

INTERNATIONAL
MUSICIAN
AND RECORDING WORLD

October 1980 75p.

Exclusive
The Floyd at Earls Court



Hugh Cornwell
Inside and Out with a Strangler

Tom Verlaine

The Banshees

Bernard Purdie

Todd Rundgren

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Tests: Guild M80CS electric; Aria Pro II SM700 bass; ARP electric piano; Roland Bolt 60 amp; Sonor XK949 drum kit; Carlsbro ADT pedal; RCF studio monitor, Rebis effects units.

November 1980 \$1.75



The Bolt Strikes

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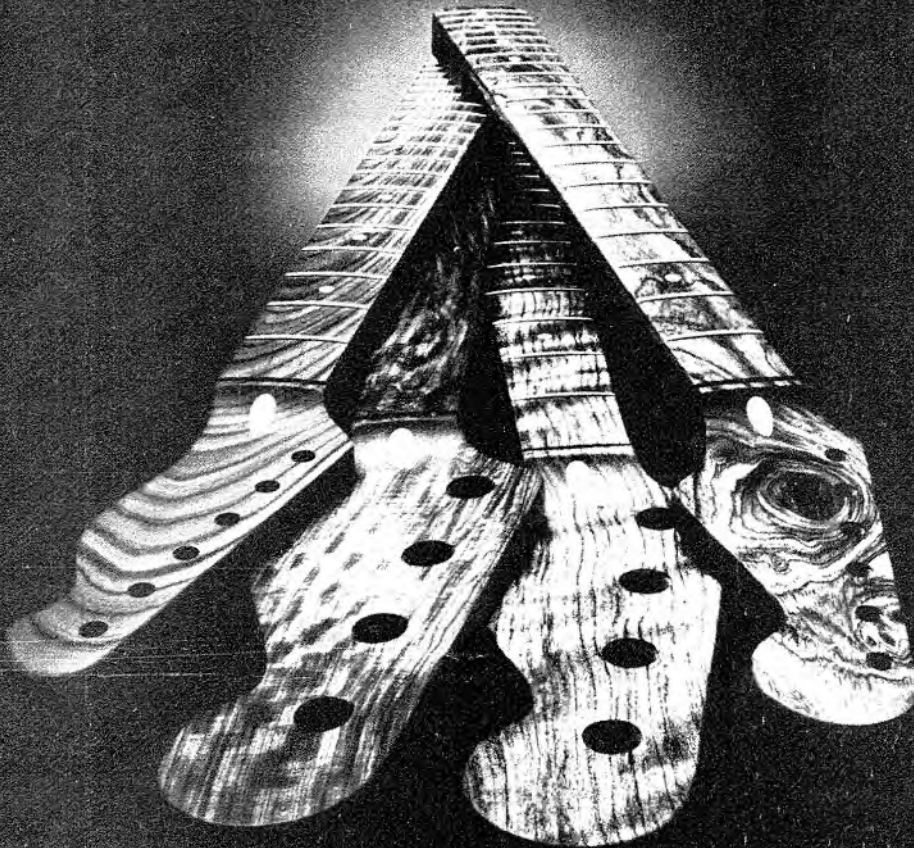
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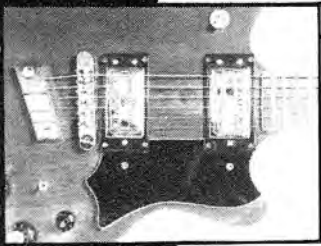
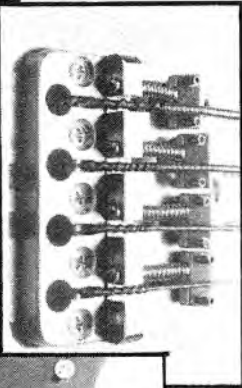
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Editorial

For those of us fortunate enough to have a holiday away from this blighted isle during summer, now is probably the time foreflecting on fading tans and two weeks of bliss.

Your humble editor was one of the lucky ones who indulged himself for a fortnight on the other side of the pond (America to you). As usual it turned out to be a bit of a busman's holiday, involving going to a lot of gigs.

One thing that really impressed me was the way every club or bar, no matter what the size, had its own PA system. Of course the standard varied from venue to venue, but because there was usually a house sound man either to work the system or advise, the end result was usually pretty good.

What struck me, was that bands could actually make money out of gigging, after all the biggest outlay is invariably for a PA system. I wonder if the idea will ever catch on in this country? I'm sure for many up and coming bands it would be a Godsend.

Incidentally it's not all good news over there — the beer is lousy.

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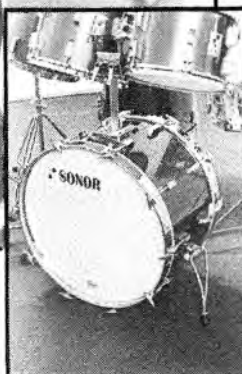
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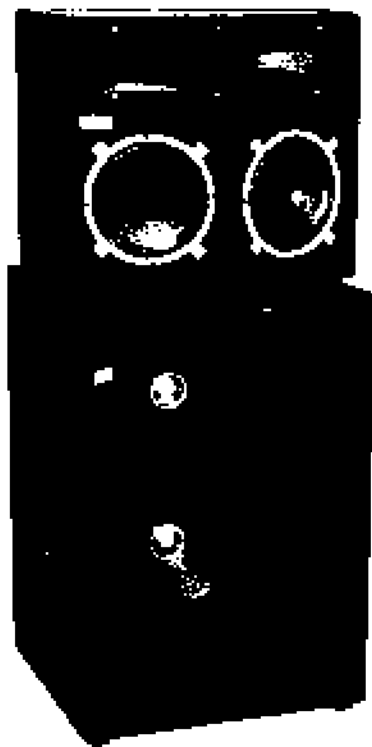
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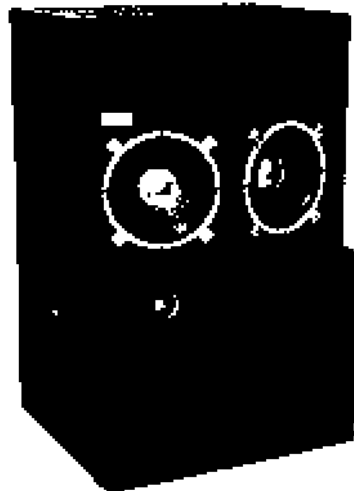
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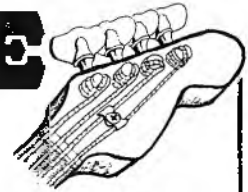
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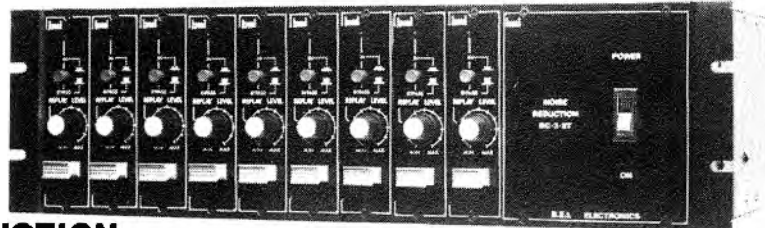
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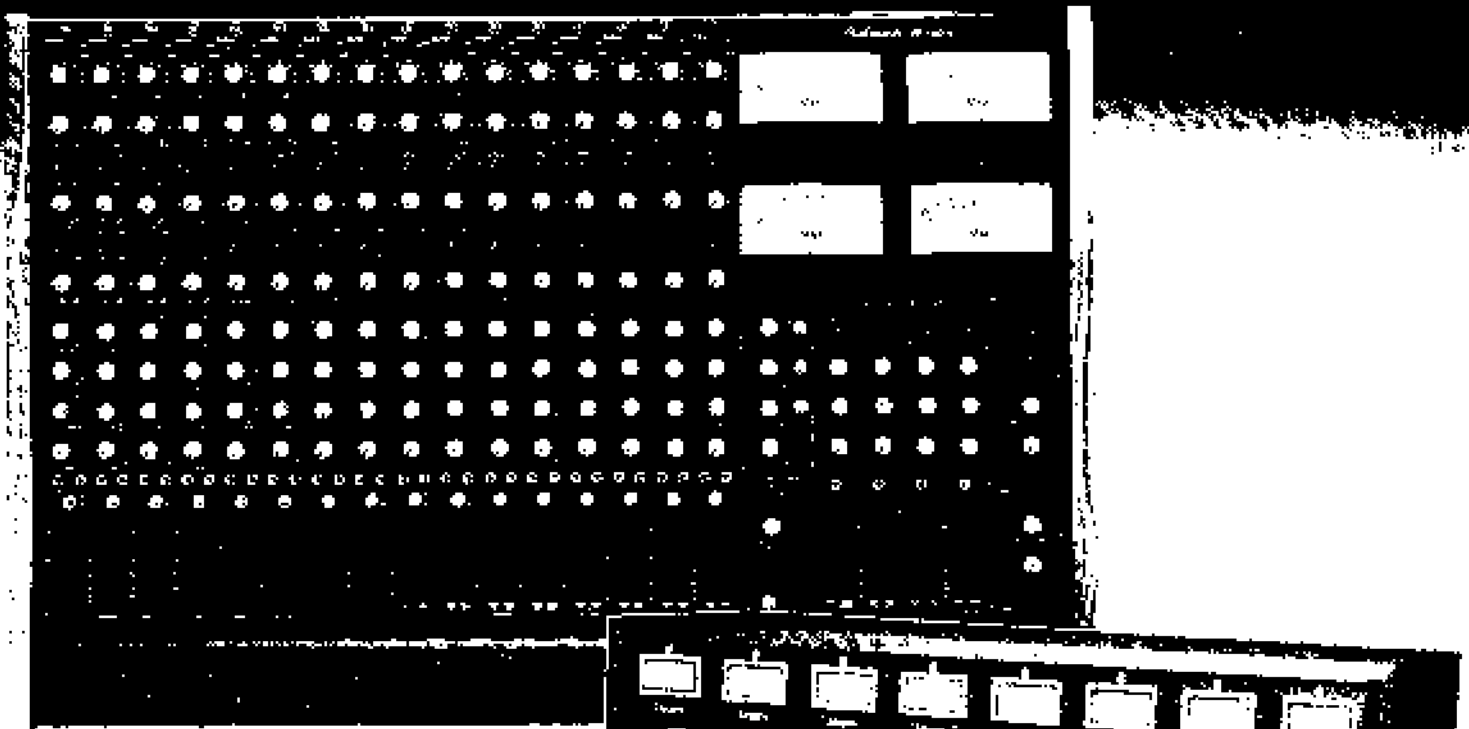
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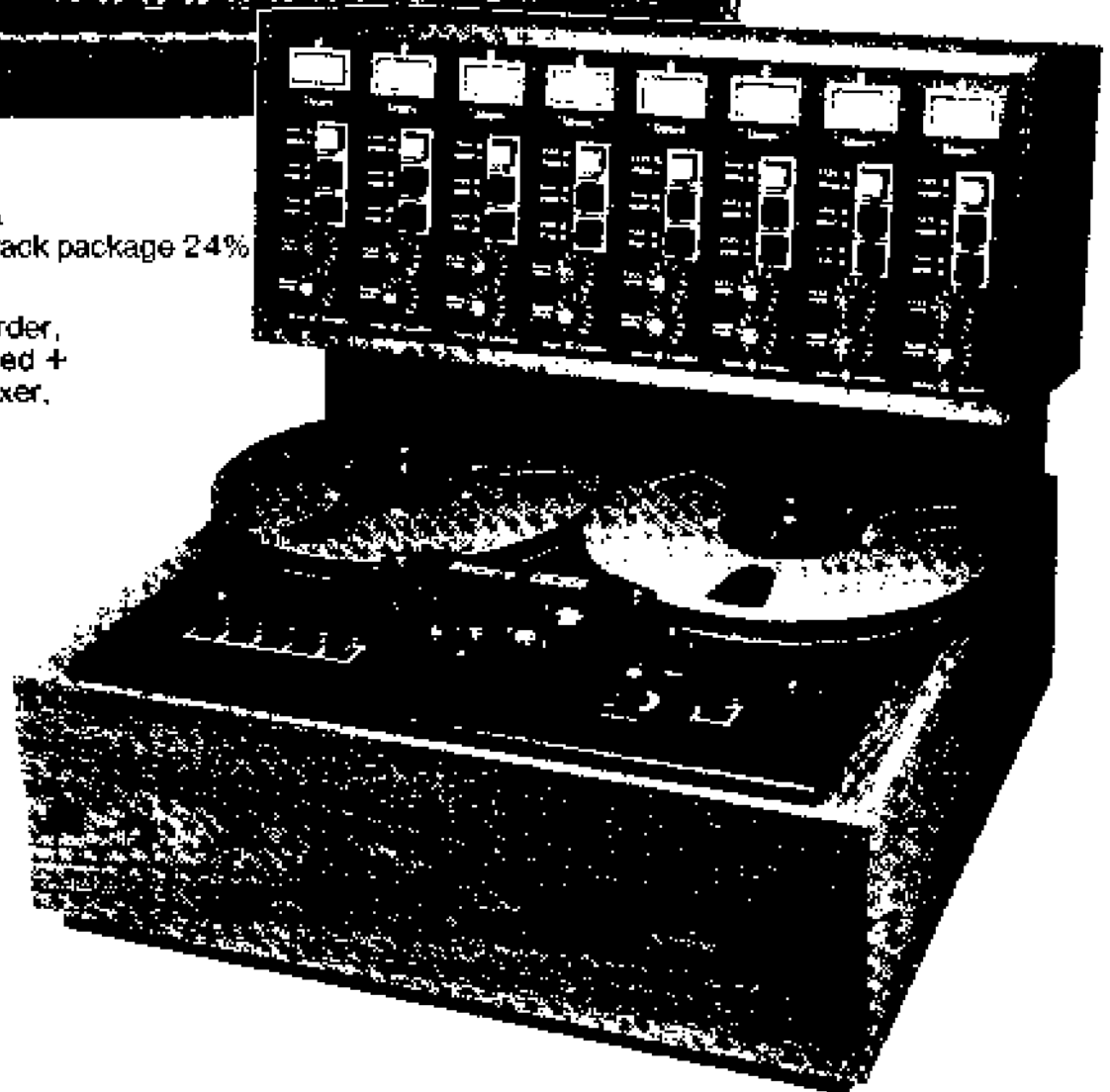


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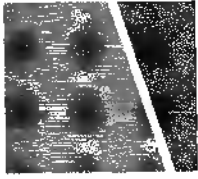
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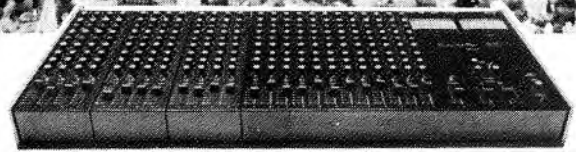
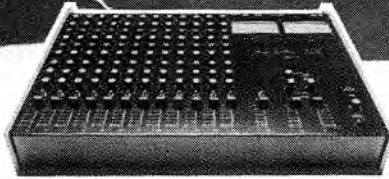
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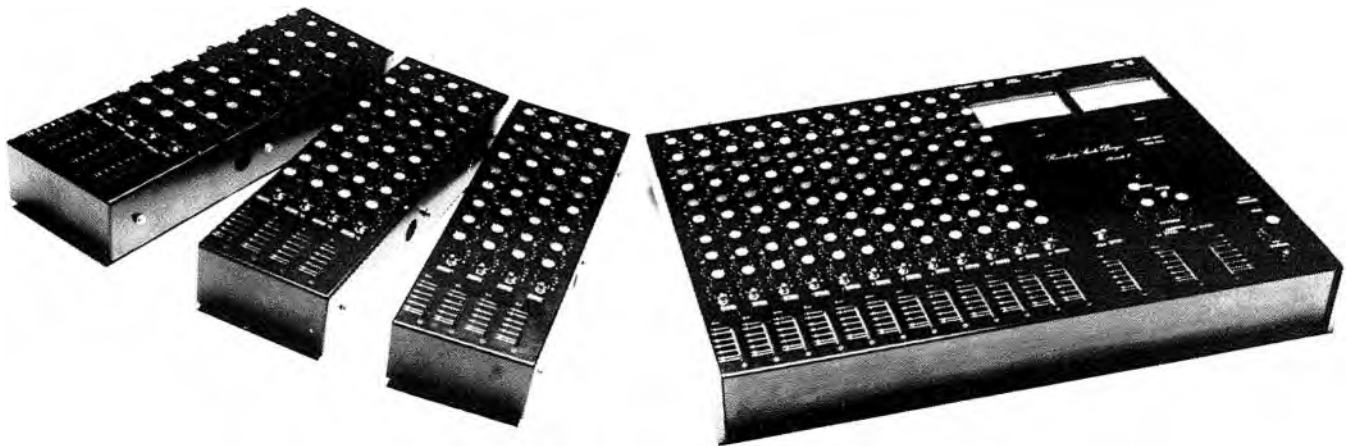
The 12/2 offers input attenuation allowing you to provide mike, D/I or line input into any of the channels, full equalisation on each channel, foldback mix facilities, effects or echo send and return and full stereo pan control. A PFM button allows the engineer to listen to any channel on its own at the touch of a button and

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required:- Without any increase in noise, without any loss of facilities and without costly "main frame" work becoming necessary.

The benefit to you is clear. Start with a professional mixer that's the right size for your performances. As you grow it can grow with you and instead of accepting insulting trade-in terms for your old mixer you'll always be able to keep control of your sound and your costs.

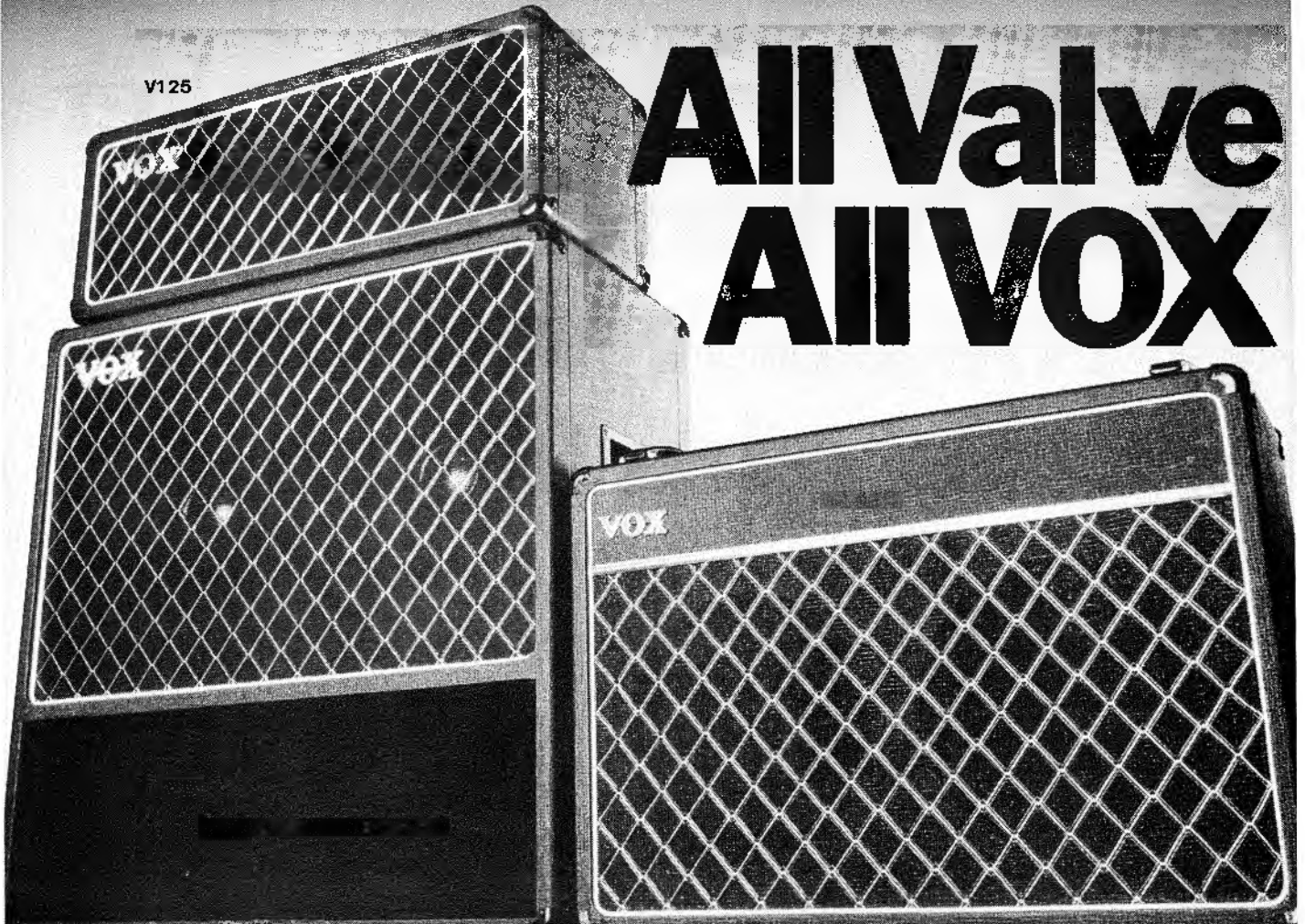


Recording Studio Design

RECORDING STUDIO DESIGN, STUDIOMASTER,
CHAULEND LANE, LEAGRAVE, LUTON, BEDS.
TELEPHONE: LUTON 570624.
TELEX: STUDIOG 825612.

V125

All Valve All VOX



VR212

V15

The all new Vox V15 Combo is the product of Vox experience and the needs of the 1980 musician. It's all valve, of course, for that unique warm overload sound. The twin speaker design is unusual in a 15 Watt Combo, but essential to fully express the potential of the amplifier design.

It's size is only 63 X 46 X 22 X cms but well balanced for portability, and weighing in at around 14 kilos it won't need much carrying! However nothing is sacrificed in construction and quality — the V15 remains true to the Vox tradition!

The all valve design features a classic Vox 'push pull' output stage using EL84 valves, and draws on years of AC30 experience. It will easily exceed 15 Watts RMS, bettering 20 Watts Peak Power. The preamp is all valve too, with preamp volume control, master volume control, and three band passive equalisation — bass, middle and treble.

Tremendous care and patience went into this design. Top rock musicians played prototypes and gave their suggestions — the result a combo for you, the 1980 Vox enthusiast.

New for 1980 is the Vox V125 Lead Stack. It's powerful, versatile, portable and Vox. The styling draws on the classical Vox tradition. But 1980 innovations in the design bring to the musician such features as active equalisation in a valve design.

The Vox V125 is a true concert amp being powerful enough for the loudest of bands. It will easily produce 125 Watts RMS before distortion, and will run 180 Watts Peak, and that's not flat out!

But not every gig needs enormous volume potential. So the Vox V125 includes a master volume control to limit that powerful output stage to the level that suits you. You can still overload at any volume by using the preamp volume control to wind up the valve front end.

The preamp has another original control — sensitivity. The difference between a cheap pickup and a Di-Marzio X2N is enormous. This new sensitivity control allows you to custom tailor the amps sensitivity to your guitars output — any guitar can drive the Vox V125.

The tone circuit is pure Vox magic. Five bands of active equalisation — the sort only previously found in the best recording studios. With these tone controls you can boost certain tones and cut them — conventional amps only cut. The benefit is incredible tone versatility. You must hear it.

One of the problems of creating an amplifier with such an exceptional performance is to find a cabinet that can do it justice and Vox abandoned traditional 4 X 12 designs as being inadequate for the V125.

The folded bin design of the VR212 provides the full frequency response the V125 needs. Two 12 inch Vox drivers, each rated at 80 Watts, deliver both direct radiated middle and treble, and bass frequencies enhanced by the ported construction. Further advantages are the compact dimensions and light weight when compared with conventional 4 X 12's.

Check out the new Vox V125 Stack and the V15 Combo. We know you'll like them.

VOX

VOX Limited 32-34 Gordon House Road London NW5 1NE
Telephone: 01-267 0702

Please send further details on VOX Amplifiers

Name _____

Address _____

VAIM 780

Built-in Rotary Speaker and Overdrive Effects... The Back-to-Basics Portable Organ



Reproduce that powerful, legendary sound with this truly portable combo organ. Nine drawbars—16', 8', 5 1/3', 4', 2 2/3', 1 3/5', 1'—for free creative control over tone color, with additional adjustable percussion volume and decay on 4' and 2 2/3'. Adjustable key-click noise adds extra punch to the sound.

Built-in rotary speaker effect circuitry and

overdrive circuitry provide realistic rotating speaker sound and distortion with simple direct connection to any ordinary amp. No extra external preamp or effects unit is needed. The most widely used drawbar registration settings are preset for instant selection whenever needed.

The CX-3 provides hard, dynamic organ sound for all applications in rock, jazz, and popular music.

SPECIFICATIONS

●KEYBOARD: C-C 61 keys ●DRAWBARS X9: 16', 5 1/3', 8', 4', 2 2/3', 2', 1 3/5', 1 1/4', 1' ●PRESET DRAWBARS: I, II, III, Drawbars ●PERCUSSION: 4', 2 2/3', Percussion Volume, Percussion Decay ●ROTARY EFFECT: On, Fast ●OVER DRIVE ●TONE CONTROLS: Bass, Treble ●TUNE: Tune (±50 CENTS) ●VOLUME: Power & Volume,

CX-3

PORTABLE ORGAN

key Click Volume ●OUTPUTS: Signal Outs X2 (High/Low), Accessory Send ●INPUTS: Accessory Return, Rotary Effect (Slow/Fast) ●DIMENSIONS: 1149(W) X 137(H) X 315(D)mm ●WEIGHT: 10.5kg ●ACCESSORIES: Dust Cover, Connection Cord ●POWER CONSUMPTION: Voltage (Local Voltage, 60/60Hz), Wattage (5W).



