contact: Martin & Co., Inc., Nazareth, PA 18064-0329 (610) 759-2837, FAX (510) 759-5757.

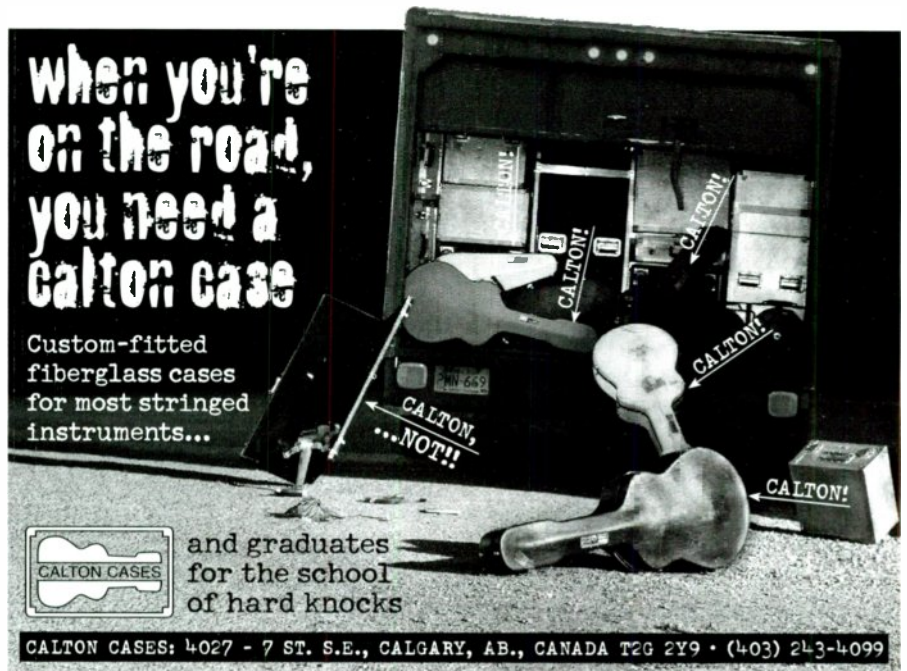
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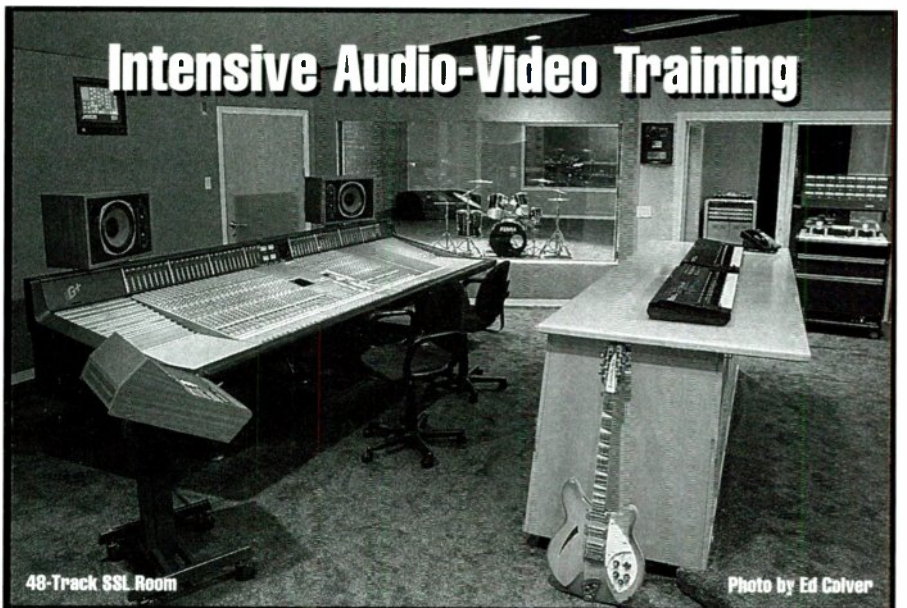