KORG

For details, please ask:

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FRANCE: GAMME 17, Rue Laperouse, 93500 Pantin.

GERMANY: GOTTHOLD MEYER KG, 3550 Marburg 1.

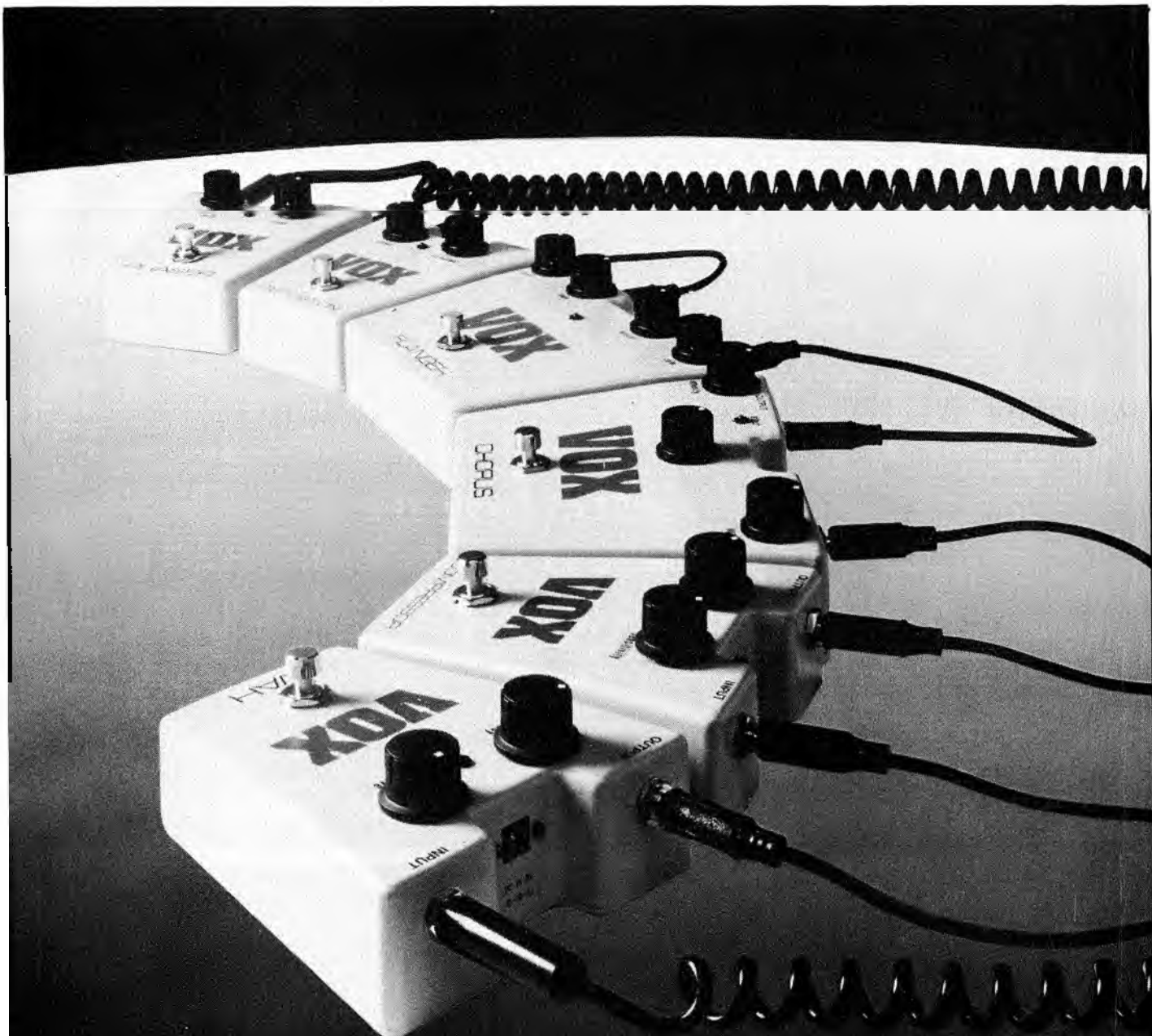
HOLLAND: MILESTONE B.V. Postbus 207, 3330 AE Zwijndrecht.

ITALY: CGD MESSAGGERIE MUSICALI SPA via M.F. Guintiliano, 40, 20138 Milano.

SWITZERLAND: MUSIK-MEYER AG, Musikinstrumente en gros, Mühlhaldenstrasse 16 8953 Dietikon.

U.K. and EIRE: ROSE MORRIS & CO., LTD. 32, Gordon House Road, London NW5 1NE.

U.S.A.: UNICORD 89 Frost Street, Westbury, New York, N.Y. 11590.



The New Range of VOX Effects Pedals

Sound processing has come a long way since Vox first set the pace and Vox are again leading the way, this time with a new range of pedals, designed for today's sophisticated musician. Vox innovation has created a new practical shape — a wedge — which means that the pedals can be used together in a natural semi-circle, and the leads and the phantom power connections are all at the back; well out of the way. It's simple and obvious, but it took Vox to think of it!

But the new Vox pedal is not "just a pretty face!" The electronics are pure 1980s with LED indicators, low noise levels, and external phantom power possibilities. The switching

is ultra-clean and ultra-quiet, and Vox thoughtfully include a pad to fit the bottom of each unit to eradicate any slip.

The range includes a super versatile "Phaser", a warm valve "Distortion", a super funk "Wah", a clean "Compressor", the sweeping "Flanger", and the ethereal "Chorus". All are battery powered as standard and all are distinct in the new Vox livery.

How much? You'll be surprised. Vox have designed not only pedals you'll want, but pedals you can afford!

Prices run from £27.00 to £58.00 including VAT. Check them out, they were designed by musicians from us to you.



Please send further details on the VOX Pedals

Name _____

Address _____

VEIM 780

VOX

VOX Limited
32-34 Gordon House
Road London NW5 1NE
Telephone 01-267 0702

Aria .. Axe's for the 80's



GET YOUR HANDS ON THE R.S.850 Specification

Maple/Walnut Transmitt neck, 650mm scale ebony fingerboard with 24 nickel silver frets, and Ash body. Sound resources are unique and amazing: 2 powerful single coil RSD 1 pickups are augmented by a third 'slave' pickup in the centre position, and a built-in pre-amp ensures very wide tone and power facilities. Each main pickup has a 'O' (3-way selector) switch for three widely differing tone colours, combined with individual tone control. The main pickups are selected either together or individually by 3-way switch. Proximity of slave to strings (adjustable) controls main pickup output.

S.R.P. £372.50 Inc. Case.

JUST A FEW OF THE COMMENTS FROM MUSICIANS ABOUT RS850

- Allan Woodmass** — "Well made guitar, great feel, great sounds".
Colin Finlay — "Aria is top on all points".
David Rae — "The new range of guitars out-prices and out-classes competition!"
Stuart Nixon — "After playing U.S. guitars for 20 yrs., Aria have got a winner here".
C B Uff — "Well set up, instantly playable, superb quality and value for money".
Ashley Corbett — "I think its a magnificent instrument".
Bill Smith — "Very pleased with RS 850's quality and tone variation has everything from 'Tele' to Gibson".

Thanks Fella's...Enjoy the Gigs

The collage features several T.C. Electronic pedals:

- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser**: Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC VII Drivable Peak Phaser**: Includes controls for SPEED and PEAK.
- Dual Parametric Equalizer**: Features two frequency sliders with controls for BANDWIDTH and CENTER.
- Sustain Parametric Equalizer**: Includes controls for SUSTAIN, GAIN, and FUNCTION.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (another unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (third unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (fourth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (fifth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (sixth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (seventh unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (eighth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (ninth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (tenth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (eleventh unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (twelfth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (thirteenth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (fourteenth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (fifteenth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (sixteenth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (seventeenth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (eighteenth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (nineteenth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.
- TC XII B/WK Programmable Phaser** (twentieth unit): Includes controls for SPEED, FUNCTION, FILTERS, and WIDTH.

... the Ultimate in Effects

"Oh yes, quality products they are; no doubt about that. Overall it has to be said that T C Effects have made an impressive debut". **TONY MITCHELL** "Sounds".
 "The Dual Parametric is a beaut. I have never heard so much top from any effects unit".
PAUL COLBERT "Musicians Only".

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 T.C.

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MICROPHONES CAN'T COMPETE WITH C-DUCERS



Transducer technology revolutionized!

The flexible microphone is here. A flexible microphone? That's right. C-Ducer is a studio quality "sensing tape" developed for pianos, all stringed instruments and drums. It is compact, convenient and easy to use (you just stick it on!)

C-Ducer is versatile. It has a phenomenal frequency response which is flat right across the audio spectrum. It captures those rich sub-harmonics and gives crisp clarity up to the highest audible frequencies. The result: a truly natural sound.

Feedback Immunity

Since the C-Ducer picks up sound directly from the sound board of the instrument and not through the air, far greater sound levels can be used before feedback than with any mikes. A must for stage work.

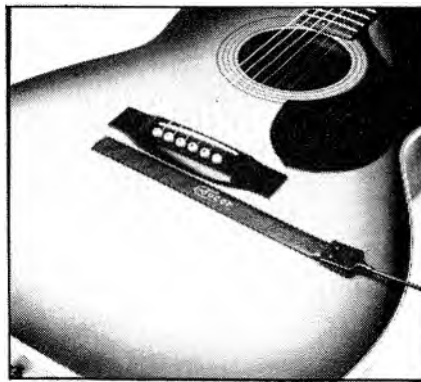
A Musician's Dream

On stage and in the studio C-Ducer gives the musician the true 'live' sound of his instrument with complete freedom of movement. No chance of,

say, the guitarist going 'off mike'.

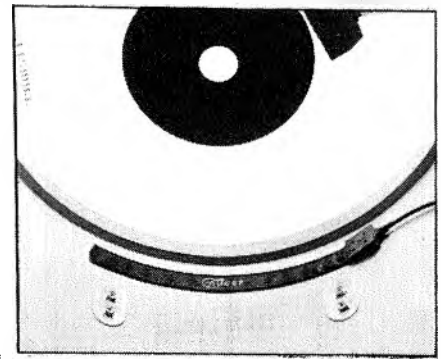
A Roadie's Dream

It takes a couple of minutes to rig a grand piano with C-Ducer and not much longer for a full Drum Kit (once on it need not be removed). In short, C-Ducer eliminates delicate microphones with their awkward stands and replaces them with a simple, positive, and durable system giving first rate sound quality.



High Separation

C-Ducer picks up virtually nothing from neighbouring instruments no matter how loud or close they may be. In the studio it can eliminate the use of a sound booth in many cases and, of course, provides an exceptional stereo image.



The C-Ducer Range

The C-Ducer 'tape' comes in a choice of three lengths.

- * Three and a half inch tape for the violin, banjo, balalaika, mandolin, lute etc.

- * Eight inch tape for acoustic guitar, cello, double bass, and all drums (including bongos and congas)

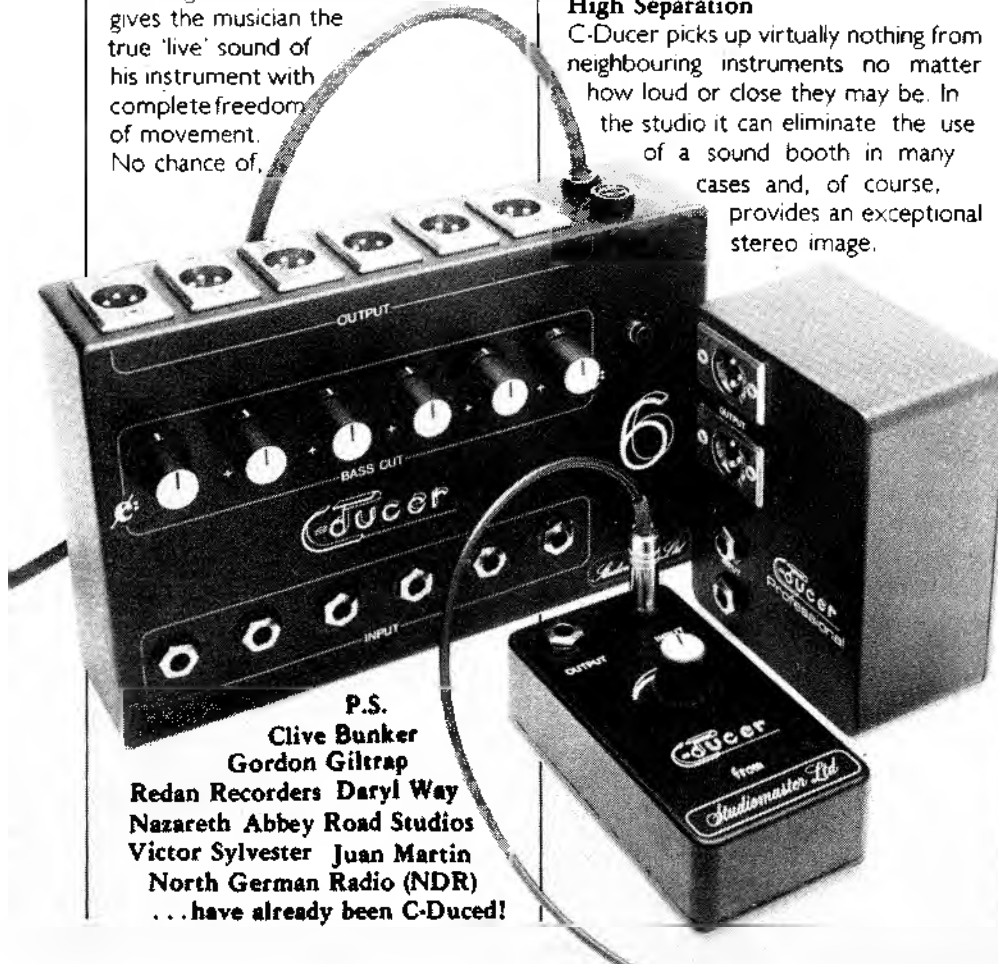
- * Thirty inch tape for grand pianos and larger keyboard instruments (harpsichord etc.) along with the harp family.

C-Ducer systems are built to last and include their own pre-amps: these fall into two groups:

The C-Ducer 'Gigster' is battery powered and incorporates a volume control. Battery life is around six months with average use and the output signal has been tailored for compatibility with stage amplifiers.

The C-Ducer Professional has been designed for studio or stage work with mains or phantom power. Systems for mono, stereo and six channels (for the drum kit) are available. Anti-resonance equalization is provided on drum systems. The Professional range is fully studio compatible with six hundred ohms balanced output.

Once you have found where to place the 'tape' for natural sound you can continue to experiment with new positions to enhance particular sounds from your instrument.

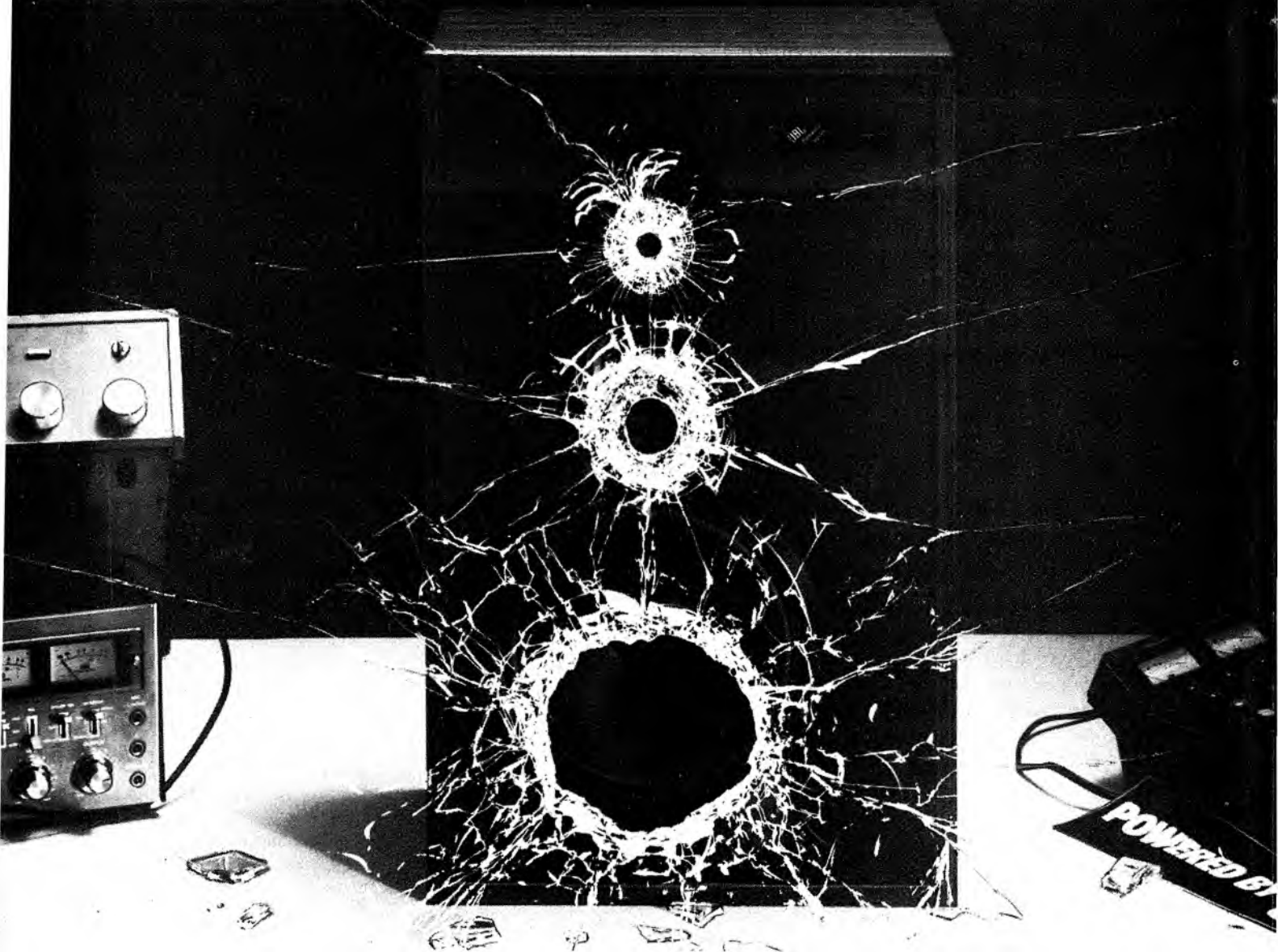


P.S.
Clive Bunker
Gordon Giltrap
Redan Recorders Daryl Way
Nazareth Abbey Road Studios
Victor Sylvester Juan Martin
North German Radio (NDR)
... have already been C-Duced!

StuDiomaster
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JBL RADIANCE. LOUD SPEAKERS.



The problem with a set of speakers as loud as JBL Radiance, is that hi-fi dealers tend not to want to demonstrate them. Plate glass is, after all, quite expensive.

JBL Radiance speakers can blitz out a sound pressure level of over 116db (bit like having a jack hammer in your living room). But the nice thing about them is that you don't need a megawatt amp to power them. Radiance speakers can be pleasantly deafening on as little as 15 watts input.

At the other end of the scale of course, Radiance 99vx's can handle 200 watts comfortably. (Comfortably for the speakers that is, not necessarily the listener).

The next step for you is to nip round to your hi-fi dealer and persuade him to let you have a listen.

If he objects, you could always offer to pay for his windows.

Dear JBL, I've warned the neighbours, insured my breakables, informed the police, sold the cat, and saved up for a stamp. Send me some more info on these speakers of yours.

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- Slider for **BRASS ATTACK** control
- LED for the luminous indication of the engaged control
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- Slider for **VIBRATO** speedcontrol (BRASS & STRINGS SOLO)
- **VIBRATO** tab
- **MUTE** tab
- **TROMBONE** and **TRUMPET** tabs
- Tone colour families **PRESETS**
- **CELLO** and **VIOLIN** tabs
- LED for the luminous indication of the engaged tone colour family
- **PERCUSS.** tab (STRINGS)
- **SOLO** tab (STRINGS)
- **ACCORDION** and **MUSETTE** tabs
- **PIANO** and **HONKY TONK** tabs
- Slider for **ATTACK** control (STRINGS & REEDS)
- Slider for **SUSTAIN** control (STRINGS & PIANO)
- Slider for **VOLUME** control
- **DIN** socket for the swell pedal
- Jack sockets for the connection to external amplification and for the sustain footswitch
- **TUNING** control of the instrument

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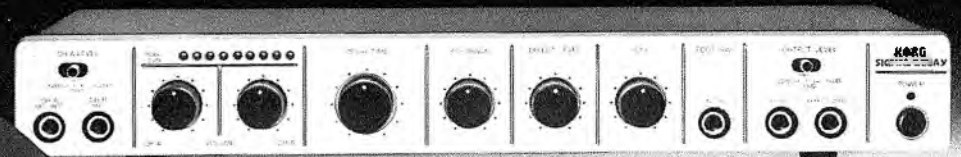
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AYR Sandgate. BANGOR High St. BELFAST Fountain St. BIRMINGHAM Shopping Centre. BIRMINGHAM Corporation St. BLACKPOOL Queens Square. BOURNEMOUTH Gervis Place. BOURNEMOUTH WAREHOUSE SALES Ringwood Rd Northbourne. BRIDGEND Dunraven Place. BRIGHTON North St. CARDIFF Castle Arcade. CROYDON Alders Dept. Store. EXETER Paris St. FAREHAM Shopping Centre. GLOUCESTER Northgate St. HAVERFORDWEST Old Bridge. KINGSTON Eden Walk. LEWISHAM Riverdale Centre. LIVERPOOL Hanover St. LLANDUDNO Mostyn St. LONDON Brent Cross Shopping Centre. MANCHESTER Arndale Centre. MANCHESTER Deansgate. Kendal Milne. MERTHYR TYDFIL High St. MILTON KEYNES Shopping Centre. NEWPORT Emlyn Square. NORTHAMPTON Grosvenor Centre. NOTTINGHAM Broad Marsh Shopping Centre. PLYMOUTH Cornwall St. POOLE Arndale Centre. PRESTON Fishergate. READING Butts Centre. SHEFFIELD The Moor. SOUTHAMPTON Above Bar. SOUTHSEA Palmerston Rd. TAUNTON The Bridge. TORQUAY Union St. TRURO Kenwyn St. WORCESTER Blackfriars Square. WREXHAM Regent St.



SD-400 SIGNAL DELAY



SD-200 SIGNAL DELAY



STAGE ECHO SE-500

Outstanding S/N ratio, professional specs, and remote voltage control capability.



STAGE ECHO SE-300

Echo with built-in reverb for varied effects.

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 U.S.A.: UNICORD 89 Frost Street, Westbury, New York, N.Y. 11590.

The KORG new Signal Delay model SD-400 and SD-200 are coming your way soon. And now they're bringing you a natural sounding echo effect to electric guitar and keyboard, with signal delay.

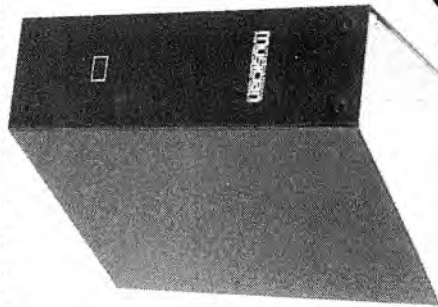
The SD-400/200 features BBD (bucket brigade) circuitry basically, these delay units give versatile echo effects. Undistorted noise-free sound quality is maintained by compander noise rejection and wide dynamic range amp design with input level LED peak indication. The SD-400 offers spectacular "swell" and "double track" effects.

So while you're thinking about what you want, see and try it at your local dealers.

SD-400 & SD-200

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NEWSLINK

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THE SOUND INNOVATORS

The creation of BOSS as an independent division of the Roland corporation was a response to a need. Not just a need for more special effects. Since the processing of instrument signals became accepted as a valid extension of the musician's creativity there has been no shortage of firms willing to 'have a go' at pedals or switching devices. BOSS, however, aim higher. The division was formed to meet the demand for accessory electronics designed and built with the same attention to musicians' requirements that is shown by the best conventional musical instruments.

Before BOSS the signal processors that existed were often based on quite advanced electronics, but their designs showed little understanding of the effects device in action — the rigorous demands of stage and studio work. The BOSS product, on the other hand, is made to perform. Backed by the research and development resources that have made Roland great, each product excels in vital qualities like reliability, practicality, and freedom from unwanted noise.

BOSS pedals are a good example. Their compactness combined with the variety of effects that BOSS have adapted for foot-pedal operation have given them tremendous popularity. However, a pedal is essentially a sophisticated switch, and it is in re-thinking the basic switching mechanism that BOSS have made their greatest innovation. The pedals that the BOSS range supersedes have mechanical switching systems prone to operating noise, 'popping', and unreliability. The FET switching featured by all BOSS devices completely eliminates these faults.

Other developments from the 'sound innovators' include a reliable and practical method of battery mounting and connection — studies made by the company indicate the 80% of failure in conventional pedals can be traced to the battery system. That's 80% of failures that BOSS owners do not have to worry about! Battery eliminator jacks for connection to the BOSS ACA-120 mains adapter are universal in BOSS pedals, and so are LED on/off indicators.

With the new Rocker range, a totally noise-free means of signal variation has been introduced using the Hall Effect. It substitutes magnetic field regulation of the signal for the mechanical systems normally used.

BOSS sets the standards for pedals, but any musician who believes that the company confines itself to pedals or even



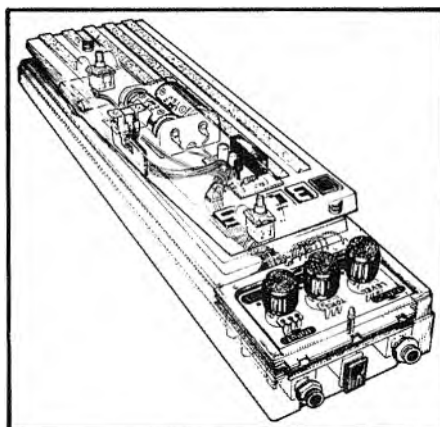
to effects is missing out. The Mixers, for example, offer professional quality and features in an amazingly compact form. Or the Doctor Rhythm — probably the most talked-about piece of musical electronics around. Or the instrument and guitar tuners, combining amazing accuracy with the ease of operation that musicians have a right to demand.

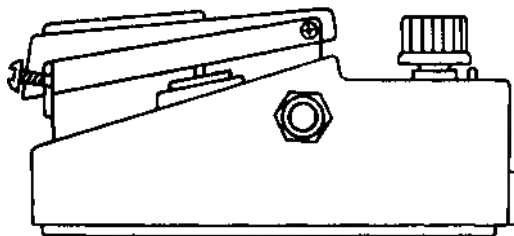
In general, 'BOSS from Roland' means quality and originality. It also means exceptional value, because

research in electronics continually makes available more efficient and therefore more economical ways of doing things. BOSS pass the savings on to the musicians of the world.

Like Roland products, BOSS units are also designed as a system. A system that includes just about everything you need — or could ever contemplate needing — between your instrument and your amplifier. This is very useful when you are interfacing a number of different devices in a recording studio, and is an attraction for the rapidly-growing number of musicians who are putting together home studios. To be able to link devices together secure in the knowledge that they were designed to be linked together is helpful to anyone who wants creative scope without sacrificing technical quality. And for any kind of recording work the extremely low signal-to-noise ratio characteristic of BOSS effects is very appropriate.

On stage, in studio, at home, BOSS are unchallenged in the electronic accessories market. Because they listen to your problems, and then design to your needs.





BOSS COMPACT PEDALS

Compression with precision

The CS-1 compression pedal gives a sustain limiting control that can put punch into a guitar sound, give you a really 'thudding' bass, and provide considerable extra scope for electric piano and keyboards players. Use the Mode (Normal/Treble Bias) control switch to adjust the balance and achieve the precision of sound you need.



Phasing versatility

The PH-1 is a four stage phase shifter that offers all the classic phase shift effects with the brilliance, clarity, and depth that are characteristic of BOSS. The Rate control gives a sweep rate variable from 100msecs. to 16 seconds — a range great enough for anyone's needs. It has the versatility and the quality for on-stage, PA and recording use.

Pedal into overdrive

Give your amp that classic valve sound with the authenticity that only BOSS can provide. The overdrive effect can be wound up to a very impressive level, yet can still be used with subtlety. Unlike some competitors, the BOSS OD-1 has the sensitivity to carry over the finer points of your playing technique and will not ride rough-shod over a distinctive guitar sound.

Dirt and distortion

Get rough with the BOSS DS-1. It's a hard, heavy distortion/sustain pedal capable of giving anything from a slight 'edge' to your playing to a thoroughly dirty, aggressive sound. Crisp highs and soft lows are characteristic of the DS-1.

Graphic in a pedal

BOSS now supply six-band graphic equalization in the GE-6 pedal for the most convenient 'environment control' around. At last anybody can have the exact sound they require without the need for bulky, expensive, or inconvenient-to-operate equipment.

Noise gate

At this year's Olympia Music Trades Fair all the pedals on the Brodr. Jorgensen Roland/BOSS stand were wired 'in line' and the signal passed through an NF-1 noise gate. Result: negligible background noise, no 'signal colouration'. The NF-1 features full control over Sensitivity and Decay time.

The NF-1 is appropriate for any band using more than a couple of effects devices at one time. Just listen to your equipment next sound-check, before you begin to play through it. If there are several kilowatts of hiss coming over the PA, you probably need an NF-1. Principle features of this versatile pedal include a sensitivity control and a decay time control so that the noise gate will not cut off harmonics.

Small fry—Big Voices

Two new voices from BOSS that will shortly be heard just about everywhere are the MA-1 Mascot Amp and the FA-1 Compact Pre-Amp. Built into pedal-sized packages these products apply BOSS quality and precision to two very important fields. The MA-1 is a loud, clear mini-amp ideal for practise, last minute tune-ups before going on stage, and even busking! With an MA-1 you can take your electric guitar anywhere, and it has a handy belt clip for playing convenience. The FA-1 is also equipped with a belt clip and provides a versatile pre-amp ideal for use with transducers that require one.

NEW CHORUS DEVELOPMENT

The CE-2 Chorus is one of BOSS's most remarkable pedal-sized achievements. All the scope and depth of the famous Roland-pioneered Chorus system is now available in a convenient, highly portable unit which will do what several years ago could only have been done by double or triple tracking. Make an ordinary acoustic sound like a 12-string, or expand the power and breadth of your vocals. The CE-2 can enable a synthesizer to provide a rich 'orchestral' backing, gives extra life to brass instruments, and is great with electric piano and syndrums. Add a CE-2 to your gadget bag you'll be adding another member to your band.



A touch of wah

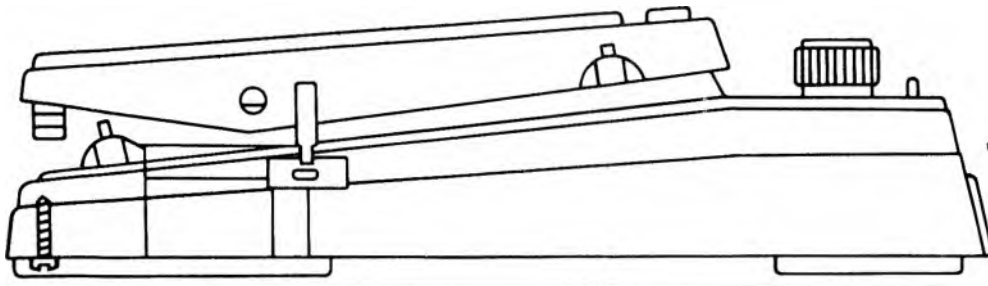
The TW-1 Touch Wah — so-called because like all the Compact pedals it can be turned on silently at the slightest touch of your foot — is the BOSS development of a classic effect. When turned on it gives a Wah of variable intensity without the player needing to squeeze a pedal. It is suitable for most instruments and particularly effective with a bass guitar. A special feature is a selector switch that gives a choice of 'up Wah' or 'down Wah'.

NEW BOSS FLANGER

The latest compact pedal from BOSS completes the range of classic effects, available in this now familiar design. The BF-2 is designed to perform like a studio flanger, offering a full effects range with separate controls for Manual, Depth, Rate, and Resonance. It offers a

sweep of range from 100 msecs to 16 seconds. It is designed as the compact version of the famous BF-1 and advance orders already indicate the BF-2 is likely to be as exciting as the CE-2 Chorus





THE BOSS ROCKERS

Rocker Wah

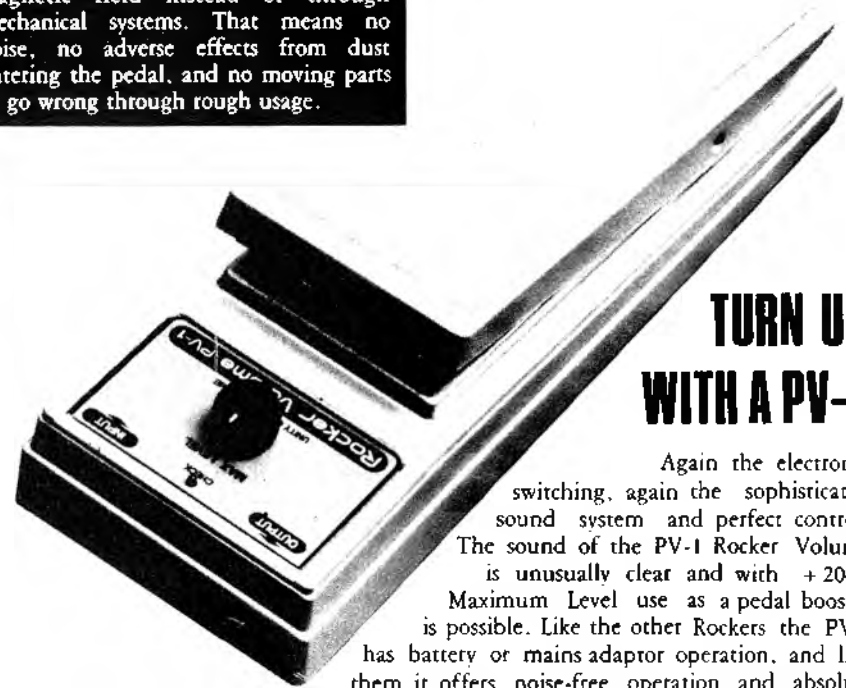
Like the other Rocker pedals, the PW-1 Rocker Wah represents the ultimate development of its particular effect, providing a clear, unbiased signal from which all unwanted noise (electrical and mechanical) has been eliminated by FET switching and Hall Effect field modulation. Selectable emphasis (High, Low or Mid) controls the exact effect given.

At last a wah is available that will operate with a bass without cutting down its power!

Rocker Distortion

Put your foot down — for Warp drive! The PD-1 Rocker Distortion is a far from conventional distort pedal. First, because it has exceptional signal-to-noise performance, no switching or mechanical noise, and full tone and sweep control. Second, because putting your foot down hard gives a dramatic power boost (43dB gain to 62dB gain) which lends tremendous impact to a performance. The distortion for real Rockers — fantastic for those sustained, howling solo effects!

The different pedals — because they operate through the variation in a magnetic field instead of through mechanical systems. That means no noise, no adverse effects from dust entering the pedal, and no moving parts to go wrong through rough usage.



TURN UP WITH A PV-1

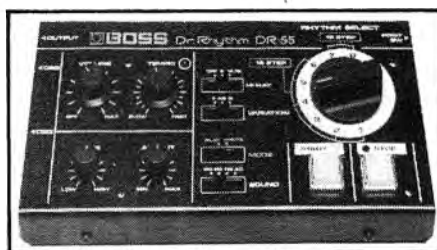
Again the electronic switching, again the sophisticated sound system and perfect control. The sound of the PV-1 Rocker Volume is unusually clear and with +20dB Maximum Level use as a pedal booster is possible. Like the other Rockers the PV-1 has battery or mains adaptor operation, and like them it offers noise-free operation and absolute reliability. Make a difference to your next gig when you turn up with a BOSS PV-1.

THIS DOCTOR CURES THE BLUES

The Doctor Rhythm and the Doctor Beat have been two of the most interesting BOSS achievements of the past year. The Doctor Beat DB-33 has turned the metronome from a rather pedestrian practise aid into a precise and versatile musician's, composer's and musical director's aid. It can provide any combination of beat from zero to six combined with any rhythm from crotchet to triplet.

As for the Doctor Rhythm, if there were a prize for the most influential musical product of 1980 the DR-55 would take it. Its technology is drawn from the Roland CompuRhythm devices, although its price is amazingly modest. The principle attraction of the DR-55 is that it is fully programmable so that the musician can construct his own rhythm sequences — up to six 16-step rhythm patterns and two 12-step ones. The DR-55 'technique' employs Bass Drum, Snare Drum, Rim Shot, and Hi Hat sounds and has 'variation' modes as well as adjustable volume, tone, tempo, and accent. It has a multitude of uses on stage and in studio, not the least, being to provide an easy and convenient way of laying down 'click tracks'.

It's the rhythm for today, and it's also the rhythm for tomorrow. It has a socket to interface with the CSQ-100, CSQ-600, or the arpeggio on the Jupiter 4.



Doctor Rhythm owners have speculated on the purpose of the DBS socket on the side of their unit. BOSS are not at present discussing this in detail, but suffice it to say that the DR-55 is equipped to operate in conjunction with the effects of the future. BOSS technology advances very rapidly, but the Doctor Rhythm is likely to be around for some time. And if the more penetrating musician hazards a guess that DBS might have something to do with a Doctor Bass Socket, it is not for us to gainsay him...

Tune to BOSS with precision

BOSS have developed the TU-120 as the solution to all tuning problems across a full five octaves, whatever your instrument. Featuring reliable, fast-reacting LED display or an aural mode the TU-120 gives accuracy far in excess of the normal demands of gigging or even studio work. Boss chose the LED system because since it does not need to be returned to the factory for recalibrating as VU meter tuners do, it is more convenient for the working musician. Also it is infinitely more accurate because it does not take time to register. The TU-60 for guitar players, offers the advantages of LED display, visual/aural modes. For the utmost precision many guitarists keep their TU-60 plugged in throughout a performance to see instantly if a string goes 'out'.



NEWSLINK

WEDGE-SHAPED POWER!

For any group that has reached the stage of requiring monitors but is neither ready to pay the earth nor to carry the average back-breaking wedge system from gig to gig, the BOSS MS-100 professional 2-speaker system is the ideal answer. Rated at 100 watts RMS these units have the reputation of being very 'pokey' for their size, and will admirably meet the requirements of cabaret work, college gigs and so on.



The sound quality is what could be expected of a Roland/BOSS product, and the price makes the MS-100 one of the most accessible monitor speakers around. The size of these new monitors is around 18" x 9" x 6" and they can be used on a stand or on the floor. Larger groups will often use MS-100's as personal monitors.

A monitor for keyboards

How many practise amplifiers for guitars can you think of? And how many for keyboards? If you failed to answer the second question, then you ought to be introduced to the MA-5, the amazing new micro-monitor/practise amp from BOSS.

The MA-5 has a five-watt output capable of warm overdriven tones and features high and low inputs, tone control, and headphone socket. Its robust construction and the excellent sound quality have made it popular for use on stage when a multi-keyboards player wants an individual monitor on one or more of his instruments. Principally, however, the MA-5 is a compact and versatile practise amp of amazingly low cost — the ideal answer for anyone who wants to use an electronic keyboard at home. It is also noteworthy that many retail music stores have started using MA-5s to demonstrate their keyboard stock.

The Muso's Safety Pin

The BOSS J-5 Multiple Jack makes no more claim to sophistication than a safety pin — and is about as versatile. Once you've equipped yourself with one of these you'll be amazed at how you ever managed to get by with the home-made Heath Robinson devices that most bands had to use before J-5's became available. With their four-into-one or one-into-four operation they're ideal for linking effects cables, instrument cables, amplifier and stack systems — or any of a hundred other pieces of equipment. We've even heard of people using them on their Hi-Fi!

The Graphic of all Trades

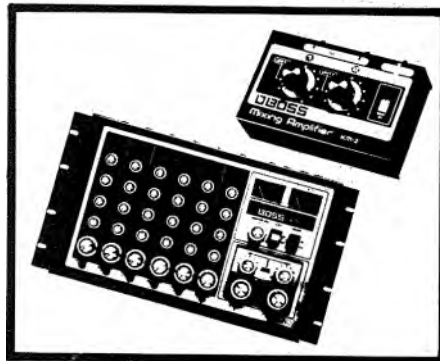
If you want a good, all-purpose reliable Graphic Equalization system, the GE-10 is a sound and economical choice. It offers 10-band sound control with 12dB cut and boost on each channel plus 12dB master control. Slider controls provide smooth variation and a 'centre click' removes any band from the circuit as required.

MIX WITH THE BOSSES

The BOSS range of mixers combines amazingly compact design with features to satisfy the professional. The KM-60 is a precision six-into-two with equalization, input attenuation, pan, level, and effects send and return controls on each channel plus full monitoring facilities. And it's expandable — two KM-60's can be linked to give a twelve-into-two system, so you're unlikely to outgrow the KM-60.

The KM-60 is a full-scale mixer despite its size, intended for use on stage or in small studios. The KM-4 instrument mixer is a compact mixer intended for more modest applications. It has four inputs and is ideal for anyone who uses several different instruments during a performance.

The KM-2 is a pre-amp, a mixer, a line amplifier, or all of them at once. A really versatile addition to your gadget bag.



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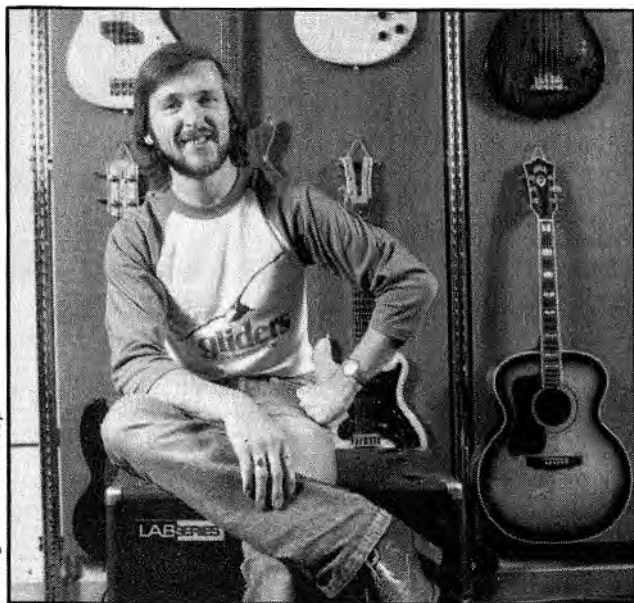
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TRADE NEWS

Fender Competition Winners

The first prize in the Fender String Competition went to John Miller of Walthamstow, London E17, the second prize to Barry Campbell of Belfast, and the third placed winner was D. R. Hallett of Basingstoke in Hampshire.



Manager Sid Bishop

Chappell's of Bond Street have been very busy in recent weeks. The shop has been completely gutted and remodelled and they will be open for business in the new shop front on October 16th. The new staff have completely rethought the planning and operation of the shop and we must admit it sounds good.

In the keyboard department there will be pianos, electric organs and a Yamaha Organ School. Guitar stocks will include Gibson, Fender, Yamaha, Peavey and Aria. Readers should note that the esteemed Dave Roberts of Norlin will be holding a Gibson Clinic at the shop on October 21st. Tickets will be available for this, and if you are interested you should write to the shop.

The new look includes a large sheet music department with everything from Palestrina to Punk Rock (and they mean that). They aim to be the centre for sheet music. This will be available on mail order as will their full line of accessories. Chappell's will also continue to operate their box office service with tickets for concerts, theatre and the like.

The shop's General Manager is David Saville. The

Manager's name is Ian C. Bishop (known as Sid). In his time, he has written a couple of authoritative books about Gibson guitars, and has worked for Top Gear and Boogie Music (where he was manager) before coming to Chappell's. The guitar expert is Amancio D'Silva. About 10 years ago, while signed to EMI Records, Amancio was partly responsible for Indo-Jazz Fusions which some of you may remember. Working experience which recommends him for the job includes a spell as development engineer for Selmer. He is expert in guitar electronics and also acoustic guitars.

The musical instrument part of the shop is obviously the largest and most important, but as you can see there are also a lot of other things going on. As David Saville told us, they aim to maintain a nice atmosphere—classy but not too much so. "People won't get ripped off, and we won't be selling anything cheap and nasty." You heard what the man said, so go and check them out as they want to see as many people as possible just milling around the shop and being interested.

Sale of the Century

Make a note in your diary — a chance like this won't happen again. On October 15th and 16th, there's a mammoth sale of professional recording equipment at EMI Studios, Abbey Road in London.

The very best used equipment gathered from studios and suppliers all over the world should be there — from mikes to monitors and mixers to multitracks, ideal for updating — ideal for expanding from two-track to 24-track.

There will be Memorabilia too — like the famous Studer J37 four-track used by the Beatles on Sergeant Pepper; the *actual* compressor limiter used by the legendary Joe Meek on Telstar — and much, much more.

And who knows what bargains you could pick up in the Jumble Sale? The bargains will be many — cables, connectors, tapes of all sizes and lots of other goodies.

You can't miss EMI Studios — Abbey Road is only three minutes walk from St John's Wood tube on the Jubilee Line. Jackson Music, the organisers recommend that you arrive early if you want the best — 10.00 in the morning until 9.00 in the evening on October 15th and 16th.

Enquiries to: Jackson Music Limited, The Studios, Rickmansworth, Herts, England. Telephone: (09237) 72351.

Bluebell Studios

This 16-track studio is situated in Staplecross, East Sussex. Owned by songwriter Brian Green, it has recently been opened up to the public with the help of its new studio manager and resident engineer Daman Page-Jones. Because of the location, the market they are aiming at is mainly

bands on the South Coast who need to do demos in a reasonably priced place. To this end they have fixed a rate of £10 an hour plus VAT and tapes.

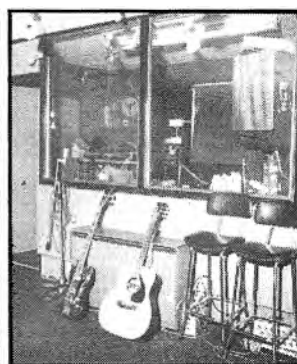
Studio facilities include an MCI 16-track, Sound Techniques desk, Otari and Revox machines for mastering and echo, Tannoy monitors, A&H ADT, Audio Design Compressor and Autophase, and a Roland Space Echo.

So, in this comparatively desolate area (as far as recording studios go, and yet very rich in musical talent), here is a studio offering cheap but professional facilities and the experience of musicians/producer/engineer/songwriter — two people who are working with the sole aim of helping up and coming bands to make a good demo, or even master tape if it turns out that good. Obviously with Brian's songwriting publishing contacts, he could come in very useful when you want to know where to take your tapes once you've got them in your eager little hands.

To give you an example of what they are doing they have already put out several albums and singles, some of which are doing quite well abroad, and a compilation album of bands from the South Coast.

The location is quite good and if you need to stay over night you can choose between a caravan and the local pub. Personally we know which we choose! However, the need shouldn't arise too often, because if you are doing a quick demo you will presumably have got your songs together before you arrive and it should be possible to get everything finished and done within a day.

The studio can be contacted on (058083) 635.



The version of Siouxsie and the Banshees that produced their first two albums was the best group ever. Or at least that's what Steve Severin reckons — but as he's their bass player he might be considered somewhat biased.

Over the top statements aside, the Banshees were one of the most exciting bands to emerge from the punk movement. And the events of the last year have proved that despite difficulties they are determined to continue their creative momentum. Last Autumn guitarist John McKay and drummer Kenny Morris walked out hours before they were due on stage, but the tour continued with Budgie on drums and Robert Smith from the Cure standing in on guitar.

Now, nearly a year later, the Banshees have produced one of the best albums of 1980, *Kaleidoscope*, which shows them moving into different areas with the help of heavy friends like Steve Jones and John McGeoch.

J.M. went along just before the album was released to talk to Steve Severin, a central pivot of the Banshees, and Budgie, now a full member and increasingly raved about drummer. Our questioning about the rumours that John McGeoch was about to join met with a tight-lipped silence. This was what followed:

J.M. Your new album, *Kaleidoscope*, seems to be in a different direction to *John Hands*. Is that a conscious thing, has the split you had last year forced you to rethink your direction?

SS: We weren't forced to, it was just because the way we were working with people, because there was basically just the three of us. If there wasn't a guitarist around we wouldn't use one. The main reason why it's so different from the others is because... with *The Scream* it was just the best of the material from the two years that we were waiting for a deal, and *John Hands* was the next year's group material. The way we've been working has been very different this time.

How do you go about working. Before, on *The Scream*, a lot of songs were credited to John McKay — I presume he'd come along with ideas or riffs based around guitar.

SS: Yeah. He usually had about three tunes and we'd pick one and work on it in the rehearsal room. Most of the material on the first album was the result of somebody coming up with a chord sequence and then the rest of us all jamming around it.

On neither of those first two albums did we write things in the studio, whereas with this new album we wrote two or three actually in the studio as we were going along. Before we always felt we had to have an album's worth of material to go into the studio with.

Did you have more freedom to do that in terms of the record company giving you a more relaxed time?

SS: We could have spent months doing *John Hands* as well. In fact we did spend more time on *John Hands* and it cost more money to make. We just did all this basically in a concentrated period of three weeks. We'd done a lot of it earlier in the year because that was the only time McGeoch was free.

BG: We changed "Happy House" around and we did it again.

How did it sound the first time?

SS: It was a bit more manic.

BG: I was playing Keith Moon at the time.

SS: Yeah, it had a completely different drum beat.

BG: Then I just moved the drums around — it was all snare drum, so I put the snare

drum out of the way and made it all floor tom tom.

Was the guitar part in it originally?

SS: Yeah. It was amazing, because as John said in an interview last month (in *IM&RW*) he just walked in on melodies and arrangements and put his guitar on. The first thing we played was "Happy House" when he walked in and it just immediately clicked, it was so good.

Did John use flanger on the original?

BG: Yeah, he used one of those little MXR things.

I wondered if you'd used one of those on "Tenant".

BG: That's on the bass, yeah.

I was just banging a bottom E and then turning the phase thing.

That particular effect on that track I've never heard used before.

SS: There's lots you can do with pedals that haven't been done. There's another sound on the flanger that I've never heard anybody use since, it's on *Join Hands*, "Placebo Effect".

BG: I've never played with Syn drums much but there's the noise which everybody uses, but I'm sure there's things that you could do with our sort of stuff. Like using the MXR. I don't play guitar so it's like a noise thing to me. Maybe it's because you don't think of it as an extension of a guitar, maybe it's using it as itself, as a noise thing. People approach those things as too precious.

SS: There's Syn drums on *The Scream*, all over "Carcass". Kenny wanted them to make a really deep sustain tom sound, it doesn't sound electronic at all, it just goes 'booooo'.

There's a sound on the new album which sounds like you've got some kind of electronic treatment on the drums, I think that's on "Tenant" again.

BG: Phased, flanged, drum box whatever.

SS: That's all mixed in with the Dolby tone.

BG: And it's kind of a little bit flanged.

One thing that struck me immediately about the album was that there was an Eastern influence, especially "Desert Kisses", which seems Indian.