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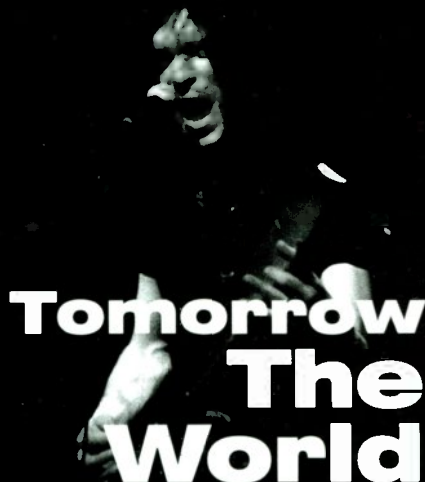
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Showcase

by Karen Bliss

If you are unsigned and would like to be a part of **Showcase**, send us a complete bio, glossy black & white photo and a cassette/CD of your music. Also include an address and phone number where you can be reached. Send your complete package to: **Showcase, Canadian Musician**, 23 Hannover Dr., #7, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A3.



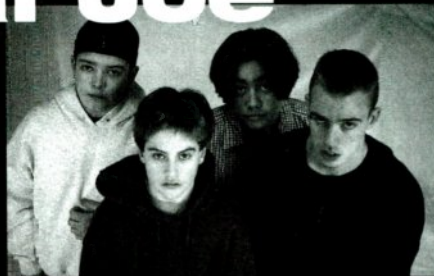
Style: tomorrow
Lineup: Jay Englishman (vocals, guitars, bass, all keyboards/programming), Mark Johnson (bass), Justin Burgess (drums)
Contact: Robert Luhtala Management (416) 406-2825

"He was using his art to fill the space where everyone said his heart should be," reads the Tomorrow The World bio, outlining the reasons for mastermind Jay Englishman's gashing wounds on his promo EP, *Manic Obsessive*, recorded with 21 tracks of analog and 24 tracks of digital at Toronto's Wellesley Sound. Taking industrial and metal, the Toronto band injects humanness (strings, piano, melody!), much in the same way Faith No More did on *The Real Thing*. The sweet soul of the superb "Don't Mean A Thing" goes easier on the venom. It has a more flippant and resolved tone, while on the industrial-based rocker "Take" he spits: "I really hope you're satisfied/Another piece of me just died/This empty shell is all that's left, leveling the blame at the soul-killer. "I really hope you rot in hell." Then, on the industrial ambience of "Numb", in a warped whispery tone he sings, "I don't want to breathe anymore" and on the heavy metallic rock of "Flowers For Ophelia (A Suite For The Sweet)" with its menacing vocal, he realizes "It took 24 years to get this stupid". While the sentiments might seem ominous, pitiful and vengeful, these are four truly remarkably moving songs from a band/artist destined for major things.

Artists appearing in SHOWCASE will be included in the *Canadian Musician* web site at <http://canadianmusician.com>

Serial Joe

Style: kicks butt
Lineup: Ryan Dennis (vocals, guitar), Dan Stadnicki (drums), John Davidson (bass), Ryan Stever (guitar)
Contact: Debbie Dennis, 124 Nelson Circle, Newmarket, Ont., L3X 1R3 (905) 853-0627, FAX (905) 853-5485, dianes@yorku.ca



Take note slackers. Newmarket, ON's Serial Joe is a group of 13 and 14-years-olds with more get-go than some adults. For one thing, they've got this CD, cool cover, cool title, *KICKeD*, all the right liner note info, far more professional than most. Singer-guitarist Ryan Dennis and drummer Dan Stadnicki write all the music, while most of the lyrics are penned by a D. Robin Dennis. The band even self-produced the CD at New Market Multimedia and made a video for the grinding rock-rap single, "Skidrow". Dennis, who happens to be the star in the Our Lady Peace video "Superman's Dead", has a voice which is quite fierce considering his age. The album ranges from the metallic rappers "Velocity", about wanting a place to skateboard, and "Obsession", about the "rush" of 'boarding, to the melodically-sung rock of "Dream Girl" and "Lonely Heart" — both love songs for freaks sake. Perhaps the object of their love is a skateboard. Let's not encourage S.J. groupies just yet.