SS: It was completely natural the way it happened. Sue would say "that sounds like these lyrics would fit" and we went from there. And when we heard it, just the backing track, because of the type of flange that was on the bass it sounded like a chorus of men humming or something, so we put that on, and it sounded quite Eastern, as you say, and John decided to put sitar on it.

How do you go about writing, say a structured song like "Desert Kisses", do you work that out from a bass line?

SS: Yeah, the whole thing is worked around a sequence of chords that I'm playing on the bass that I just worked out at home, and the actual chorus was written by Sue. The guitar is just almost following that but bringing in areas of atmosphere really.

BG: A lot of that was when we were auditioning as well, we used to have loads of ideas.

SS: Several of those songs with structures were written when me and Budgie and Sue went on the *John Hands* tour because quite often three of us would be there at the soundcheck before Robert would get there, because we were travelling separately. So we used to muck around



with roadies playing guitars and not take any notice of them and just work out things with the three of us.

All of those ideas that had been sparked on the tour started to take shape when we were auditioning people. When McGeoch came down at Christmas we had virtually four songs that all he had to do was put a guitar part to. He did that in virtually two rehearsals.

Can I go a bit into your individual backgrounds? Budgie, I've seen your name credited on a Liverpool sampler album. What was the band?

Bg: Big In Japan, and there was the Spitfire Boys, which was named by Wayne County. These two guys came round to my house and said 'do you want to play drums' and I said OK, and Siouxsie and the Banshees were playing that night at Liverpool Eric's. I remember that night really well, and we went down just trying to get on and some poxy little Liverpool band were playing instead. Then there was Big In Japan, and that went on for the best part of a year. The next thing is the Slits after

GEAR

Bg: I use a black Pearl kit at the moment. It was the one that Kenny left behind, I just changed it around a bit, its got Premier stands, Zildjian cymbals, its got a little tambourine on a hi hat, an 18" floor tom which I don't like very much, it's too big. It's one of those wood, fibre glass shell kits, and it's a bit flat. I used to have a little Beverley kit, that's what I used on the Slits album.

SS: It's a Musicman Stingray bass, Acoustic top and an Ampeg cabinet. The only reason I chose the Musicman was before we signed I never had a bass guitar so I used to use every type. A guy from the Buzzcocks had a Musicman that I borrowed for a gig. I just thought it was pretty! It's got a very distinctive sound I'd, a very muscular, stringy sound.



THE BEAT BEHIND THE BANSHES

that.

How did you get involved with the Slits?

Bg: When I was with the Spitfire Boys we came to London and supported the Slits a few times and we used to sleep on their floor. When Palmolive was kicked out or she left or whatever they asked me down because I was helping them with some demos and ended up doing a tour with them. People have always asked me 'why did you leave', it was because half way through the tour I just really couldn't get on with them. It was great on stage but off stage I was thinking that I wanted to do something else. Then there was a period of nothing. I was playing with Glen Matlock and Danny Kustow and Steve New, and the four of us were just sitting around and they were having hassles with EMI, so we just did four gigs.

Then I got a phone call from Nils, the Banshees manager, saying 'I'm looking for a drummer', I thought he must have a new band. And he said the split had happened, so I went down and met Steve and Sue.

The drumming you did with the Slits was very different to your drumming with the Banshees. Were you very reggae influenced there, have you listened to a lot of reggae?

Bg: At Eric's there was a lot of reggae knocking about, a lot of heavy rockers and heavy dub stuff and I listened to a lot of it. There were always bands playing reggae-ish beats without really knowing that much about it, and with the Slits signed to Island people were literally walking off planes from Jamaica and walking in and playing tabla drums saying, "play this" and I'd say "OK".

People would say, "You haven't got the feel" and I'd be really annoyed and I'd try even harder. Then choosing Dennis Bovell, who plays with Matumbi, to produce the album, it was going more for feeling and I was left a lot to my own devices. Also, Dennis being such a really talented all round musician, he was really teaching me things.

When you joined the Banshees it sounded like you had been playing with them a long time. Your style sounded not radically different to Kenny Morris, but with perhaps more power.

Bg: I'd seen Kenny, I'd seen the band before and I don't think I liked his

drumming that much, but you don't have to like it to respect it. There were a lot of things on like *Join Hands* songs where I had to learn beats, but then I found ways of stepping away from it a little bit, putting myself in there. It's like we were saying before, it's not a conscious change of direction, it's inevitable 'cos it's different people.

Can you tell me a bit about your background, Steve? When you played that infamous first gig at the 100 club could you actually play bass?

SS: I'd played it for about half an hour the day before.

So you just played a continuous drone?

SS: I can't remember! I don't know to this day if I was plugged in! People tell me I was but I don't know. We just got up and did it, I don't really remember anything of it.

It was presumably a direct product of being into the Sex Pistols?

SS: Sort of... it was that I always really liked "Sister Ray" (by Velvet Underground). I thought the idea of a 20-minute load of noise was really appealing at that time.

Did you play much after your first gig?

SS: We didn't do anything for six months, we broke up when we left the stage, that was the idea. We met Nils that night and he persuaded me and Sue to work on what we'd done and we just found a friend to play guitar (Peter Fenton) and while the Pistols were in Amsterdam we used their rehearsal room. That's where we started writing our first songs, things like "Love in a Void", that was the first ever Banshees song.

Just prior to the Pistols were you pissed off with the stuff that was around at that time?

SS: I'd always been into music. Right from the Beatles — well, actually the Stones.

What sort of bands were you into?

SS: Roxy Music, Can, before that Beefheart. The only albums that were any good were up to *Decals*, that's my favourite one. It's funny, nearly all my favourite things are about 20 minutes long, like "Mirror Man" by Captain Beefheart, "Mind Train" by Yoko Ono.

Going back a bit to just after the split when Robert Smith deputised on

the tour, he didn't have very long to learn the songs, did he?

SS: No, he had about two days. He knew the material, but he didn't know how to play it. We just spent a couple of hours sitting down with the tape of both albums just slowly going through. The first three or four gigs that we did he was actually playing with sheets of music.

BG: Well, his music, he'd scrawl all over these pieces of paper, he had these chord shapes written out, which nobody else could understand, we found out later.

Did you actually offer him a fulltime job?

SS: No, not sitting down and saying 'will you join the Banshees?' specifically. There was one night on the tour when we were all exceedingly drunk when he asked me if I'd like him to be a Banshee, and I said 'yes', and he said "I would have liked to have been if I wasn't in the Cure." But it was obvious from the beginning that there was no way we could break up the Cure.

BG: It happened that straight afterwards they threw their bass player out!

Then you had all those auditions. How many people did you see?

SS: Forty, fifty, something like that. And that got us just up to Christmas. We were supposed to be auditioning somebody the day before Christmas Eve and he didn't turn up and Steve Jones did instead! He came down for a drink and fancied playing, so we had an afternoon which was just playing with him, which was really funny. It was also really good, so when we came to do the album we just decided virtually at the last minute in the last week of recording to get Steve down to do a couple of tracks. We'd been trying to get Robert to do some but he's been so busy he didn't have time. For some reason everybody we thought of was on Virgin, and it was just too many legal hassles. We would have liked about four or five guitarists, but we didn't need it in the end.

Without committing yourself on John McGeoch, do you want to work with a permanent guitarist, or do you think you'll stick to using different people?

SS: Well I think the Banshees that recorded the first two albums was the best group ever. I'm not particularly interested in groups any more. It's just much healthier to work without thinking it's a band with a



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career doing the next album. It's been so refreshing doing this album like that, that's probably the way to carry on.

What gave you the idea of using John McGeoch, were you fans of Magazine?

SS: No, I told him straight out that neither me or Sue were fans of Magazine. Me and McKay were definitely McGeoch fans. I'd seen them a couple of times and the only thing I liked was John's guitar playing and his sound especially. As soon as we broke up he was one of the people we tried to get in contact with to help us put the tour back together again, but he was in the States at the time. It took us ages to get in contact with him.

On *Kaleidoscope* it sounds like John McGeoch all the way through, I didn't recognise Steve Jones, who has got a distinctive "wall of sound" usually. How did it go when he was playing with you, did you ask him to play in a certain way?

SS: No, what happened was that Steve gets his guitar sound in a certain way using certain equipment.

BG: In all the auditions we had the same equipment set up, so guys started from a Fender amp and a Gibson guitar, and everybody was complaining at our shitty equipment, and Steve came down that day and he sounded really good.

SS: That's the stuff he plays through anyway, a Les Paul and Fender Twin. It was really interesting, because he had the distortion full on, he got this really weird effect that's on "Paradise Place" where it's distorting between the two speakers so it sounds backwards.

BG: It's not tampered with at all.

On "Skin" he's virtually playing one chord all the way through, which sounds different to his normal sound.

SS: That's because we only let him put two (overdubs) on instead of the 20 when he does his own style!

That place Surrey Sound in Leatherhead where you recorded the album, what's it like?

SS: Well it's only got one studio. Nigel (Gray) just sort of built it himself and it's totally different from somewhere like Air, where we did *Join Hands*, which has got a reception, is nicely laid out and carpeted and that. It's all a bit in disrepair. It's got a really nice atmosphere. There were just loads of things lying about whereas if you were in another kind of studio it would be much more rigid, you'd have to hire everything, so you'd have to think about it beforehand. That's basically why we had the sitar on it, just because it was knocking around and we started playing with it. Different kinds of synthesizers were laying about.

Have you actually bought synths for the band?

SS: Well I've got one at home, a small Yamaha, which is on the album on "Red Light".

Did you buy that after you'd played them in the studio?

SS: Me and Sue went into our publishers a couple of times, Chappells, where they've got a little room with a Teac 4-track, a Revox and a drumbox and an ARP synthesizer and we started writing songs on that, and because of what was around, that in a way determined the way we approached it. But then I bought a synthesizer before we did the album so I could actually write some things on the synthesizer.

A good thing about synths is that you don't need to be a keyboard wizard to get some interesting effects.

BG: That's the thing about instruments,



you don't have to be a wizard to get good sounds out of them, not just synths.

That almost seems to be the Banshees' philosophy.

SS: I think it's consistent with the way we kind of started in that we didn't know how to play. I always think that we're really professional amateurs. I never practice. I've never played along with a record in my life, I've never wanted to. I don't particularly listen to bass players at all. I don't find them very interesting except for one or two people.

BG: People say 'who's your favourite drummer?', I'm listening to guitarists and things.

Are there any drummers you do like?

BG: I really like Dennis Davis (with Bowie). It's just a feel — I never liked Billy Cottons and Buddy Riches. I quite like Copeland (of the Police) on certain things. It's like sometimes you hear records where the drums are prominent, and sometimes where the guitar is prominent and I just pick up on that as well.

Do you like the Police at all, or just the drumming?

BG: Yeah, I like 'em, they're alright (unenthusiastically), but I mean I've not got any of their records or anything.

SS: They're nothing special really. The best thing about the Police is the way Nigel (Gray) produces them. That's why we wanted to work with Nigel — the clarity of the sound, and the space that he gets on the records. He's very easy to work with, he's easily the best person we've ever worked with as far as translating your ideas into actual sounds. He's sort of got his own sound but in a way that is compatible, I think, whereas (Steve) Lillywhite (who produced *The Scream*), is developing a sound that he started with us, and in that respect half of that is our credit because that was the sound we were going for. I think he's got really good. He's taken that kind of sound and he's making it better and better.

The sound on that *Psychedelic Furs* album (produced by Lillywhite) is definitely influenced by the Banshees.

SS: I don't want to say anything about that! (laughs)

What do you think of what he's been doing with Peter Gabriel?

SS: I really like it. I know that he really wants to work with us again at some point, and I'm sure we will work on a single or

something with him. He's such a young producer anyway that he's bound to get better and better. We'll never work with the guy who did *Join Hands* again, that's for sure.

How do you feel about the *Join Hands* album?

SS: I think it's a masterpiece.

Despite you not being happy with the production?

SS: Oh, eventually, the end result, I'm happy with the production. I'm just not too happy with the way it was recorded. The production's good, but it was such hard work and it took so long and we spent so much money on it. We took a very long time doing overdubs, getting different sounds on the guitar, much too long. I think we must have spent a whole day doing the bell at the beginning of the album. Simply because of his attitude, basically, 'cos he was an American and he liked working that slowly. So every night we'd go in and do a "Lord's Prayer", we had about 10 "Lord's Prayers" that we had to choose from at the end and they were all completely different. We just settled on the one that we thought would sound good on vinyl and last. All the rest were like the day's jokes thrown in with the lyrics, 20 minute pissed up versions.

Presumably if the Banshees had signed early on you would have produced a very different record to *The Scream*.

SS: We were very conscious of that, the fact that we had to get material that we'd be proud of. So that's why even when we went in to record *The Scream* what I consider to be the two best songs on it, "Jigsaw Feeling" and "Switch", weren't written until a week before we went in to do it. We could have done two albums at that time, but we just left out the first year's material.

I remember reading that you weren't particularly happy with parts of the *Scream*, why was that?

SS: We weren't particularly happy with the production on *The Scream*. It was a very new sound that we were going for and we didn't get it quite right. It would be better now. There's just basically some things that annoy me on that album, basically because we'd waited so long to do it, and the material was so well known to us, we had a very set idea as to how it should sound. It was just that the production on a couple of things like "Metal Postcard" didn't capture it. And that was one of the reasons why we wanted to do it as a German single so we could get a different kind of sound on it.

Was that single closer to what you wanted?

SS: No, not really.

It sounded like it was done really quickly to me.

SS: Yeah, it was. Basically because we were playing it and the new melody Sue put to it sounded really good, so we just quickly did it as we were doing *Join Hands*.

Do you think that the whole energy thing unleashed by punk has burnt itself out?

SS: I think the energy's still there but there's not much talent. I think there are so many bands that should get together and mould into 10 bands instead. So many of them have only got half ideas. There's quite a bit of potential but I've always felt people are making records too early, even though it's a good thing that there are independent labels and stuff like that. It just seems to me that a lot of people just rushed in and made a record before they were ready.

TOM VERLAINÉ

A black and white photograph of Tom Verlaine, a member of the band Talking Heads. He is shown from the waist up, wearing a light-colored t-shirt, and is playing a dark-colored electric guitar. He is looking down and to the right. In the background, a drum set is partially visible. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his face and the guitar.

On Another Channel

"There have been two strong dreams in my life but I've never written anything about them because it's hard to get across the language of dreams."
— Tom Verlaine

"I'm a bad judge of my own work."
— Tom Verlaine, twenty minutes later.

Tom Verlaine's guitar work is the stuff dreams are made of. Not that they're ethereal or indefinite or any of those qualities we impose on dreams. Rather, the isolation, the internal self-absorption, and the mysterious allure of "the language of dreams" is what Verlaine's playing can offer. As lead guitarist of Television until their breakup in the Summer of '78, and now on his own as a solo artist, Tom Verlaine represents the guitar hero as a romantic figure. A category all too rare in this age where guitar maniacs have to put up with the moronic fog-cutting heavy metal of Van Halen, the reupholstered latino rhythms of Carlos Santana, the excessive repetition of the Outlaws ilk or loads of tired old sixties blues-based hold overs.

Instead, Verlaine's Television gave us hefty doses of *purposeful* six-string work and a band attitude totally centered around the almighty guitar. Sadly, even many of their small cult following didn't recognize this. The problem has something to do with the setting. In late '73, Verlaine formed his band (with short-term member Richard Hell) in order to "tell-a-vision"; debuting in '74 at arty outhouses like Max's and CBGB's in New York. Playing on the same historic bills as the more lyrically oriented Talking Heads and Patti Smith in the early days of "punk", Television's guitars were viewed by some as simple backdrops to their symbolist lyrics and remote, brooding stage persona while the trendy "artiness" imposed on the scene stole a lot of attention from the real work of Verlaine and his more conventional second lead, Richard Lloyd.

And as some downplayed the guitars, others overplayed them. Several complained about the long, drawn-out solos, even though most of Television's guitar work was brilliantly choreographed. If you listen to Television's two albums (*Marquee Moon* and *Adventure*) or Tom's solo L.P. (released last September), you'll see that, in many ways, everything is a solo and nothing is a solo. There are lead lines running through all of the choruses and verses, mounting the guitar work vertically, while even in the few recorded horizontal moments (like the guitar extension in "Marquee Moon") the tones develop in a logical *literary* manner; delivering a sense of built-up tension as tightly constructed as a top forty pop tune. Even in the more extended live movements,



EQUIPMENT

When it comes to choosing guitars, Tom Verlaine is truly long suffering. His favourite six-string is the one that causes him the most problems — a vintage Fender Jazzmaster which offers lots of string buzz, horrible hissing in the studio and other troubles to test your faith. For the string buzz, Verlaine suggests taking the bridge out and wrapping masking tape around the poles to keep it from rocking. And because of the hissing, he says you can't jump around while doing a solo in the studio. You've gotta be at a certain angle to the amp where it hums the least.

Verlaine has less problems with his favourite strings (Ernie Ball and Gretsch) and his amps, which since the final days of T.V. have been Ampeg SVT's, which he claims, "totally changed my sound. They fattened up the lead guitar so I'll probably use them next time in the studio." On the two Television albums Tom used Fender 'Super Reverb' amps, and on his solo LP he favoured cheap \$57 mikes, which he claims "take more punch. It gives it a slappy effect."

Verlaine generally prefers cheaper equipment, asserting the main problem with guitarists today is, "they all go for those \$3000 Les Paul's and Marshall amps. There's really a lack of the individual with that stuff."

Verlaine has proved to be one of the few guitarists (along with Neil Young, Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck and others), who can solo for more than a few minutes without losing the point. Of all of them, Verlaine's work seems to have the greatest sense of "telling a story;" of bringing you somewhere and coming back with a vividness as insistent as a recurring dream.

But beyond tight focus of Verlaine's work, there is the uniqueness of his tone; an almost anorexic sound — thin, piercing, brittle and vulnerable. "I term that sound shinny," Tom asserts. "You can get that with Gibsons. On the solo record, I used an Epiphone "Al Kaiola." It's got six switches on it and every one makes the sound even thinner."

Verlaine's sound actually developed somewhat by accident. "When I was in high school in Delaware I had a different sound," Tom explains. "I was using an old tape deck — you take the pre-amp out of it, which gives you the same sound I later heard when I first saw Clapton play live. He had this little thing on top of his amp, which I bet was a tape recorder with the pre-amp taken out. A lot of people did that in those days — Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page. It gives your guitar a lot of volume before it hits the amp itself. Then the amp distorts it and gives it an edge. When I got to New York my sound changed because I didn't have any of that equipment. The new equipment I bought in New York was a Fender Jazzmaster, which in those days was \$95 because nobody wanted 'em. Now they're up to \$400, probably because Elvis Costello had his picture taken with 'em so many times."

Verlaine labels the new sound he came up with for Television as a "cranked up surf sound. It's basically a combination of Fender surf guitars and Fender amps cranked up."

Interestingly, when Verlaine was growing up as Tom Miller in Delaware he claims not to have liked guitars at all. "In the early Sixties I listened to jazz and when a guitar would come over the radio I would literally turn it off. When I heard The Stones, that's when I started to like the electric guitar sound. Also on Dylan's *Highway 61*, Mike Bloomfield's stuff."

"19th Nervous Breakdown" and "Tombstone Blues" may have inspired Tom to throw in his sax and piano for a guitar, but his style developed on a track far outside of Bloomfield's or Keith Richard's blues-based licks. Listening to early Television, one might more closely associate him with the psychedelic San Francisco sound; Jorma Kaukonen with his vibrato hooked on speed. "I never liked San Francisco music," Tom counters. "People still associate me with that. But the tones I liked more in those days were The Butterfield Blues Band or

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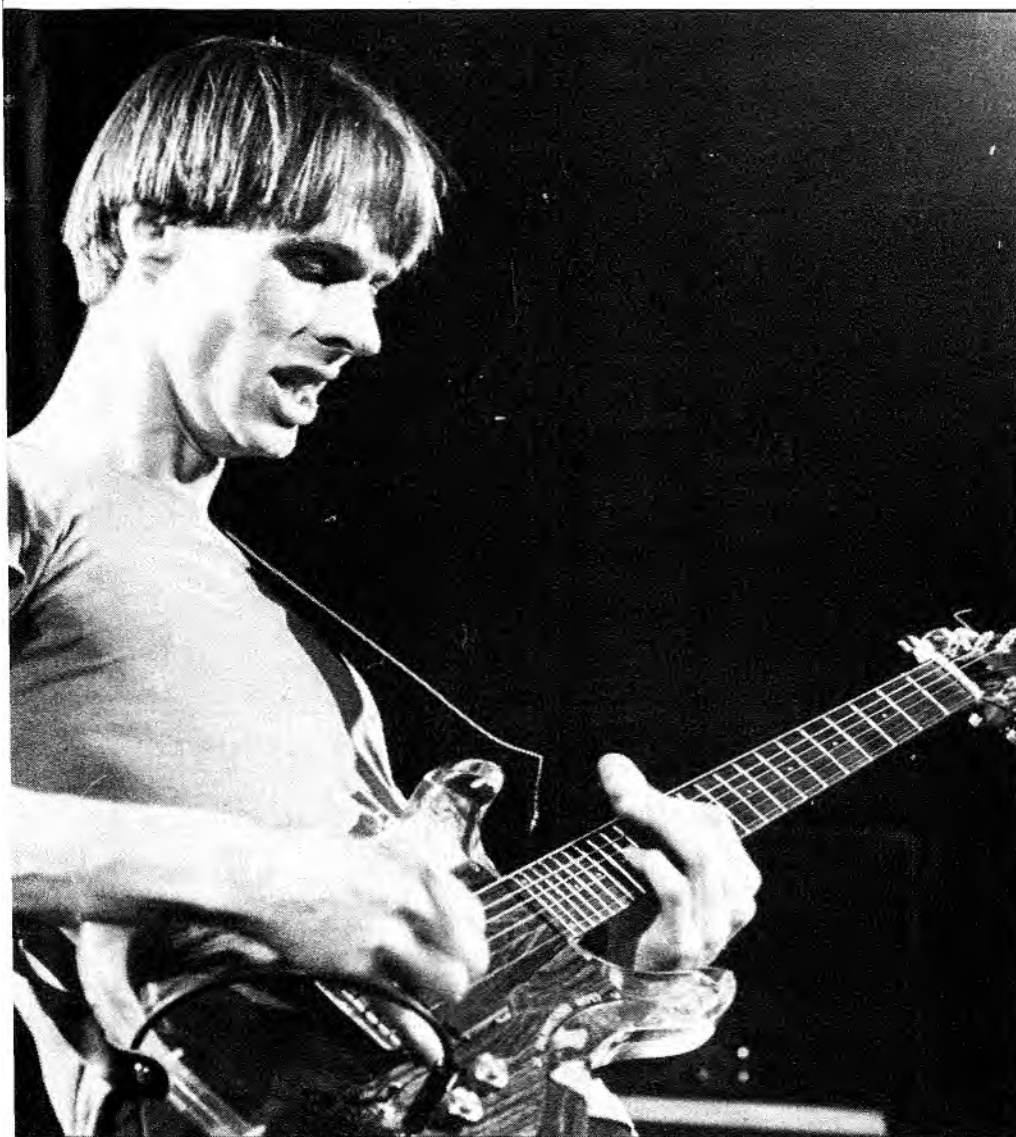


Photo Richard Young L.F.F.

The Yardbird's live record."

In terms of the "lean-and-hungry" aspect of Verlaine's tone, one could also dredge up the name of Neil Young. Both Young and Verlaine feature off-kilter lines, emphasizing convoluted reconstructions or extensions of the main themes in their solos. Yet Verlaine is not as culturally rooted as Young. While Young's lines are pure mythic Americana (ironic for a Canadian), Verlaine creates his own separate reality. One is description, the other implication. "The first Neil Young album I bought was *Zuma* which I thought was great," Tom says. "I think he's got integrity. He's one of the few players who does. His live album I like a lot. The guitars are mixed real loud on that album."

In the past Verlaine has had problems getting his own guitars mixed just right. He complains of engineers not knowing how to deal with his sound. On the first Television album it took a while for the

band to make themselves understood. "When we started making the first album with Andy Johns, he didn't know what the hell to make of it. He pulled me out into the hall and said, 'is this the Velvet Underground? What kind of trip is this?' He recorded a few tracks and then had some personal events so he went to California and I finished the record without him. He came back to mix it and he finally said the band was a lot like The Stones because there's this slight out-of-tuneness to it, and you can't polish it up too much or you lose the energy."

On this debut disc, Verlaine revealed how purposeful his guitar work could be right away; in at least one instance creating a solo to reflect pre-conceived visual images rather than random aural effects. Verlaine labels his feature in "Fiction", "a picture show". It didn't have anything to do with tonality at all. There's a Mingus record called *Oh Yeah* and a song called 'Hog Calling Blues'. It's got trombone players making pig

noises and others making cluck noises and it all sounds great. It's all just a picture."

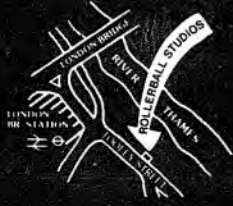
Interestingly, Verlaine reveals some unexpected roots for other guitar bits on the album. While the stuttering riffs on "Marquee Moon" may seem wholly original, Tom claims it was reggae rhythms inverted with a guitar version of the horn part from James Brown's "I Feel Good" layered on top.

On Television's second album, one of the most stunning guitar riffs is on "Days." It features Verlaine's warmest work, plus a passionate vocal with the key lyric; "days/be more than all we have," to the realm of the spiritual. The captivating main riff in the song has a strange origin. "I had read that Wagner would write something and then write it out backwards," Tom explains. "He'd have the violins play the main theme backwards. I thought that was interesting. And I always liked The Byrds so I asked Lloyd if he could play 'Mr Tambourine Man' backwards. We took that and changed it a little bit and that became 'Days'."

Unfortunately the kind of magic created on the two Television albums could not last. Richard Lloyd had personal problems as well as ego conflicts in the band, and Tom became disillusioned with the drum sound of Billy Ficca. A bust-up was unavoidable but the outcome hasn't been easy for Tom. His solo album was completely misunderstood by the L.A. staff of Elektra Records, partly explaining the LP's poor sales, and Verlaine had to spend many months battling to change labels. a new deal now seems likely with Warner Brothers, but nothing has been finalized. Then there's the matter of finding a new second lead guitar player, and that's a Catch-22 situation in itself. "If a guy's great he wants to play everything himself; he has his own vision," Tom explains. "And if he's not great then who wants to play with him? It's so hard to find someone who's talented and has the right attitude."

For now, Verlaine is writing lots of new songs and seeking out fresh sidemen. It should hardly come as a surprise that he claims much of his new work is very romantic. While so many other guitar "heroes" offer a shallow macho strut, Verlaine has long been delivering the depth and passion that befits a true musical hero. True, this has yet to win over the masses, but Verlaine, like his work, always emphasizes the ideal. To him art should always be a "higher reflection of life." You can almost hear his crystalline guitar work in "Venus De Milo" when he says: "how high you set your sights is a lot how your life is going to turn out." ■

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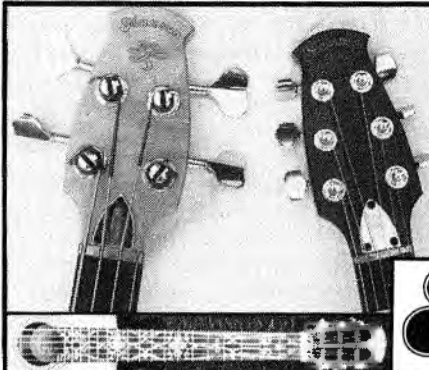
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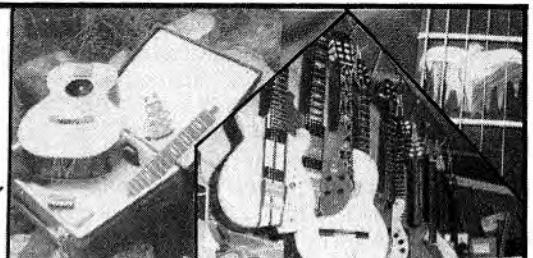
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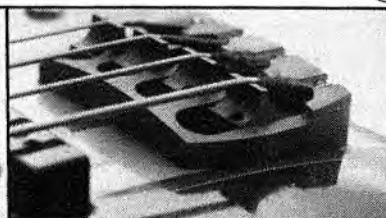
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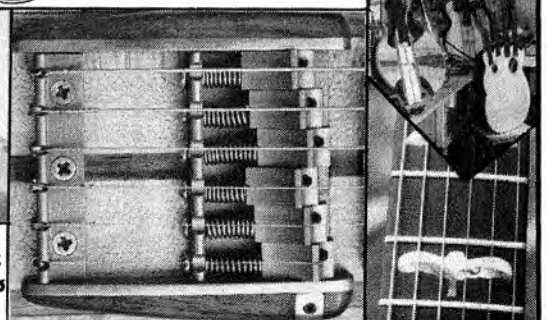
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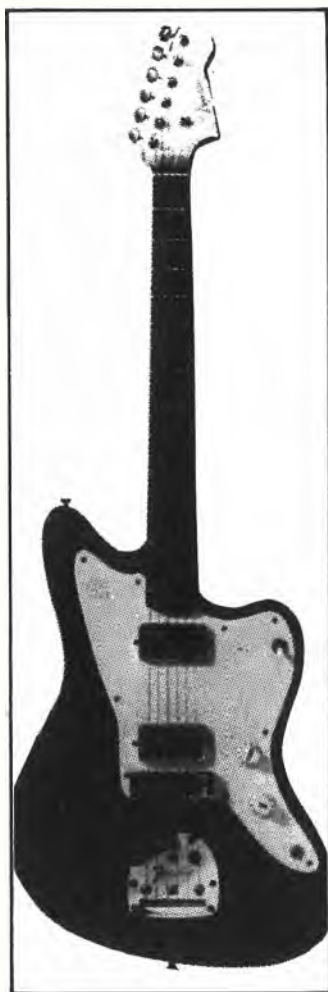
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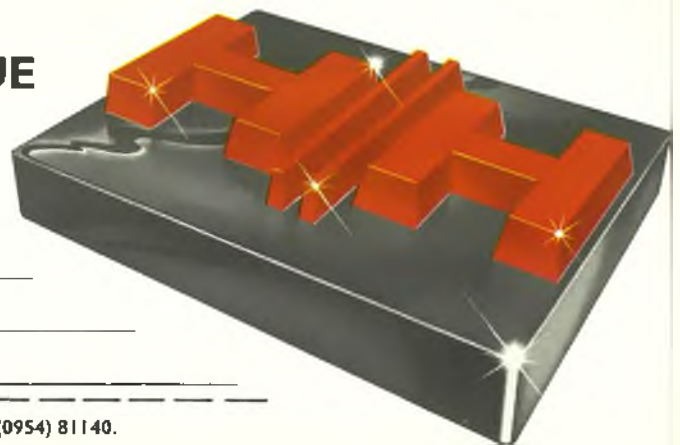
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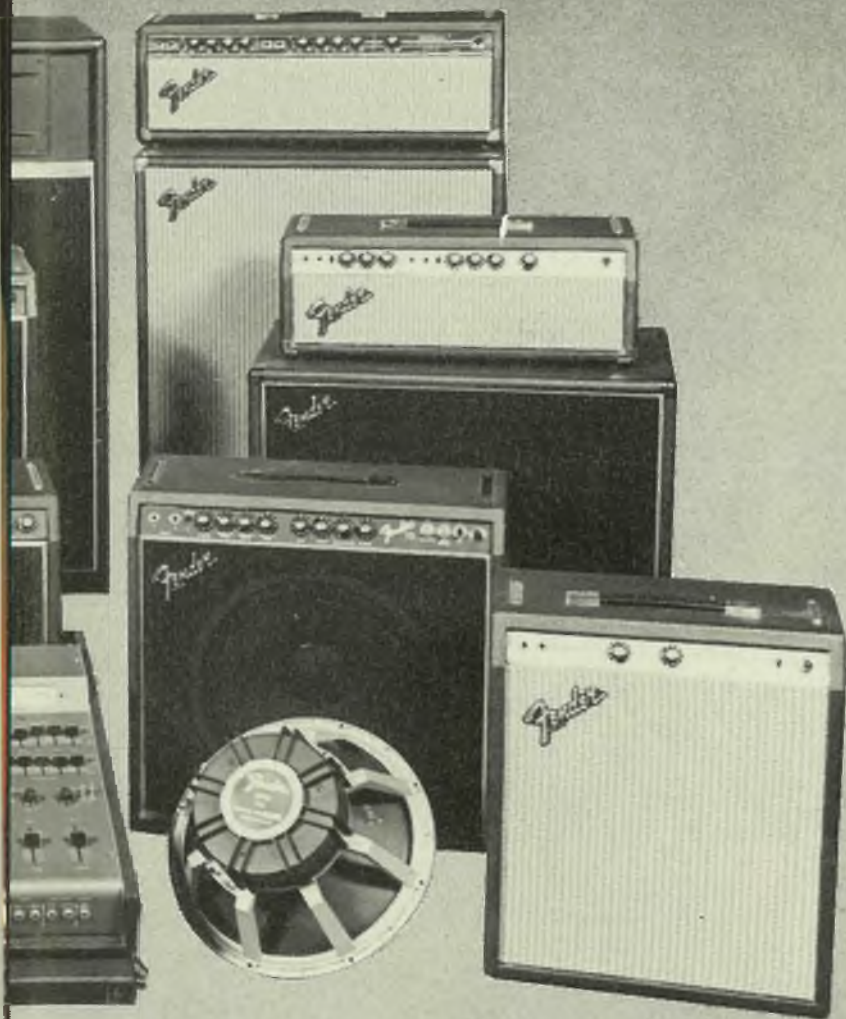
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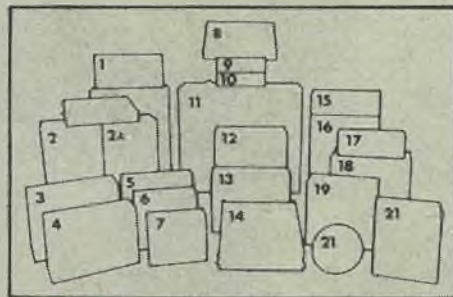
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The MXR Micro Amp was designed to preserve the full bandwidth produced by any instrument and pickup, (freq. resp. 12Hz-25kHz) without adding any coloration of its own. Using the Micro Amp, you control how your sound is modified, if at all. Your sounds' tonal qualities are not predetermined by the effects of pickup loading. If you are currently using another preamp in conjunction with your instrument's pickups, the MXR Micro Amp will perform better with more transparency and less noise.

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nce upon a time, there was a young, handsome record producer. Everything he touched turned to gold and so he was in great demand all over London. Still, he was not a happy man. "Surely," he said to himself, "there must be more to life than spending hours in dingy studios, only to emerge into the bustle of busy London Traffic to go to yet another noisy inn for a pint of flat ale."



So, one day, he cancelled all his appointments, climbed into his gold Rolls Royce, and went for

a drive in the country. (Only not too far, you understand, what with the price of petrol.)

In the country, he met a farmer. As he passed the time of day with him, he remarked how nice it would be if there was a recording studio amidst the fields and woods instead of in the smoke and noise of the city.

"Well, young man," said the farmer. "You're in luck. I hear tell there's a cracking studio down yonder, in Dorking." Before you could say 'double platinum' the producer had leapt into his car and found this wondrous studio, under the sign of a huge strawberry.

There he met Keith, Steve and Angela who showed him the priceless

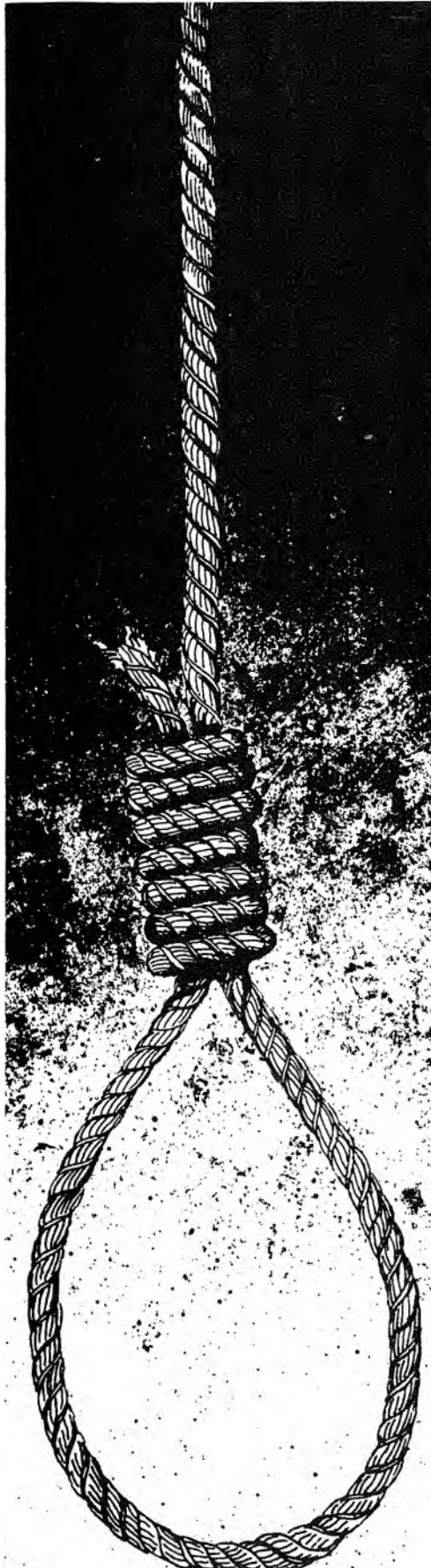
Eastlake control room, the natural echo chambers and many other wonders, including the rooms for entertainment and the fine apartments with rich and exotic furnishings. The producer was overjoyed, and soon many other people got to hear of the Strawberry in the country and how convenient and pleasant it was.



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*(Also see Studio of the Month feature.)

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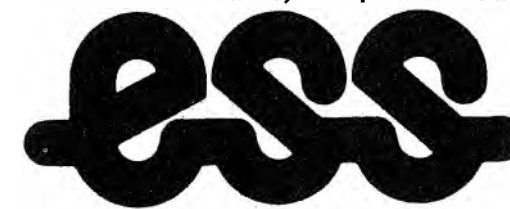
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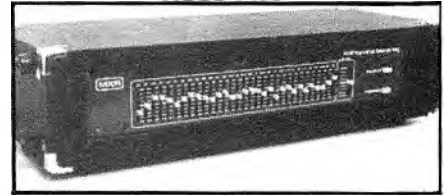
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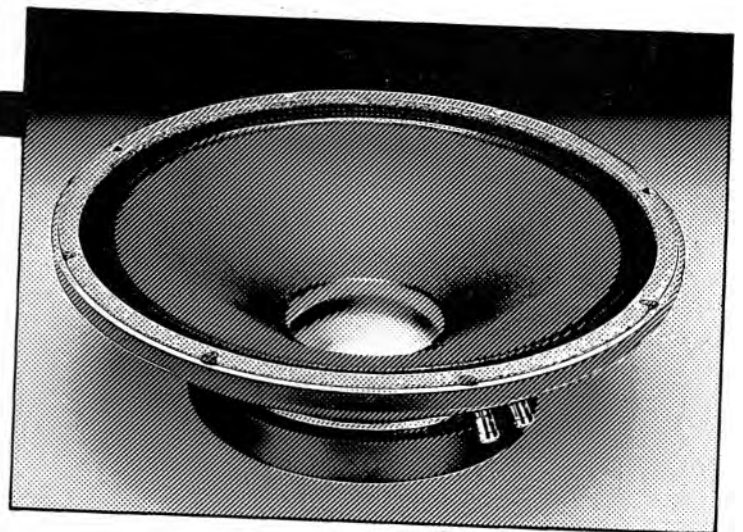
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Exclusive Insight
The Floyd at Earls Court

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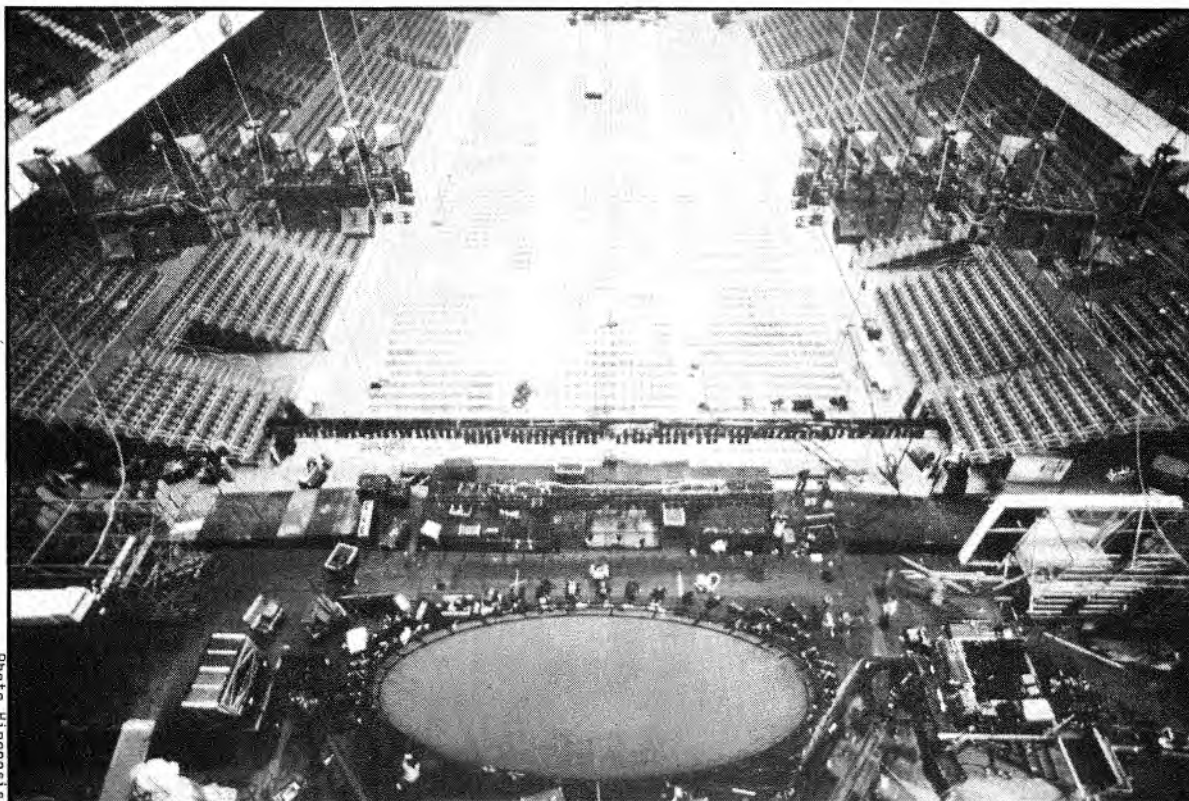


Photo: H. Dignostis.

PINK FLOYD

Another Brick In The Wall

Venue: Earls Court

Hire Company:

Britannia Row, London

Not so much a rock concert — more a theatrical experience is how I would describe this incredible production which played to six capacity audiences of 10,000 plus in Earls Court during early August. Although grossly overplayed as an adjective, incredible is about the only word which adequately describes that which took place.

The show opened with a large scale radio controlled model of a Messerschmidt aeroplane making a circuit of the concert hall spitting venom at a bewildered audience to the accompaniment of some 106 decibels of quadrophonic engine sound effects while

batteries of searchlights swept the night sky (or was it the roof of Earls Court?) for enemy aircraft. As the show got underway, gigantic marionettes of schoolmasters and other fantastic and evil looking creations dangled from the roof and made their painfully slow way across the hall with the schoolmaster brandishing his cane all the way.

While all this was going on and while Floyd played through their first 50 minute set, armies of roadies were to be seen carrying huge bricks onto the stage, with which they proceeded to build a gigantic wall, some 10 metres high by the full width of Earls Court, right across the stage actually between the band and the audience. By the end of the first half, the band were literally completely walled in leaving just this huge blank wall to oc-

cupy the attentive gaze of the audience!

The second half opened with the band still playing behind this wall while the wall itself was used as a screen for three 35mm film projectors to throw up the most incredible cartoons which included the expected armies of marching hammers and children being put into a mincer and turned into sausage meat by the gleeful schoolmaster. Most of the second set was occupied with these films, which were superbly imaginative and brilliantly executed.

About half way through, the band re-appeared in front of the wall, where a second set of equipment and instruments had been set up in readiness and continued to play — still with projected effects onto the wall, until eventually, with an almighty rumbling and roaring

and flashing of lights, the wall collapsed into a smoking, smouldering heap of dust and rubble all over the stage and the show was over. As I said — incredible!

Equally incredible was the technical set-up on which the entire show hinged, not least of which was just about the largest and most sophisticated sound system I have ever seen anywhere, and it is difficult to know quite where to start to describe it. Perhaps I had better start with an explanation of the basic set-up in general terms before we start to examine the system in any detail.

Basically, there were four independent sound systems, the stage monitor or foldback system, the main sound reinforcement system and a quadrophonic installation for three dimensional sound effects. In addition to this, was a

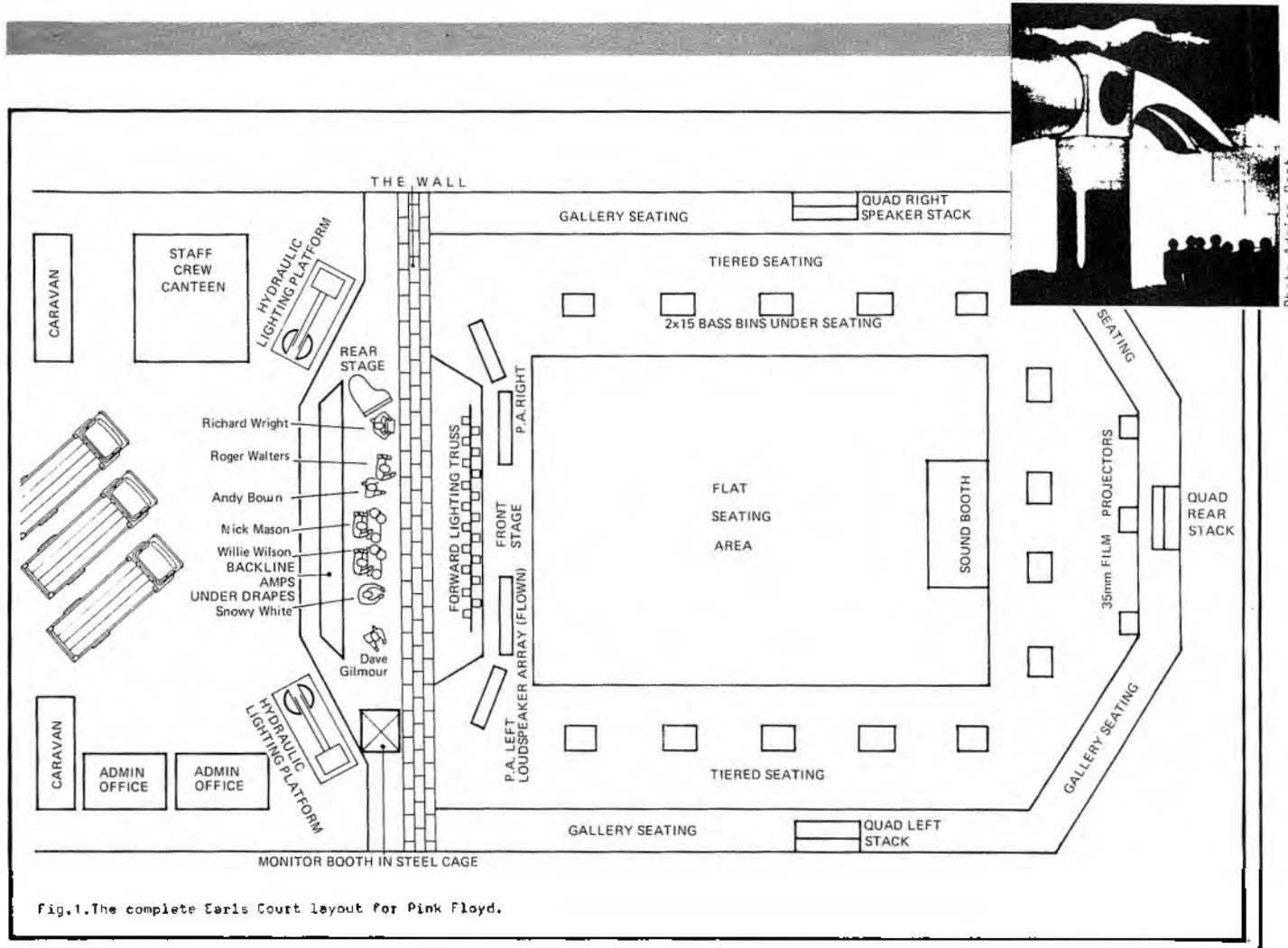


Photo Adrian Boot.

Fig.1. The complete Earls Court layout for Pink Floyd.

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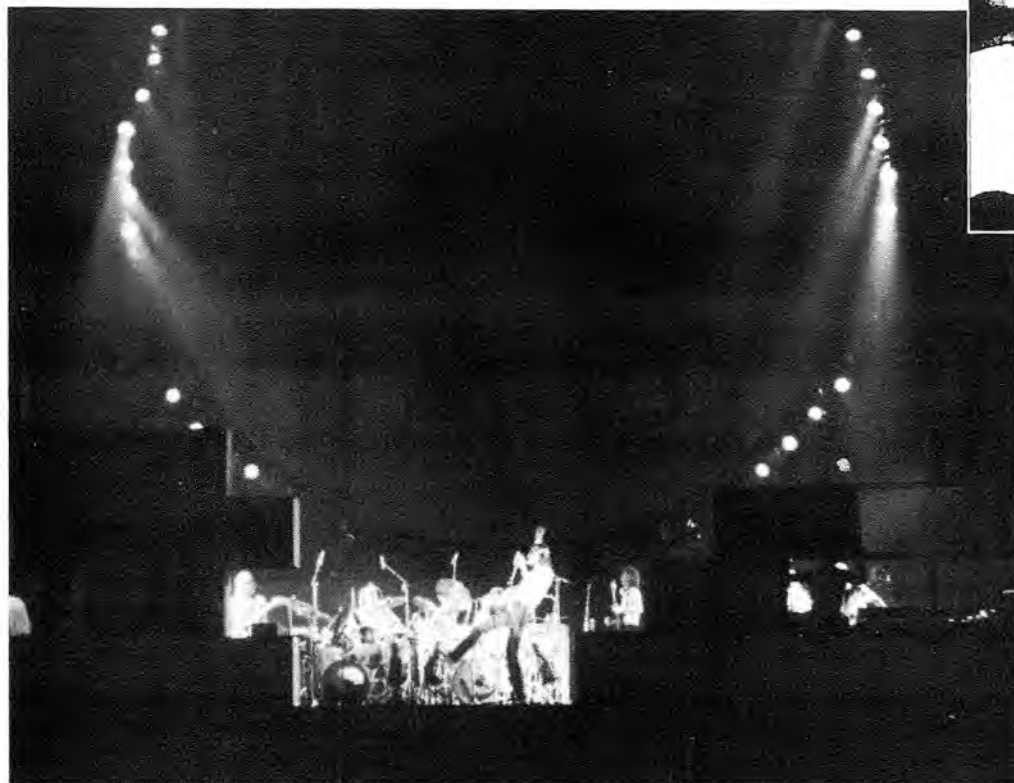
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IM-E





12 racks, each about one metre high, full of auxiliary equipment of the types described above.