Wyckham Porteous

Style: ragged roots
Lineup: Wyckham Porteous (lead vocals, guitar, harmonica); Pat Stewart (drums) and Rob Becker (bass) and various guests
Contact: Pacific Music Marketing, 341 Richmond Avenue, Victoria BC V8S 3Y2, (250) 598-1997; FAX (250) 598-1923
104413.3400@compuserve.com



In This World, the fourth album from this edgy roots singer-songwriter is world class. Produced and arranged by ex Captain Beefheart guitarist Moris Tepper (Captain Beefheart, Tom Waits, Frank Black, P.J. Harvey), the 13 tracks were mixed by Joe Ciccarelli (Beck, Frank Zappa, U2). With traces of John Hiatt and Bob Dylan (& son), Porteous's lyrics are spun in ways that are familiar, then not. Lines jump out like the beauty of a petrified tree along a rural highway. "Playing my guitar on the Eric Hoeniker train/ I just got into Holland surrounded by graves," begins the pop-rocker "Radio London". On the soft-talkin' "Collar To The Wind" and eerie stillness of "Shine On Me", the BC-based artist addresses the death of a loved one. Pure radio hits are the title track and the "Jimmy Lefave Goes To Hibbing, Minnesota".



Maren Ord

Style: young and restless
Lineup: Maren Ord (vocals, acoustic guitar), Greg Kavanagh (acoustic & electric guitars), Steve Lucas and Peter Bleakney (bass), Greg Critchley (drums) Rob Gusevs (Hammond B3)
Contact: Greg Kavanagh, 189 Haddington Ave., Toronto, ON M5M 2P7 (416) 256-5605, (416) 256-5606, kavsong@idirect.com

This singer-guitarist has been given a gift from above. At 16, she has practically mastered the art of songwriting. The eighth of 10 children, who also perform as The Ord Family Singers, she won one of six top spots at Edmonton radio station Power 92's homegrown contest. The prize was a session in Toronto with one of the judges, producer Greg Kavanagh, the "K" in techno project B.K.S. They recorded two tracks at his Kava Sound, the ballad "Eternity" and gripping "Falling", the later of which was put into heavy rotation at Power 92. Kavanagh was so impressed with the teenager he continued to work with her. Sounding at times like a nightingale, at other like a less angry Holly McNarland, the other songs on this CD pro are the bouncy pop of "Sarah", the do-doo "Duet", with its vocal acrobatics and rockier chorus, and the truly outstanding "Harsh" — arresting, moving, all that stuff.



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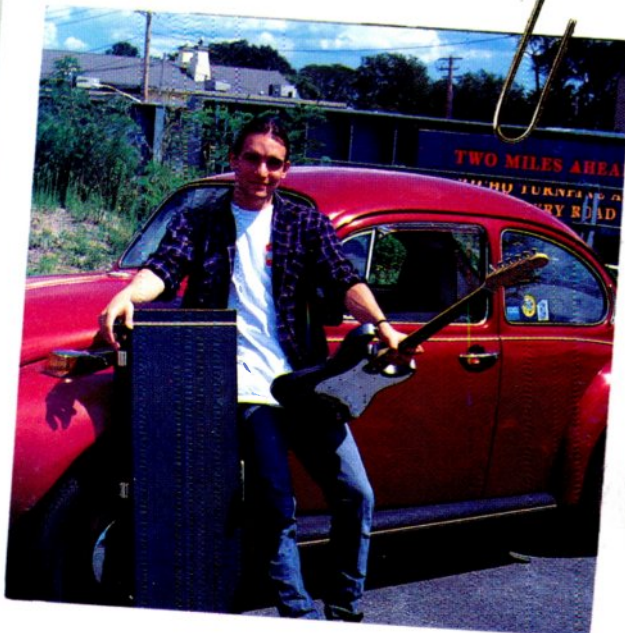
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