In addition to all that, there was a whole bay of tape equipment comprising a Revox B77 to replay two-track backing tracks and sound effects, a Brenell eight track used primarily for replay of the explosion sound effects in quad as the wall collapsed at the end of the show and it also doubled as a spare in case of failure of one of the other machines. An Otari eight track console machine was used for quadrophonic sound effects for most of the show, which also provided click tracks and synchronising pulses to cue in the band when pre-recorded quadrophonic effects were being used. A Soundcraft eight track which besides doing much the same as the Otari during most of the show, was also used in conjunction with a Magnalink Synchroniser, to provide quadrophonic soundtracks and synchronising pulses for the three 35mm cine projectors, so in effect, the Soundcraft, with the Magnalink unit, provided the "brain" behind the amazing cartoon projection system on all three screens simultaneously.

A fifth machine, a Studer 852, was used to make a two-track stereo recording of the show at 19cm/sec (7½ips) from a pair of Neumann U-87's mounted high up over the audience at the back of the stalls.

Equally gross was the loudspeaker system. The main sound reinforcement system comprised four trusses flown very high overhead in a kind of arc formation. Figure 2 shows a typical array as mounted on each truss, but the precise location and angle of the midrange and high frequency horns varied between the trusses so as to provide a completely uniform coverage of the auditorium from the front.

Each truss carried six Altec 817 low frequency bins fitted with Gauss 38cm (15") drivers, six or seven Altec Manta Ray bi-radial horns fitted mainly with Altec 291 compression

low frequency reinforcement system comprising a large number of bass bins concealed beneath the tiered seating stands all round the auditorium, and this was capable of being used in conjunction with either the main sound system or with the quad system as and when required. Fig. 1 shows a general layout of the auditorium and stage areas with the loudspeaker positions marked on.

The driving end of the sound reinforcement and quad systems was quite mindblowing to anyone really into sound systems. It occupied a control station that must have been at least eight metres deep by 12 metres wide (approximately 25ft by 40ft) at the back of the stall seating area which was literally full of equipment and required a crew of about six engineers to operate it!

The whole front width was occupied with mixing consoles giving a total system capability of 116 input channels mixing down into eight stereo sub-groups and six quadrophonic sub-groups, which in turn mixed down into a single quad master feeding the quadrophonic effects system and a single stereo master feeding the main PA. These desks were all manufactured by Midas and the installation was made up of three large desks, one of which was in fact in three sections.

Floyd's own custom built Midas is a 40-channel into

eight stereo and six quad subs into quad and stereo masters and comes as two 20-channel input sections and the incredible master section. However, one of the 20-channel input sections was lost in the Ally Pally fire disaster and had been replaced by a standard Midas 32/8/2 desk which had been extensively modified by the addition of elaborate routing circuits so that the unit could interface with Floyd's eight stereo/stereo and six quad/quad master section. In addition to this main desk — which in effect had 52-channels, Floyd were also using a standard Midas 32/8/2 desk on which the mikes of all four drum kits were mixed, and two Midas 16-channel extender boards to make up the 116 channels.

All these desks were routed through the main Floyd desk master section and in order to provide control of routing of all five consoles at the central master section position, all output groups and sub-groups of all desks were routed through a whole rack of Aphex voltage controlled amplifiers (VCA's for short) which were remotely controlled from a bank of routing switches added to the Floyd master section. This meant that any group or sub-group of any desk could be routed to any of the mixing busses of the main Floyd desk and therefore fed into any one or any combination of the eight stereo and six

quadrophonic submixes or direct into the stereo or quad main groups.

In association with this amazing array of consoles was rack upon rack of auxiliary signal processing units, most of which were patched into individual channels rather than being used on the various auxiliary sends from the desks. For example, most of the drum kit mikes were fed through either parametric or sweep equalisers of various types and also through noise gates. All vocals, bass guitar, and various of the keyboard instruments were fed through limiters — usually Audio & Design Scamp modules, UREI limiting amplifiers, or DBX 160's.

The special effects units in use — some on auxiliary sends, some patched to individual channels, included two Eventide H910 Harmonisers, an AMS DMX 15/80 digital delay, a Klark Teknik DN70 digital delay with DN71 control unit, a Klark Teknik DN34 Analogue Time Processor, three Lexicon 102 digital delays and a Lexicon 224 Digital Reverb unit. (My article in last month's issue on the Eventide Harmonisers may give some idea of the use and application of these digital delay units and time processors in general — just in case you are totally confused by that formidable list of goodies!) I would hazard a guess that there were at least

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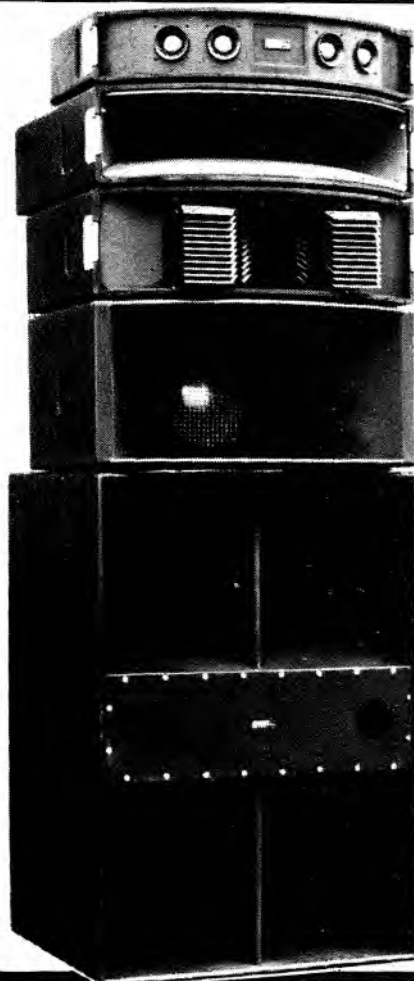
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drivers, a vertical line of three smaller radial horns, and either four or five clusters of small Altec 903 high frequency horns in groups of four. The crossover frequencies were 800Hz and 7.5kHz, as due to the outstanding directional control of the Altec Manta Ray horns, a single driver is used to handle the whole of the range between 800Hz and 7.5kHz, thereby permitting a three-way rather than four or five way system to be used.

The system was powered by a combination of Phase Linear 700B's and Altec 9440A's, which were in racks underneath the stage and coupled to the loudspeaker trusses by very heavy duty multiway cables. Brooke Siran Systems crossovers with Limiters and Klark Tekniks 27-band graphic equalisers were used.

The loudspeaker systems for the quad left, right and rear channels were positioned as shown in Fig. 1 and located very high up in the upper seating gallery. The front channel of the quad system was split equally between the left and right main loudspeaker arrays so as to give a central source image. Each of the three separate quad stacks comprised eight Court Acoustics 2x15 bins fitted with JBL K140 drivers, 9 Court Acoustics 2x12 midrange bins fitted with JBL K120 units, four JBL 2355 radial horns and four JBL 2390 crinkle plate lenses, all fitted with JBL 2441 compression drive units, and two clusters of four JBL 2402 bullet high frequency units. Crossover was four-way active using a Brook Siran systems crossover unit with Limiters and Phase Linear 700B and Altec 9440A power amps in racks right behind each stack. Fig. 3 gives some idea of the scale of each stack.

I remember thinking as the show started and that plane roared overhead, that there is no way that the incredibly high levels of pure low frequency sound from the model's engines were being produced in an auditorium of this size by just 24 Altec 2x15 bins, or for that matter, by the eight Court bins of each quad stack. The

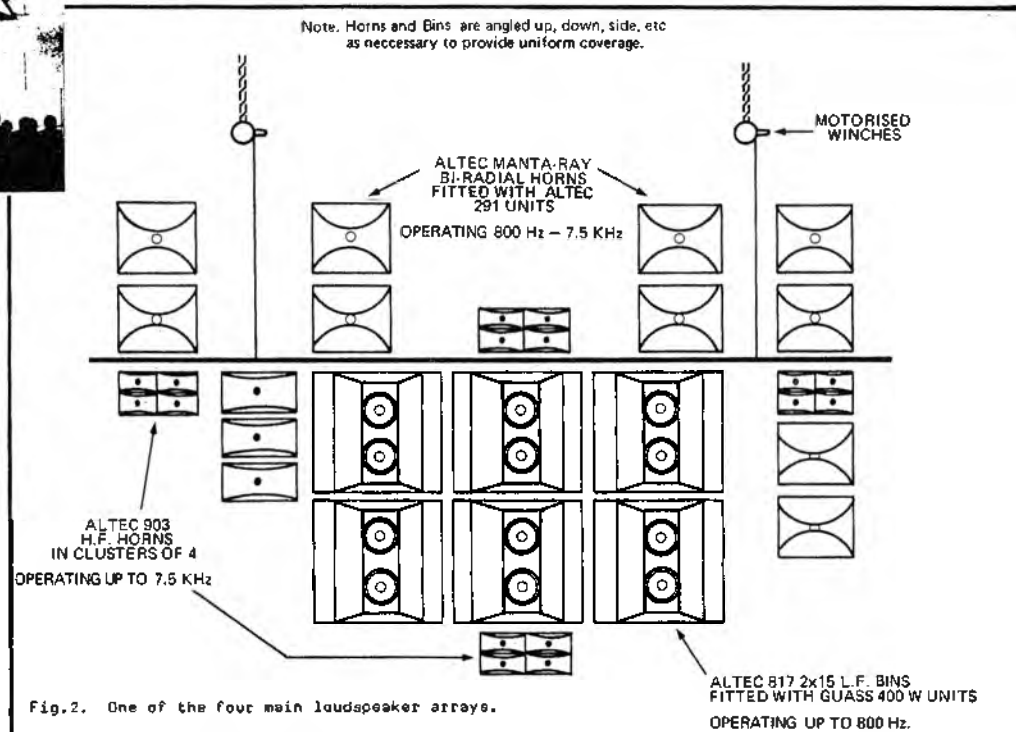
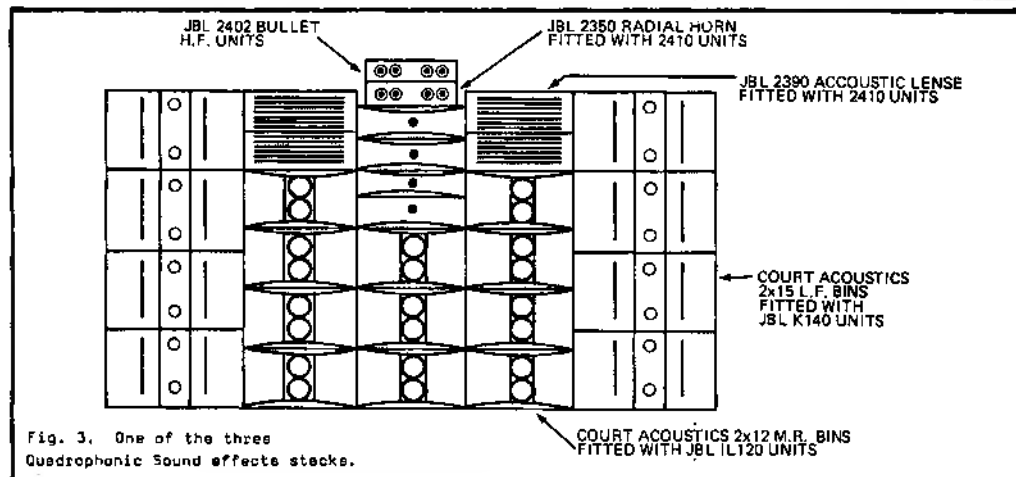


Fig. 2. One of the four main loudspeaker arrays.



same observation applied to the kick drum sound and to the synthesizer bass sounds. It would also have applied to the roaring that accompanied the collapse of the wall at the end of the show had I not by that time have sussed out what was going on.

It turned out that all the fundamental low frequency sounds of the type I have mentioned were not only fed through the 24 Altecs flown on the four trusses, but also at certain times through all 24 Court Acoustics 2x15 bins in all three quad stacks, and through a further system of some 16 Altec 2x15 subwoofers each containing two Altec 421-8LF's which had been concealed underneath the tiered seating stands on three sides of the auditorium, giving therefore a total of some 64, 2x15 bins distributed all around the auditorium at the sound crew's disposal to

reproduce earth shaking low frequencies.

Of course, the ear is not sensitive to sound direction at low frequencies, so provided that the mids and highs continue to emanate from the appropriate stack to give the desired directional effect, the audience will only be aware of high levels of low frequency energy — not of the fact that it is literally creeping out from every nook and cranny in the building, and most likely, from under their very seats as well! Besides which, anyone who heard Stephen Court's demonstration at the Audio Engineering Society's convention in London last year, when he used a field recording of shell fire from a Centurion tank to put his 2x15 bin through its paces and brought down half the ceiling in the process, will be only too well aware as to what a Court Acoustics 2x15 bin can do!

The stage was set out in two halves, with a complete equipment line-up behind and in front of the wall, including separate monitor systems. Each monitor system comprised a Midas 24 into eight PR series monitor console feeding either Martin Audio LE300 or large Altec floor monitor loudspeakers or headphones to each member of the band. Unusually, there was no elaborate high level monitoring system for the drummers — just one of the Altec wedges.

Besides hearing the appropriate monitor mix of the rest of the band through the monitors, each member also received the pre-recorded backing tracks and sound effects from the tape machines as well as their click tracks for cuing in and synchronising. The entire monitor control facility was built into a steel framed enclosure with a strong wire mesh top so as to protect

the equipment and the monitor engineers from damage due to falling masonry when the wall collapsed.

Just to give some idea of the equipment used on stage by the band, I shall briefly run through the gear as used behind the wall on the main stage — from where most of the concert was actually performed. The equipment used in front of the wall was basically similar but scaled down somewhat to facilitate rapid erection and dismantling by the road crew during the show. All the backline loudspeaker systems and power amplifiers were concealed behind drapes.

Dave Gilmour:

Fender Strat, Les Paul Gold Top, Charwell customised Telecaster and Ovation electric/acoustic. The main amplifier was a Hiwatt Custom 100 feeding two WEM 4x12 cabinets, but was supplemented by an Alembic guitar pre-amp unit feeding two Yamaha Leslie type cabinets and also a Mesa Boogie combo. A whole host

of pedal effects units were in use, all assembled into a custom pedal board, but exactly what pedals there were, or how they were used I did not have time to establish. Dave was also using a Shafer guitar transmitter and receiver system to avoid the encumbrance of a guitar lead, and had another fine toy in a Roland Compurhythm unit. All the band had MXR digital delay units, and these were all interlinked and coupled to Dave Gilmour's master override unit so that all the DDL's could be synchronised to the same setting and delay the whole band together by exactly the same degree. Also, all the musicians had Conn Strobotuners.

Snowy White

Les Paul and various acoustics including Ovation 12-string fed through custom pedal board and Hiwatt/WEM system as Dave Gilmour, and Fender Dual Showman amp and cabinet. The only other obvious effects unit was the MXR DDL linked to Gilmour's master unit.

Roger Waters

Fender Precision bass and Ovation 6-string electric acoustic feeding via custom pedal board as Gilmour's into Alembic guitar pre-amp and two BGW 750C power amplifiers. The loudspeaker system comprised a Court Acoustics 2x15 LF bin, Court 2x12 MR cabinet and a JBL radial horn fitted with 2482 compression driver. Again, the linked in MXR DDL and Conn Strobotone unit.

Andy Bown

Fender Precision std. and fretless Precision feeding identical Olympic/BGW/Court/JBL 3-way active system as Roger Waters except for addition of another Shafer guitar transmitter/receiver system.

Richard Wright

Steinway concert grand piano (no Yamaha C70 electric grands for this guy!) two Prophet 5-string synths, ARP Quadra, Fender Rhodes and Wurlitzer electric pianos and Hammond C3 organ. Effects included Eventide H910 harmoniser, Roland Space-Echo

RE201 and the MXR DDL linked to Gilmour's master unit. This lot was DI'd into the PA and monitor system via a 12/4 desk and used two of the large Altec 2x12 + horn wedges on the monitor system as well as separate backline amplification.

Nick Mason

Fairly conventional Ludwig kit miked up with AKG D12 on kick drum, D202's on tomtoms, D224 on snare, Beyer M201 on hi-hat with M88's on everything else, and AKG C451's as overheads. There was no elaborate high level monitoring system as seems to be the trend for drummers these days — just basic Martin 1x15 wedge.

Willie Wilson

Second drum kit very similar to Nick Mason's with similar monitoring system.

The lighting system was surprisingly simple — but nevertheless extremely effective. Unlike current trends to cover the roof of the stage with as many trusses as possible and

Continued on page 117

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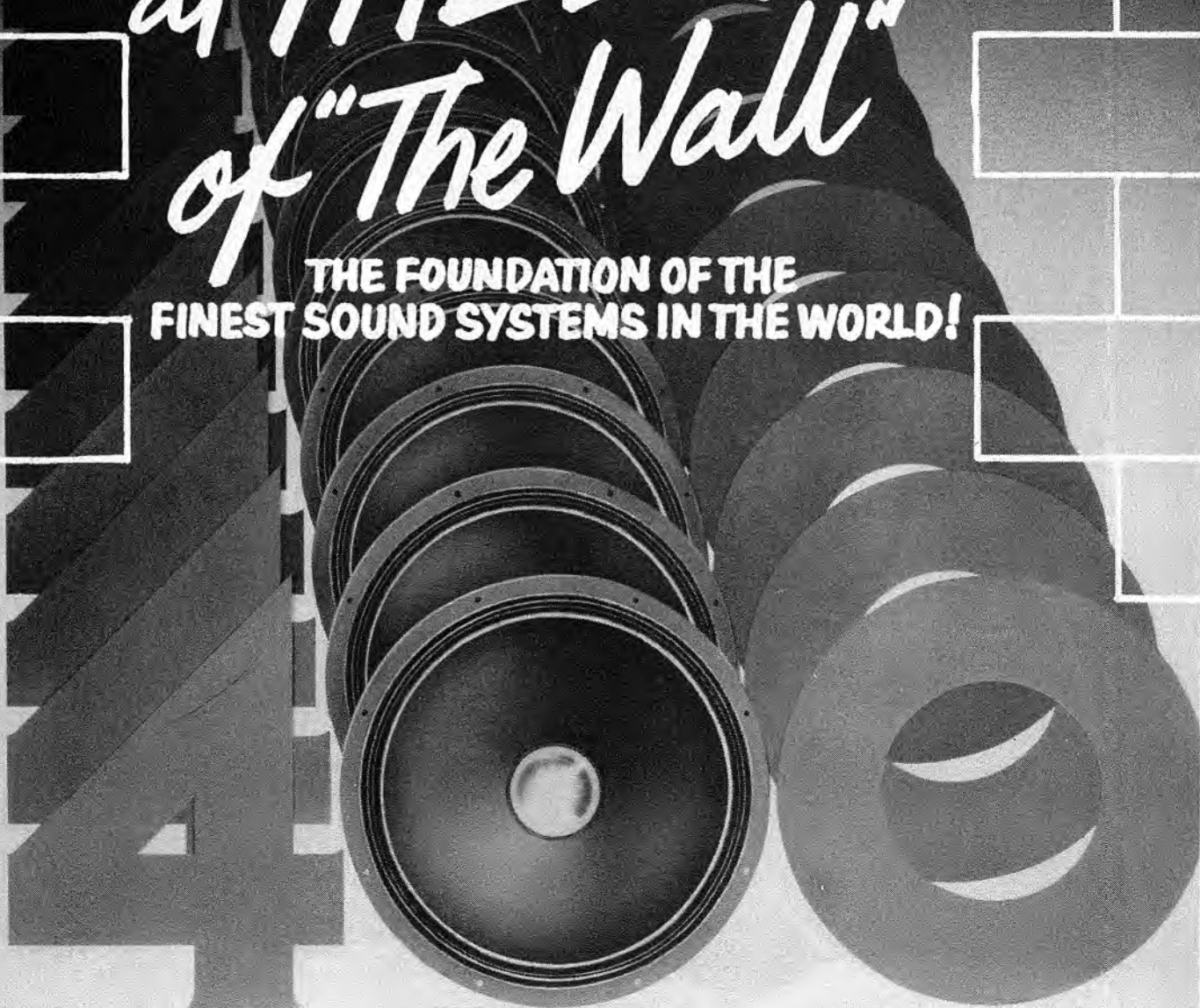
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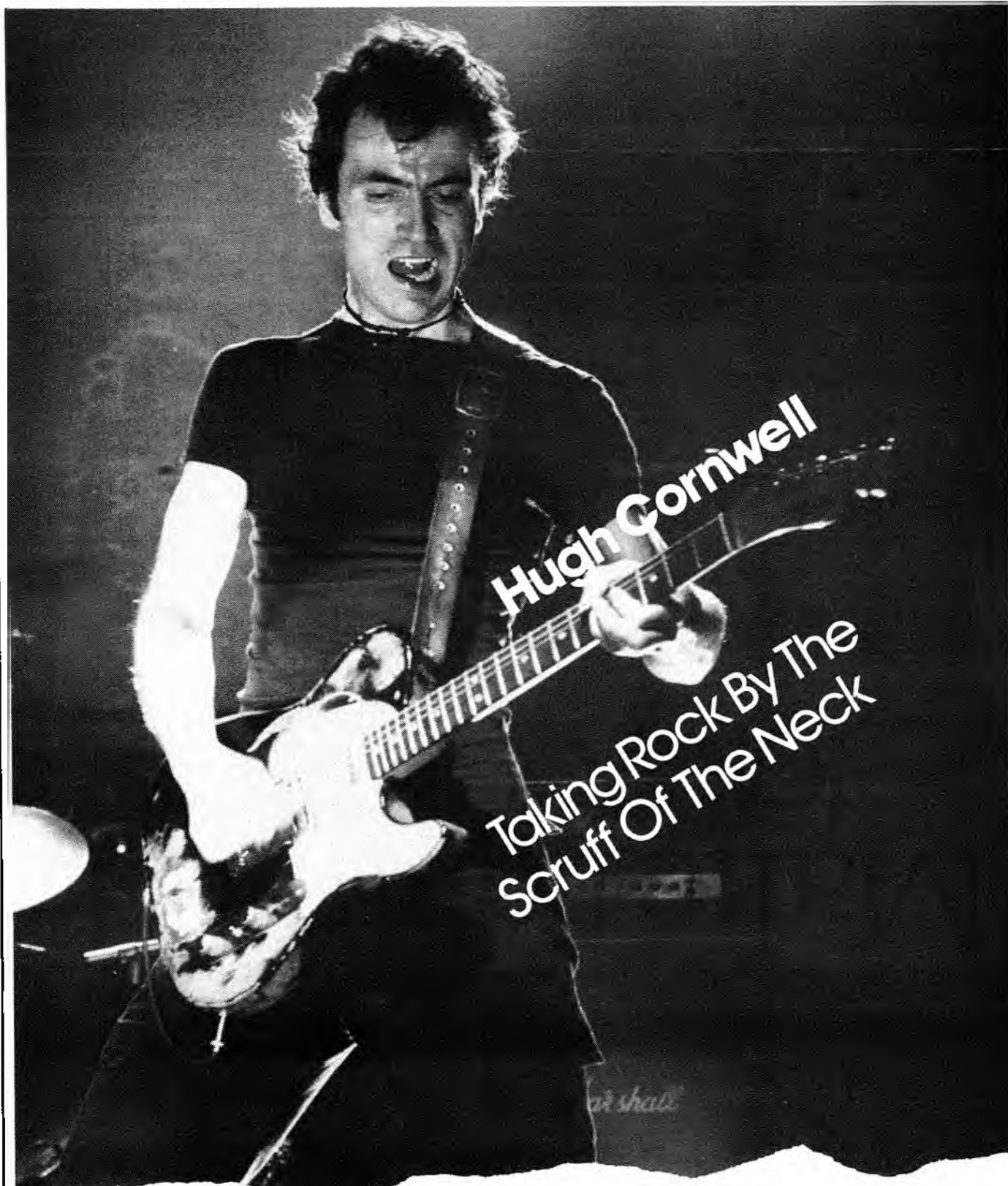
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Hugh Cornwell

Taking Rock By The
Scruff Of The Neck

Think about it. The Stranglers must be one of the most controversial bands in rock today. Hardly a week seems to go by when the Stranglers aren't making headlines about something or other. In and out of prison all over the world; inciting more riots than many bands play encores; beating up more journalists than there are keys on a typewriter! What price the rumpus of the Rolling Stones and the scandal of the Sex Pistols compared with all of that?

Of course we all know that newspaper stories shouldn't be taken at face value — especially when they're stories about rock groups —

but there is inevitably an element of truth in every tale. And if the Stranglers ARE one of the most controversial bands in the history of rock then they probably can't blame anybody but themselves for it. Between them, you see, the Stranglers — that's Hugh Cornwell, Jet Black, Jean Jacques Burnel and Dave Greenfield — rarely recognise the word 'compromise'. And what a lot of trouble that has landed them in over the years.

The Stranglers started out in 1974. That was six years ago and two years prior to the Sex Pistols and their systematic assault on public decency;

when Punk Rock was a term used to describe obscure American Beat groups of the middle Sixties and the New Wave meant Cinema and Jazz. In 1974 the Stranglers played their first gig in Guildford Surrey and were soon to become local villains. The gothic fury and sub-psychedelic throb of their early days plainly bewildered pub audiences expecting Seventies stereotypes like Glam Rock, Country Rock and Teenybop pop. To see the Stranglers live then was to experience Futureshock and on more than one occasion an audience walked out en masse in total disgust!

I leave you to work out what the

landlords and promoters had to say.

After two years of hard graft, however, building up a hard core fan following, the Stranglers secured their recording contract with United Artists in the Autumn of 1976. But they hardly had the respect of London's rockbiz clique. There were fights here and bans there and the Stranglers found themselves well branded as a group who refused to play the game.

And then their debut album 'Rattus Norvegicus' rocketted into the Top Twenty in April 1977 and 'Peaches' proved the first of many hit singles. But if the Stranglers were suddenly Big News they were hardly any more amenable. In fact they showed even less interest than before in the music business' caste system and its complicated protocol. And when they openly ridiculed all the fond theories of the Punk politicians they lost what few friends in the media they had left.

Which means that whenever something untoward happens to the Stranglers, sympathy is the last thing that comes to a reporter's mind as he sits at his typewriter. In fact most believe that the Stranglers only get what is coming to them and if they've ended up in prison twice in the last few months... well, they probably deserved it.

Hugh Cornwell doesn't see it quite that way. The Stranglers lead guitarist is often portrayed as a dour and taciturn individual with a touch of the George Orwells about him. He seems to take things very much in his stride and speaks in a dry, matter-of-fact, even dispassionate tone of voice that rarely shows signs of humour or emotion.

1980 has not been the easiest of years for Hugh Cornwell. First of all he was convicted under the Dangerous Drugs Act in the early Spring and sentenced to two months in London's Pentonville Prison.

"Pentonville is only a short-term prison. The maximum sentence there is six months so it's full of ordinary guys who haven't paid fines and alimony and such. But because it's only a short-term prison doesn't mean that it's any easier. In fact it's one of the toughest 'cos the longer you're in for the easier they make it for you. TV every night. Painting. Books. But if you're only in for a couple of months they don't let you do anything at all. It's the short sharp shock routine.

"Mind you, everybody ought to have a spell inside. It's like when you're healthy you don't appreciate your good health but when you're ill you suddenly do. I never appreciated my freedom until they put me away. It really hits you when they take all your clothes off you and you suddenly realise that you've got absolutely nothing left of your own. But after you've been in for a month or so you could be in for any length of time. It sort of doesn't matter any more."

Prison in France was something altogether different. Almost as soon as Cornwell was released in Britain the

Stranglers were all arrested in Nice. They quit the stage after the third power failure at the University there and the crowd went berserk, causing thousands of pounds worth of damage. The local authorities claim this was a direct result of words spoken by the band, but the first the Stranglers knew of the riot was when the police burst into their hotel and bundled them off to the local jail.

"It was all a bit like 'Midnight Express' to begin with because none of us had the faintest idea what was happening. The police were very brutal and didn't let us see a lawyer for days. We honestly thought we might be locked up for months and no one would know where we were. It was really quite frightening. But after a couple of days they transferred us to a proper prison and then we knew it would only be a matter of time before they let us out. But I can't feel guilty about it. I didn't feel like we'd committed any crime. It was all a big misunderstanding really. We said nothing more than we've said before in similar situations. It could have happened anywhere at any time and it could just as easily happen again. I mean, you go out of your way to put on the best possible show like we do and then the power keeps going off because the guys running the gig don't have the faintest idea what they're doing... you're bound to say something about it, aren't you? You're bound to say what you think is right for the moment. You never think about the consequences."



"Everybody
ought to have
a spell inside"

When he chooses Hugh Cornwell is certainly one of rock's more lucid and outspoken personalities but what is too frequently forgotten is that he is also one of the most inventive and skilful guitarists to emerge in the last five years. Initially he was overshadowed in the Stranglers by Dave Greenfield's immediately distinctive keyboards. But Cornwell's playing has matured quite remarkably over the last couple of years and his work on the Strangler's most recent album *The Raven* is quite stunning in its precision and imagination. Hugh Cornwell is a craftsman far in advance of the majority of his peers.

Needless to say he did not learn to play overnight!

"I must have been about 13 when I first got a guitar. My brother gave it to me. It was an old Spanish acoustic, I think, but it got stolen years ago. I learned like everybody else does, playing along with what was on the radio. The first things I learned were Eddie Cochran's 'C'Mon Everybody' and some Hank Marvin stuff with the Shadows. There must be a whole generation who learned how to play 'Apache'."

If you listen to the Stranglers either live or on record it won't surprise you that Hugh Cornwell cites Hank Marvin as a major influence. Long, fluid, melancholic guitar themes are at the cornerstone of classic Stranglers' songs like 'Down In The Sewer', 'School Mam' and 'Toiler On The Sea' and they're all pure Hank Marvin — part of a British rock tradition that stretches back 20 odds years to 'The Frightened City' and 'Man Of Mystery'. The more psychedelic influences on Cornwell's style — the perverted innocence of Arthur Lee's Love, the eerie romance of the Doors and the metallic discordant crossrhythms of Captain Beefheart's Magic Band — were all to come later, after the teenage Cornwell had learned to R'n'B it with the rest of the nation's youth during the Beat Boom of 1964.

"My first group was at school in Muswell Hill. Richard Thompson was in it, before he went 'folk' and started Fairport Convention. So was Nick Jones who now runs Faulty Products for Miles Copeland. We went through a lot of different names. In the end we called ourselves the Germs which is funny really 'cos there's a band just come out in the States called the Germs. We weren't writing our own stuff, we were doing cover versions of Rolling Stones numbers and these obscure Blues things that Richard would dig up. He was really good in those days. Much more of a rocker than he is now."

But the Germs folded as exams loomed on the horizon and Hugh Cornwell spent the next few years in pursuit of Higher Education. He remembers a little busking and folk club playing while he was reading Bio-Chemistry at Bristol University but little else of musical note until, upon graduation, he was offered a research post in Sweden. There his gradual slide into Stranglerdom began.

Experimenting on rats during the day he joined a Swedish band called Johnny Sox and played by night. It was an arrangement that could not last. After an argument with his employers about some missing chemicals Hugh Cornwell decided that enough was enough and, with a year of gigs already under his belt, packed his bags and headed back to Blighty with Johnny Sox in tow.

"That was in 1973 and we did three gigs which were all in London. We played the Brecknock, the Cock in Kilburn and the Lord Nelson on the Holloway Road. I remember the night we did the Lord Nelson because Ian

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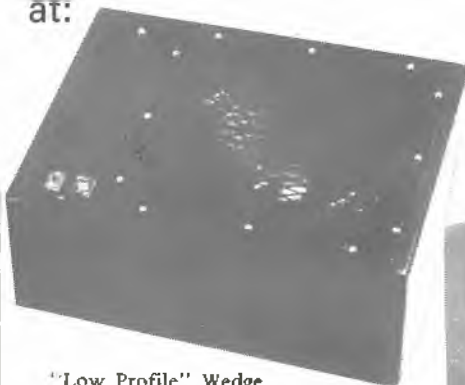
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Dury and Kilburn and the High Roads were on round the corner at the Hope and Anchor. I thought nobody would come to see us at all but we got a fair crowd in until there was a bomb scare and the police cleared the place out halfway through the set."

The shape of things to come? Johnny Sox must have thought so because they broke up soon after leaving Hugh Cornwell and replacement drummer Jet Black sitting in a house in Chiddingfold, near Guildford, thinking about the future. But then it was only a matter of time before Jean Jacques Burnel and Dave Greenfield appeared and the Stranglers were ready to take on the world.

"I still use the same guitar I was playing then, you know. It's an old 1965 Telecaster and it's my favourite guitar. It's got an extra pickup on it which is a De Armond version of a Gibson. It's wired so that I can use it by itself or in combination with either of the other two. It was like that when I got it. This guy in Sweden sold it to me for £120 eight years ago. That's my black Tele. I've got another one that's a lot newer which I use as a spare. Funnily enough I sweat a lot when I'm on stage and the pickups on my guitars get so rusty I have to keep replacing them. Recently I discovered that genuine Fender pickups are now manufactured in Japan while there's a company in America making copies! That's a total reversal of how it used to be, but the funniest part is that the American copies are now the best! I found that out when I could only get a copy pickup for my spare guitar and it turned out to be twice as powerful as the standard one."

Although he swears by Fender Telecasters, Hugh Cornwell has a taste for the more exotic guitar too. Pride of place in his collection goes to a DanElectro shortscale bass, originally made for the Sears and Roebuck Mail Order House in America in the Sixties. You can hear it on 'Dead Loss Angeles' from the 'Raven' album.

"I bought it from Red Rhodes' guitar shop in LA. He didn't want to sell it to me to begin with. Red is very possessive about his guitars and he'll only let them go to people whom he feels will give them a good home and look after them properly. I got another DanElectro guitar from him called a Silvertone which is a six string with two pickups on it and is even stranger than the bass. It was made for Sears and Roebuck too. They used to market them in the Sixties with a case with a little amplifier built into the lid. So if you sent away your fifty dollars or whatever it was, you'd get a guitar, a case and an amplifier. I use the Silvertone mostly for playing at home. I've tried it a couple of times in the studio and I can get a very nice bell tone out of it. But other than that it's pretty limited.

"I used to use an AC30 in the early days but when we began to play bigger places it really wasn't powerful enough. I read that you could link



them up with each other but I tried that and it wasn't very satisfactory. So I got a Marshall amp and cabinet and that proved to be very strange indeed. I mean, the tone and the power was exactly what I was looking for but it didn't throw the sound out much further than a couple of feet. I move around a lot on stage, I like to be mobile, in fact that's why I don't use effects pedals because they tie you down too much to one place. Anyway, with the Marshall I used to find these huge dead areas on stage where I couldn't hear a thing I was playing! So naturally I used to turn up even louder until Sheds, our soundman, started to complain that I was doing his ears in and he just couldn't mix me properly because of the volume. Now I've got a Burman valve combo, the PRO2000 and I'm really happy with it. It's a hundred watt job and it throws the sound out for about six foot in every direction. So between it and the monitor speakers I can prowl about wherever I like and never miss anything.

"It's so versatile too. It has three gain controls on it instead of your normal volume control. All three operate on different stages of the amplifier. So according to how you set them you can get exactly the amount of distortion and sustain you want at any volume. That's especially useful on tour when you have to compensate for the sound characteristics of all these different halls. And it's great in the studio as well, 'cos you can get just about any tone out of it you want."

When this interview took place Hugh Cornwell was relaxing mid-tour and mindful of the finishing touches which were still to be put to the Stranglers' sixth album, tentatively entitled *Love*. Production had hiccupped all along the way as both Cornwell's prison sentence and then

the fracas in Nice had disrupted the Stranglers' carefully worked out schedule. He had the look of a man clouded with concern if not exactly with worry.

"Our other albums have invariably been recorded all in one place, or else recorded in one place and mixed in another. So much has been going on we've had to record this one in so many different studios every song will probably end up sounding really different. It wasn't a conscious decision on our part but this album will have been done in Paris, the Music Machine in Munich, Rome, Air, Pebble Beach in Worthing, Wessex, Eden and Startling which is Ringo Starr's studio in Ascot. Mostly we've been using Steve Churchyard to engineer, although occasionally he hasn't been available. But we've been producing ourselves.

"I'm very work conscious at the moment and it's so much more fulfilling producing ourselves than having an outside guy do it. We know what it wants to sound like and I think we're getting pretty close. It's easily the most psychedelic thing the Stranglers' have ever done. We've had to remix a couple of tracks, which is good. We didn't remix anything on *The Raven*, which was the first album, we produced without Martin Rushent, and I think in retrospect we should have done."

Well, I hope you get the mixes better than you did on your last single 'Who Wants The World'. I thought that was one of the best things the Stranglers have ever done, but it was so muddy.

"Really? Well, I don't know. I wasn't around when that was mixed. I was in the nick."

Hugh Cornwell cracked a rare wry smile.

D. W. Charles



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We won't tell you about all the Fender, Gibson, MM MUSIC MAN, Rickenbacker, Marshall, YAMAHA etc. etc. 'cos the Post Office can't handle it! But phone or come round for the BEST prices.

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Why there isn't a Westbury in Peter Haycock's guitar collection.

To the rock world, **Peter Haycock**, guitarist with the Climax Blues Band, is a skilful and imaginative player of international status.

So you can imagine our enthusiasm when we discovered that the guitar Peter uses for both studio and live work, was a Westbury. (a Custom II, gloss black actually), quite a modest guitar pricewise, for a musician of his standing.

So with almost indecent haste, we tracked him down and asked him over the phone if he'd tell us why he chose and used a Westbury.

And could we put it in an ad?

'Sure' he replied, 'as long as you mention the Climax Blues Band's new album coming out shortly on the Warner Brothers label!'

It was a deal, and the conversation went like this:

Peter, why Westbury?

I think because it's such a versatile guitar, yet so easy to use... I can still get a lot of widely differing sounds quickly.

You're obviously happy with the sound.

Yeah, it's great, as I said, it's very versatile... used with a variety of amps you can get anything from a screaming humbucker sound to a really slicing single coil sound.

I understand you collect guitars.

Yeah, right, I've got sixteen so far... including an ES355—a gift from the Marshall Tucker Band, a black Les Paul Custom and a Veleno which has a weird aluminium neck.

And yet you use the Westbury to the exclusion of the others?

Right, I've now got a room full of guitars, just collecting dust.

What about the old adage—you're not a guitarist till you've owned a Gibson?

It's nice to own one... I would say try a Westbury first... you'll be pleasantly surprised... you can, over the years, spend a lot of money trying to find the right guitar... starting with perhaps a second hand Fender... through the Les Pauls, 355's etc. You'd be far better off buying a versatile one like this, as they certainly aren't a lot of money. In fact I'd say that a Westbury is a short cut to finding the ideal guitar for stage and studio work.

Did you know the Westbury range starts at £135.00 including VAT?

Really? That's amazing, they look and perform more like £400 guitars.



Dear Rose-Morris. If what Peter says is anything to go by, Westbury seem to have a great range of guitars. Please send me the full story.

Name

Address

Rose-Morris & Co. Ltd.,
32-34, Gordon House Road,
London NW5 1NE
Tel: 01-267 5151

Rose-Morris
Westbury

GUITARCHECK

GUILD M80 CS £485 inc VAT

This is not the latest model of Guild electric: in fact it has been around for quite a while. It is one of my favourite solid guitars, and has been on the review list for over a year, but with the constant flow of new models from various companies shouting for attention I never seem to have got round to writing about it. Actually, I would rather just sit and play it, but I don't think my esteemed Editor would appreciate a nice picture in the middle of a blank white page. I tried calling it 'working white', but he didn't fancy that idea either: he says he wants words. So read on...



The M80CS has an ebony fingerboard, mahogany neck, arched-front mahogany body, two pickups, the usual controls, plus a master volume control. It is also remarkably heavy, considering that the body is not very large, and is cutaway on both sides of the neck almost up to top fret.

By the standards of some recent guitars, it may appear slightly old fashioned; it does not have active tone controls, or coil taps, or 24 frets, or a through-body neck construction. Electronic features are easy to describe on paper: quality is not. I suppose this M80 represents that increasingly rare item, the classic American rock guitar, but done very well. It does not have any electronic assistance, because it does not need any. It already has a nice smooth sustain and makes one of my ultimate guitar sounds all by itself. It is rather difficult to improve on a guitar like this; one can fit it with extended tone controls and other effects, until it is fully equipped to dance from Byker Hill to Walkershaw but that comes close to designing a *new* instrument, not improving the original one. A similar process converted an early Italian harpsichord into the modern grand piano, and I am not sure that was an improvement either.

Do not think that I am against electronic toys. Far from it: I have an automatic camera, and a pocket calculator, and a swept audio oscillator, and two of the more obscure and collectable guitar amps. They are all great fun and some of them do save me a considerable amount of time by doing simple repetitive jobs for me. But I also have, and use, one of the last of the classic, non battery-powered cameras, which will probably last for ever, and for which I can *make* spare parts, in the unlikely event of the manufacturers going out of business. My audio oscillator has a varying performance according to the temperature of the room, and my previous pocket calculator happily gave me an assortment of correct and false answers for several weeks, until it made a rather simple mistake and I guessed what it was up to. I now have an elderly *mechanical* calculating

machine which will either give the correct answer *or* jam up solid, and is therefore more reliable than its electronic children.

Perhaps you are beginning to understand my direction of thought. There is a certain purity of design and performance in a simple mechanical device which does a particular job very well and is not stretched to its limits, so that it can be advertised as doing something faster, or longer, or louder than its competitors. I think this Guild is one such simple, but highly refined device, and there are not many of them around these days.

There is no need for a rock guitar to be complicated, although many of them seem to be increasingly complicated. One can now buy almost any imaginable electronic sound effect, controlled noiselessly by electro-optic pedals or touch sensitive foot switches. Soon it will be possible to store an entire sequence of effects changes in an electronic memory, needing only minimal attention from the instrument player. So who needs electronics built into the guitar? It's fun and it sells guitars, but you don't *need* it, and you are not likely to need it in the near future.

Now a guitar with a built in 'radio mike' transmitter for cordless playing on stage, which would automatically recharge its batteries when plugged into a tune-up amp back-stage; that would be quite useful, but nobody *offers* you things like that. You can get the transmitter, but it is not in the guitar, and you have to remember to recharge it. It is not quite the same as the dream, you see, and until I can have electronics exactly the way I want it, I would rather not be troubled with looking after its needs.

Another very useful device would be a little box which would make a guitar with moderately good sustain, sound like a guitar with beautiful sustain, without needing the player to make any allowances or changes in technique. (And I don't mean a 'sustain box' because they sound like sustain boxes, not like beautiful guitars.) Until such a box is invented (and I don't think it is very likely) if you want a beautiful, smooth,

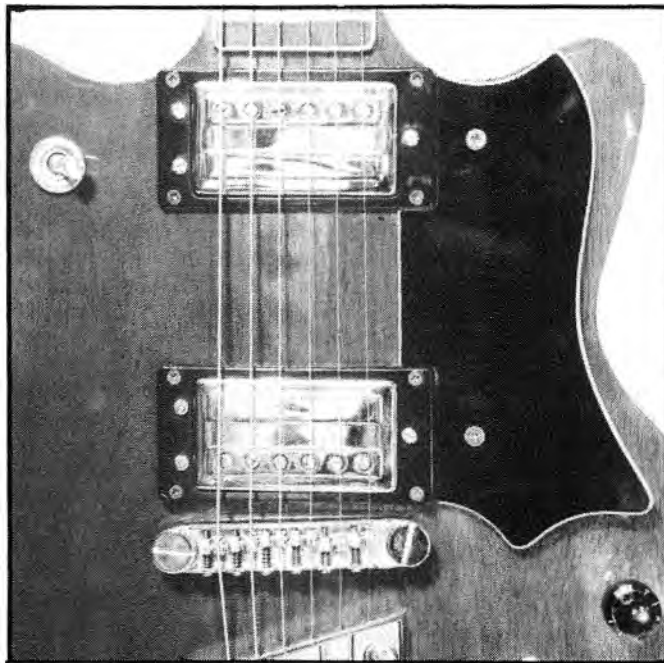
creamy, sustain, you are still going to need a beautiful, smooth, creamy, sustaining *guitar*, which brings us back to this Guild M80.

It has a slim and shallow neck up to a point level with the 13th fret, where the heel starts. By the time you reach the 16th fret, the heel is almost square and nearly the same width and depth as the bit of body remaining between the two cutaways. In other words, access to the highest frets is not too great when compared to the latest heel-less 'through-body' necks. On the other hand, it is quite possible to play on these frets without any real difficulty. It is mainly the *illusion* of a thick neck joint, because of the deep cutaways on each side.

Neck access at the back is similar to that on the Gibson Les Paul model, one of the better known classic American guitars. On comparing the M80 with a Strat another well-known classic, I thought access to the top frets was easier on the Strat, but then realised that the Strat has one fret less at the top: I think we should consider that one an equal match. However, if Guild could see their way to taking a little bit off the end of the body and another little bit off the heel... Meanwhile, I am quite happy to accept it as it is.

I am also willing to accept having only 22 frets, because I find the position of the fingerboard pickup for the best sound is roughly in the same position as the 24th fret, and you can't have them both. You may have different priorities, but personally, I think I would appreciate the best possible sound, more often than I would appreciate two more frets at the top end. (If you need the extra frets, Guild also make S300 and S60 ranges.)

The quality of the fingerboard ebony, inlays and fretting on this sample are adequate, but could be improved a bit. I have had this review instrument for some time and they may already have been improved. In particular I needed to stone a couple of frets level at the top of the neck, which is unusual in my experience of Guild electrics. Also, there are traces of red finishing lacquer in places, on the white body and edge bin-



dings. It is not really important, you can hardly see it, and it would need extensive re-finishing to remove it in a satisfactory way. I really do not think it sensible to go to all that trouble to remove a few wisps of red, but it does suggest that this instrument may have been finished off in a bit of a hurry: not really appropriate on one of the more expensive models.

The other point which I feel deserves attention, is the fitting of the bridge on this sample. This bridge leans over on the bass side, towards the pickup, apparently because the mounting bush is placed in the guitar front at an angle. Nothing seems to have been bent, and the bridge screws both operate smoothly and easily. I think someone has just drilled one of the holes over-size, or at an odd angle. The guitar works fine, and all the strings can still be adjusted to play in tune, but I think in the long term, I would be inclined to plug and re-drill the mounting hole in the body. (As the position of the hole is correct, it is only a half-hour job and will not leave any mark on the front of the guitar.)

The bridge on this sample is unusual in that it offers individual adjustment of string intonation and string *spacing*, but string height can only be adjusted from the main screws which raise and lower the entire bridge frame. I have had customers who wanted (say) a Strat bridge rebuilt to Gibson

string spacing, and it is quite an expensive job, so perhaps Guild should make a bit more of a fuss about the adjustable string spacing on some of their guitars. The parts for this bridge are not compatible with the common Japanese or American bridges and 'copy' bridges. However, I did once order some spare string rollers for a customer, and received them by return of post. As long as they can maintain that level of service, I don't care what bridge bits they use. Guild have a tradition of going their own way with bridges, and none of their designs have given me any trouble yet. (Incidentally, I saw a very solid

brass bridge on their new bass at the Frankfurt show.)

The pickups are standard Guild humbucking units, with adjustable pole pieces and three-point height and tilt adjustment. They produce the sort of sound which I like, and seem to be optimised for use with an average guitar lead. If you intend to use a buffer or pre-amp to drive exceptionally long guitar leads or to minimise electrical noise, it may still be a good idea to have a good quality 10-foot straight lead between the guitar and the buffer.

The controls are quite conventional except for the addition of a smaller knob controlling a master volume control. The wiring inside is not going to win any prizes for elegance, but it looks reliable and the cavity and the back plate are lined with copper foil shielding.

Conclusion

As I said at the beginning, one of my favourite solid guitars. It is good that Guild have new models, but I hope they don't stop making this one. In the light of recent through-neck guitars, this M80 might benefit from a little more wood trimmed off around the heel and neck-body joint, but not to the extent of affecting performance or long-term reliability.

This sample was made some time ago and the references to frets and finishing may not apply to any current production.

I find it interesting that the standard Guild humbuckers on this guitar do *not* sound noticeably quieter or less impressive than some more recent pickups, designed to produce a high output, or extended treble response. Perhaps Guild got it right first time.

Further information on Byker Hill and legendary equipment may be found on "The Young Tradition" on Transatlantic Records TRA142. A fine, and sadly long gone band. Please, does anyone have a tape of them singing "Bright Morning Star Arising." Quality of recording unimportant.

Stephen Delft

P.S. Our latest news is that there may soon be a new version of the MC 80 with active electronics - so look out for it around Christmas

Measurements on Guild M80CS

Serial No.: 127521
 Scale length: 628mm
 String spacing at bridge variable: set to 52mm
 String spacing at nut: 36mm
 Fingerboard width at nut: 42mm
 Depth of neck at fret 1: 20.5mm
 Depth of neck at fret 12: 21.5mm
 Depth of neck at fret 15: 33mm
 Heel begins around fret 13
 Action as supplied: Not Available
 Lowest recommended action (after light fret stoning and minor adjustments): 1.0mm treble/1.2mm Bass
 Frets on fingerboard: 22
 Typical body depth at edge: 48mm

Source: Stephen Delft

Distributor: Guild UK.

BASSCHECK

**ARIA
PRO II SB700
BASS
£289.70
inc VAT
Plus hard case**

The Japanese have definitely arrived as a major force to be reckoned with in the world electric guitar battlefield. The lessons learnt from the manufacturer of cheap copies of the leading American makes have been put to good use by companies like Ibanez and Yamaha, and they in turn have come up with some outstanding individual products of their own. The rapid acceptance of the absolutely amazing value that this "Aria Pro II" bass guitar range offers, signals warning bells of a possible "Pearl Harbour" threat to the long-standing dominance of American makes in the bass guitar section of the market.

A clever blend of some of the features displayed on top American hand built basses by Alembic and B.C. Rich appear to me to have been employed and how Aria manage it, at the price, is beyond me. The long, wickedly sharp, curved horns of the cutaways are very reminiscent of the B.C. Rich Bitch bass, as in the six position varitone switch found on the leader of this range — the S.B.1000 (reviewed in these pages some months ago). The double octave, long scale, one piece neck and central body is common to both aforementioned manufacturers, with the five ply laminations of maple and walnut favouring the Alembic influence. The moulded type MB-1 pickup, the central knobs and toggle switch on this SB700, all closely resemble the Alembic counterparts, and when the active circuitry is employed, similar tonal characteristics and frequency boosts are selectable.

I was lucky enough to have this particular bass in my

possession for over two months, and was able to test it in many different situations in terms of musical style, venue and amp coupling. To indicate the extreme diverse circumstances in which I used the instrument, and hopefully enhance the credibility and validity of this review, I will list them thus: (1) Kinks rehearsal both at Konk Studios and at Shepperton, on one of their large sound stages. In the studio, through a HiWatt stack, and for the full-blown, full rig rehearsal at Shepperton my usual concert and Acoustic rigs, plus direct injection into the ML PA system we use. (2) Small club gigs "depping" on bass with an eight piece R&B band "The G.B. Blues Co. with Root Jackson" through an Acoustic rig comprising 370 amp with graphic, and 301 bin for one gig, and HiWatt 100 watt valve top and 4x12 cabinet for another. (3) Pub gig, playing Country and Western music with George Brown — founder and leader of the *original* "Alabama Hayriders", through my 1963 Vox AC30. (4) Dance band gig at our local British Legion club with a trio led by my uncle Les Argent, father of Rod, on piano through a Sun 2000 watt Festival system!! Sorry, just a silly joke, no, here I used a German 1x15 Dynacord combo, also being tested for this magazine, which had a graphic facility. (5) Traditional/mainstream jazz gig in a small club with our local "Dave Saville Jazz Band" through Acoustic 370 and 301 rig again.

Apart from the live work I used it at Konk studios to record some Kinks demos with its 24-track Studer recorder and Neve desk and for my own

home demos on a four track Teac machine through an RSD 16 into four mixer.

Broadly speaking the versatility demanded of it was fulfilled admirably, apart from one sound factor at the bottom end which, in my opinion, is a slight discrepancy. I couldn't get the deep, warm beefiness I like for the heavier rock situations without considerable help from the graphic facility on my Acoustic 370 amp. When I'd into the desk for recording this showed up even more of course, and is a trait shared in smaller measure with the Alembic in my experience. Both makes have big chunky solid brass bridge-tailpiece units and brass nuts, and I suspect the key to this purely personal criticism lies in this region of the design. Apart from this, it proved easily adaptable to all the musical styles in which I used it, from the "clicky" top for Country and Western to the graphic-aided roundness needed to approximate a double bass sound for the jazz gig.

It really came into its own though within the R&B format, where the warm but punchy middle predominance was ideal for the more intricate, funky lines required for the more recent compositions and style developments from this idiom, but on renditions from the blues side of R&B I still employed graphic assistance on my Acoustic rig slightly to the bottom end, to give a more "bootsey" appeal. A later gig with this band using the HiWatt 100 watt valve amp and 4x12 proved less satisfying to me because of the absence of graphic help, but of course different speaker cabinet design and varying venue acoustics all





play their part.

From a recording point of view I found it a delight to use, as the deeper bass frequencies tend to get lost anyway by the time a track using a conventional rhythm section is mixed and the purity and clarity of the sound quality this bass emits really shows up best in this, the highest fidelity section of our game.

As mentioned before, the pickups and controls look and sound like the Alembic counterparts, with a similar frequency boost at the half way roll-off point of the tone control, when the active circuitry is switched in via the small black toggle switch. I'm not suggesting that the, audibly, almost complete range of frequencies and permutations obtainable from an Alembic are obtainable from this much cheaper Aria, merely that to me the sounds that are, remind me strongly of the other product.

The balance and feel of this

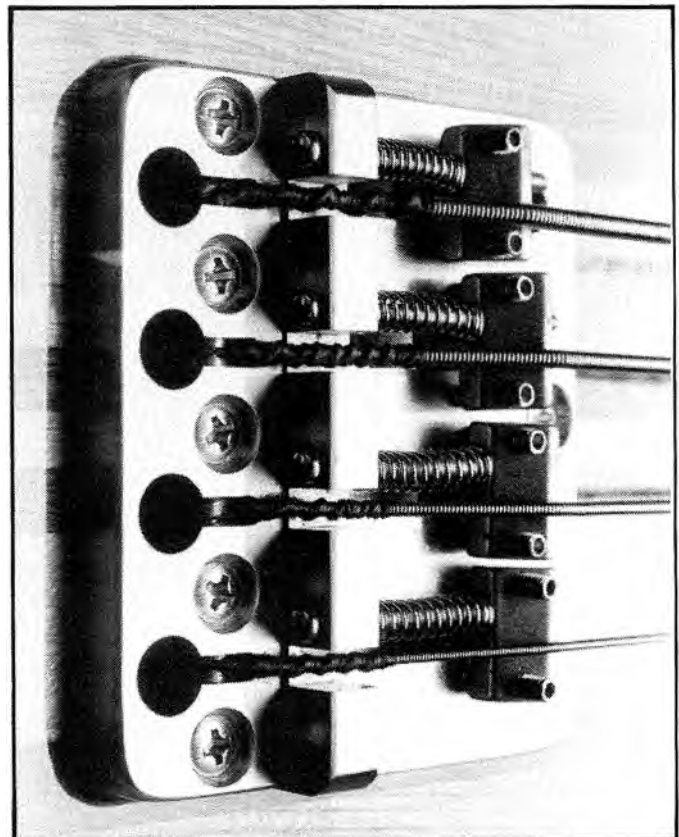
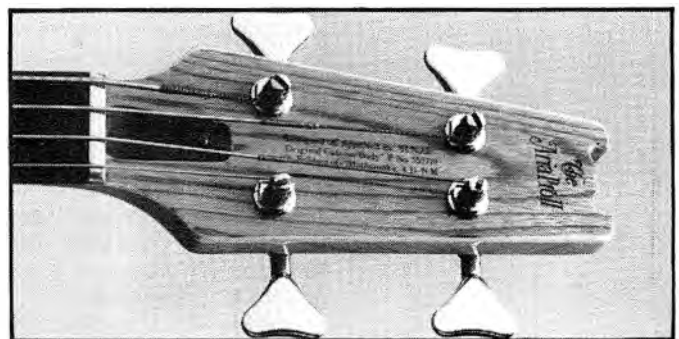
bass is excellent, with comfortable Precision type top body contouring on the back, and a relatively narrow, beautifully playable, long scale (428mm) double octave neck. The Schaller-like Aria machines have an interesting self adjustment collar around the shaft, and a small spanner is provided to tighten the rotary action to your own feel, and to adjust any loosening over a long period of use. I think this is a big improvement on the basic Schaller design, as I've found that after fairly vicious, left hand, pulled string vibrato technique, the string would often be pulled out of tune slightly, due to "travel" on a Schaller machine, and these don't move. Intonation and response along the entire length of the Rosewood fingerboard is superb, with easy access to the highest fret positions made possible by the extreme bottom cutaway and the heeless rear neck at this point.

The conventionally designed bridge-tailpiece is set fairly deep into the central body-neck one piece section, and this in turn provides excellent sustain as well as quite a loud, full sound, purely acoustically, through the solid body.

The most stunning aspect of this product though is its construction and finish which is worthy of a far more expensive, hand built instrument. The maple/walnut five piece laminated neck/central body has the appearance and feel of an Alembic and the ornately grained solid ash side body sections, add to the beautiful expensive look of the instrument. The body shape is purely a matter of personal taste, but, whatever you think, it doesn't interfere with the balance, feel, and playability aspects of the guitar.

The relatively narrow fingerboard, and therefore finger spacings, will probably not suit the more "physical" right hand finger style players, especially those with big hands, but pick players should find it more comfortably easy and fast to play than most things on the market today. The tonal qualities selectable, some of which I have criticised, will probably be ideal for a large proportion of bassists, and the simplicity of the controls, producing an extremely versatile spectrum of fully useable sounds, make this product virtually unbeatable in terms of value. Here is an instrument boasting qualities usually reserved for top professional bass guitars, easily affordable to the semi-pro musician.

Jim Rodford



KEYBOARDCHECK

ARP 16 Voice Piano £1,099 inc VAT

Like air rushing in to fill a vacuum, the ARP 16-voice Piano comes into the electric piano marketplace to plug the gap between the high-priced thoroughbred electric grand above it and the many budget-priced pianos below. The 16-Voice also represents an important attempt to provide more versatility than usual for electric pianos and, by and large, it's a successful and exciting new instrument.

The major attraction for my taste was the actual keyboard. It looks and feels like the real thing, i.e. a classy acoustic piano, and the action is solid yet flexible and fast. The keys are wooden and standard grand-piano length with a weighted maple action. Each key is mechanically coupled to a hammer, whose speed and weight when struck are measured by electronic circuits which in turn are connected to tone generators. This system allows the keyboard a continuum of touch sensitivity in terms of both attack volume and respective decay, creating a most realistic facsimile of an acoustic piano. It just feels very natural to play the 16-voice. The keyboard is six octaves long from F to F.

Above it are the 16 numbered tabs for each preset sound, each tab with its own LED. Preset 1 is the standard piano setting which is perhaps a little spongy, but then

preset nine provides a somewhat more percussive version with a stronger "pluck". The other crucial voices are seven and eight, the "Rhodes-type" sounds. They produce classic electronic outputs which should satisfy aficionados of this sort of sound. Those who may find traditional electronic pianos unwilling to express their own style and idiosyncrasies will be pleased to discover that preset seven produces a livelier and brighter-than-usual version of these tonal voicings without losing the warmth. Both seven and eight presets certainly provide respectable and tasteful accompaniment or soloing sounds in the hallowed tradition.

Voices 14, 15 and 16 are successively brighter, funkier and increasingly touch-responsive applications of the piano's built-in envelope follower. The harder the keys are hit, the heavier the effect.

Voices 10 through 13 are also progressively brighter settings from a muted harp through muted harpsichord and grand harpsichord to voice 13, an exceedingly hard-edged piano sound with so much bite and definition that care must be taken not to hit the keys so hard that distortion results. Voices 11 and 12 are definitely my favourites; to my ears the best compromise between bite and warmth. The remaining

presets are somewhat more esoteric and ethereal concoctions which, apart from the "vibes" sound, would probably not have too much regular application.

Each of the 16 presets is subject to various other controls which can enhance the basic settings. There are controls for overall volume, tone and tuning, plus a de-tuning control. An acoustic piano has more than one string for each note, and the 16-Voice piano has more than one tone generator for each note. The further clockwise the de-tune control is set, the more these tone generators de-tune relative to the master tuning. Perfect tuning would actually sound a little unnatural, so judicious de-tuning should be applied to impart presence and warmth. Considerable de-tuning creates a honky-tonk effect from presets one and nine.

As on traditional pianos, two pedals are supplied — the left for muting and the right for sustain. The impressive brass pedals can look a little strange on their floor platform divorced from the rest of the instrument, but at least they can be easily taped down onto a stage. By switching the "soft" tab on the front panel to "vibrato", the left pedal then applies vibrato, which has adjustable speed and depth controls. Consistent vibrato can also be applied independently





of the pedals, which do not have to be plugged in to trigger the effect. Vibrato is especially enhancing of the more "cutting" voices such as 7, 12 and 13.

Inside the piano there is also a phaser, applicable to any preset voice with adjustable speed (sweep) and resonance (depth). The phaser tab activates the built-in stereo phase shifter, and so, round the back of the instrument, besides low and high impedance mono outputs, there are also left and right stereo outputs. Actually the two stereo outputs are essentially the same, but electronic circuitry "animates" the sound to enhance the impression of presence. Obviously, to get the ultimate effect from this piano, you really need the facility to assign the stereo outputs to two speakers either by using two inputs on a mixer which can bisect outputs to different speakers, or by using two separate amplifiers and speaker set-ups, one for each channel. It may sound obvious to say that the better the amplifier/speaker system the better the results from an instrument, but this truism has never struck me as forcibly as it did when reviewing the ARP 16-Voice. The scope and sensitivity of the instrument is noticeably improved with every enhancing adjustment of the sound system. Both top and bottom responses must be wide-ranging to really cope with the extremities of the piano's dynamics, and working pianists may find that putting it through the PA system is the best move. It is also crucial to match up all the impedances to get the best results. I found that, even using a cabinet

designed for keyboards with responsive top and mid-range and attenuation control, everything had to be just right to avoid distortion. I would also recommend the use of a noise gate to eliminate line noise and hum, but in this respect the ARP is certainly no worse than a number of other electric pianos. Nevertheless distortion and earth loops are on the cards if elements of the surrounding set-up are inappropriate. Having said all this however, I assure you that it's worth taking the trouble to sort out the best reproduction for the 16-Voice Piano. This is a classy and sensitive instrument with a wide dynamic range, and it requires an equally flexible and sophisticated sound system to do it justice. In the right conditions, going through a good PA in stereo, it is truly impressive.

Through the use of auxiliary inputs, it is possible to mix other stereo pre-recordings with the piano's stereo signal (useful for learning or experimenting with new parts) and this facility can also be put through a front-panel headphone output.

The 16-Voice is eminently transportable, being relatively light and covered in fairly tough vinyl with a detachable keyboard cover panel. There are three useful metal carrying handles attached, but there are also metal corners which can work loose and cut your hands, as my roadie will testify!

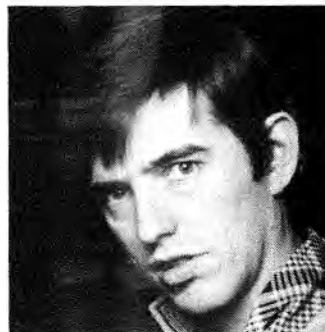
Underneath the piano is a substantial wooden frame which prevents warping and holds in the detachable steel legs (a trifle wobbly), but are set at a sensible height for

playing either seated or standing. The legs can hold an extra 200 pounds besides the piano, so additional instruments can be placed upon the helpfully flat-top surface.

It's hard to predict the road-worthiness of a new product, but I must report that on a flight from the UK to the States cuddled in a good flight case, the piano lost the use of two notes in the middle octave. That's easily repaired of course, but it does imply that checks are in order when touring. ARP assure us that, because the master clock oscillator digitally determines the pitch of all the notes, the piano will never require tuning.

Overall then, the ARP 16-Voice Piano has many selling points — the flexible and natural keyboard action, the accurate and dynamic touch sensitivity, the range of presets and controls and the compactness of design of such a sophisticated instrument. It needs more careful setting up than many other pianos, but sorting out the appropriate system is well worthwhile, for this piano can deliver a wide spectrum of impressive and rich sounds, including both classic acoustic and electronic piano voices. It's more expensive than many other pianos, but it is also much more versatile and realistic to play than cheaper products. The price seems justifiable to me and this instrument is a valuable new addition to the available range of keyboards, and one which I'm sure most pianists would be pleased to own.

Stan Shaw



Stan Shaw is a keyboard player with a wide experience of both sessions and regular gigging. He has worked with Nick Lowe and featured on early Elvis Costello recordings. Now involved in a solo production venture, he most recently worked with singer Noel McCalla and currently gigs with the Hitmen.

SOUNDCHECK

**ROLAND
BOLT
AMP
£287.50
inc VAT**

This is quite an interesting little amp from the Roland stable. The Bolt-60 is in the range of mini combos that we see so many of these days. However, if Roland decide to break into a market with a particular amp they normally take great care and do it properly. Hence this particular combo.

It is quite small yet somehow Roland have managed to squeeze into its modest dimensions a 50-60 watt tube amp. Keeping the combo dimensions down does not keep the weight down and the unit is deceptively heavy. Still that isn't really surprising as most of the weight is due to the tube amp chassis and heavy duty loudspeaker.

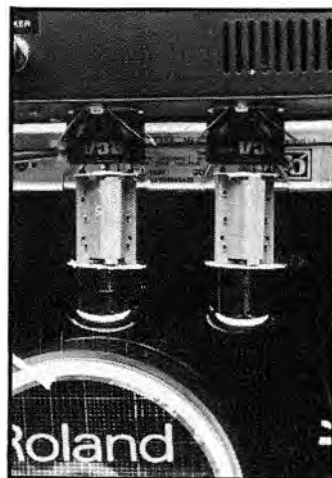
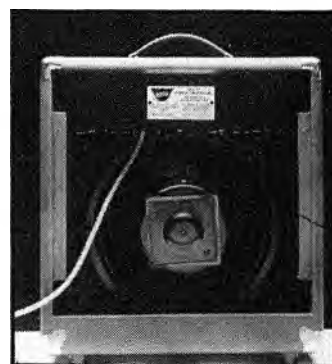
The amp drives into a single 12 inch loudspeaker unit mounted in an open back-type enclosure. It is, but not really advisable, to use a sealed enclosure which is so small in order to obtain any reasonable results.

The cabinet is constructed from 1/2" chipboard and covered in black vinyl cloth.

Black plastic corner caps are provided on six corners — the top of the cabinet at the front is angled back slightly so these corners cannot be covered. The very sharp Roland speaker cloth in gold and black provides protection for the rear mounting 12" speaker unit. The single chassis amp is fixed to the top of the cabinet and so effectively that the tubes sit upside down, which allows the front panel with controls to sit at the very top of the cabinet. Also mounted inside onto the amplifier chassis is the reverb spring unit.

The electronics section of this combo is very interesting as Roland have tried not to compromise too much on the facilities offered. Perhaps a quick run-down on front panel controls and their use might show what these facilities are.

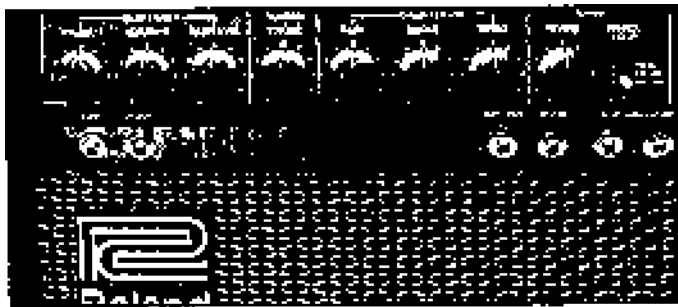
Two inputs are provided — hi-gain and lo-gain to match up to a particular guitar. These two inputs can then be routed through two different sections of the amp — either the over-



drive section or the normal section. The overdrive section on far left comprises Volume 1, Volume 2 and Master volume, while the normal section just to the right comprises just one Control-volume. Each section has an LED to show which is on at any particular time and this switching between channels can either be done by turning down Volume 1 (switched pot) or by using the overdrive jack with a footswitch.

Anyway, without trying to cause too much confusion, I will attempt to explain this facility further in the playing section. To the right of the two sections is the equalisation section—bass, middle and treble provided, with a single rotary control for reverb level. Next comes a three-position toggle switch which allows an external effects unit to be inserted in one of three different positions in the amplifier chain — pre-EQ, post-EQ or post volume. Two more switches are provided at the right hand end of the front panel. One is for power on/off and has an associated red indicator. The second switch is for standby on/off and switches the H.T., to the tubes.

Input and output jacks are



mounted just below the controls and comprise (in addition to the hi and lo inputs) overdrive jack, reverb on/off jack and effects loop send and return.

The back panel of the amp has a single jack connector for the internal speaker with two more jacks for pre-amp out and power amp in.

Altogether a very smart little package, so how does it sound? Well, firstly, the range of control offered by each of the tone controls does seem to be a bit lacking when compared to many transistorised amps. However, for a tubeamp they are not too bad and, of course, the basic flat sound is pretty reasonable.

Running a guitar through the normal channel produced some nice sounds when undistorted and when turned up loud some nice stage distortion. It did seem to me, however, that there was a slight edginess or harshness to the sound when pushed hard which tended to detract slightly from the warm tube sustain that could be obtained.

As mentioned above, there is an overdrive section which

can be switched in, in place of the normal section. On Volume 1, a switched pot is provided so that when turned up the overdrive section is in circuit and when turned full down the normal section is in circuit instead. (Two LED's indicate status for these two conditions. However, a footswitch is connected to the overdrive jack, switching can be done remotely — which, of course, allows distorted and clean sounds to be set up and their respective volumes balanced correctly.

Setting up a sound on the overdrive channel is fairly easy but I did wonder why three volumes were provided when normally just pre-amp and Master vols are necessary. I think the reason is that Vol 1 adjusts overdrive level and Vol 2 is required (when overdriving) to attenuate the signal so that the master volume control does not have to be operated at the bottom end of its travel, which does not have to be operated at the bottom end of its travel, which could make life a little difficult.

Also in the non-overdrive condition on the overdrive

channel it is necessary to keep Vol 2 fairly well up and Vol 1 down to ensure a clean sound.

Hopefully, now you can understand the basic operation of the amp. Anyway, when it was actually used in a live situation we did not have a footswitch suitable for the amp, so the possibilities of channel switching were not tried out.

It does seem, however, that it takes most guitarists a little while to get to grips with this sort of facility and most just set up the amp one way and leave it. The amp sounded impressive when used at volume and was certainly loud. The slight edginess didn't appear to be noticed when used with the full band but there was still a hint of something just making the sound slightly woolly.

It was when the combo was used in a recording sessions that it was possible to be a little more precise in pinning down

Dave Mann gained an honours degree in Electronic Engineering at Southampton University in 1972. Since then he has been working in television and sound studios with more recent involvement in the design of guitar amplifiers. He is also a member of a regularly gigging band.

TEST REPORT

1 input sensitivity	hi-overdrive	.56mV
	lo-overdrive	1.6mV
	hi-normal	18mV
	lo-normal	54mV
(for full output)		
2 Max input	hi-600mV	
	lo-1.35v	
3 Tone controls	Treble @2kHz	12.5dB
	Middle @400Hz	13.1dB
	Bass @70Hz	23dB
4 Power output	52 watts r.s.m. into 8ohms	
	45 watts r.s.m. into 4ohms	just prior to clipping 1kHz

SPEAKERCHECK

Compression Drivers Part 3

Compression Drivers

This is the last of our reviews of compression drive units and the five units included this month brings the total number of units reviewed over the last 20 months to a staggering 44. Apart from the Gauss HF4000, the odd Altec driver and the Fane HF100 (which should have been included this time round, but for some reason did not materialise) I don't think there can be many units on the market in the UK which we have not now tested.

I sometimes wonder just who is buying all those compression drivers, as I suppose that all these manufacturers are making a living by manufacturing these units and must therefore be selling their products in quantity. With the quantity and quality of drive units now available, I don't think that the manufacture of compression drivers is a line that I should be contemplating as a business venture just now, as surely, it won't be long before the market is swamped out. Not so long ago, unless you had the sort of money to buy JBL, you had a very hard task indeed to find a good quality driver at a reasonable price, but now it would seem that you can take your pick from a large variety of very nicely made units all offering a good overall standard of performance.

Included in the final five this month is the new JBL 2441, a new unit being imported from America by ATC — the Renkus-Heinz SSD-1800, a new version of the Vitavox Music Motor and a Japanese unit currently being sold in the UK under two different brand names — Unit 8 and Vortec, and which is in fact manufactured by Foster in Japan. These products are separately reviewed following this article. As has become our practice at the end of a series of reviews, I shall devote the remainder of this month's space to a comparative assessment between all 14 units tested this time around.

Unlike cone loudspeakers, it is difficult to group compression drivers into categories for comparison purposes. Even

flange mounting vs screw coupling types is no longer valid with the advent of the Electro-Voice DH1506, which has a standard screw thread coupling, yet is priced and performs at the top end of the professional scale. Separating the high frequency units from those intended specifically as mid-range drivers will similarly serve no useful purpose as there are only two units in the latter category. It is therefore probably best if we do our usual calculations to find out

how much you actually pay for each decibel of basic sensitivity as we have done with cone loudspeakers, and thereafter to consider any special characteristics that may also have a bearing on selection. For example, the lowest price per decibel may also buy the worst frequency response and the highest distortion, and so on. Also of course, the crossover frequency may well dictate that one unit is used in preference to another, even may necessitate paying more.

the best buy of any unit tested for general purpose applications and represents amazing value for money at just 60 per cent of the cost of its nearest rival, the Gollehon 4640. However, the Gollehon has a lower distortion figure and can be used down to 800Hz, and so may be worth the extra bread depending upon the particular application, but does not have the uniform frequency response curve of the HH unit. The Peavey 22A is low on sensitivity and suffers high distortion again, but offers a uniform frequency response and can be used down to 500Hz. I personally think that I would give the Peavey a miss, and use either the HH CD-400 which offers better overall performance at a considerably lower price, or else move up-market to the Emilar EC-175. I am afraid that the 102dB sensitivity would put me off the Peavey — and besides which, the Peavey replacement diaphragm assembly costs about £31 as compared to just over £7 for the HH replacement! The two Electro-Voice 1824 units are intended specifically as mid-range drivers and both give a very good account of themselves for this particular application. However, they cannot really be compared to the other units in the same way.

Working down the table, we find the RCF TW200 coming up with an excellent set of results, but it suffers from a somewhat high minimum crossover frequency and also from an awkward, non-standard throat coupling flange. Otherwise, it is a very good unit with particularly low distortion figures and at a reasonable price. Next to the HH CD-400 for outstanding value must come the Emilar EC-175, with very high sensitivity, particularly smooth frequency response, and with a relatively low minimum crossover frequency, and is without doubt a very fine unit indeed, although prices are now starting to rise somewhat.

The Vitavox Music Motor is another very useful general purpose driver and shares its place in our table with the Unit

The units are listed in order of best Price per dB value
COMPARISON TABLE BETWEEN ALL UNITS TESTED

Unit	Sens.	c/o	HF Lim	Dist	Mtg	Price	Price/dB
HH Acoustics CD400	107dB	1.3kHz	15kHz	30%	1/6	£ 49	£0.45
Gollehon 4640	107dB	800Hz	12kHz	20%	1	£ 80*	£0.74
Peavey 22A	102dB	500Hz	12kHz	30%	1	£ 84	£0.82
Electro-Voice 1824/S	112dB	500Hz	2kHz	8%	1	£102	£0.91
RCF TW200	106dB	2kHz	10kHz	12%	6	£100	£0.94
Electro-Voice 1824/M	107dB	800Hz	4.5kHz	12%	1	£102	£0.95
Emilar EC-175	110dB	800Hz	13kHz	25%	4	£120	£1.09
Vitavox Music Motor	107dB	800Hz	12kHz	20%	2	£126	£1.18
Unit 8-11	107dB	1.2kHz	13kHz	20%	3	£126	£1.18
Vortec MF2000	107dB	1.2kHz	13kHz	20%	3	£126*	£1.18
Renkus-Heinz SSD1800	110dB	800Hz	14kHz	20%	4	£150	£1.36
Emilar ECH-175	112dB	800Hz	13kHz	25%	¾	£155	£1.38
Electro-Voice DH1506	112dB	800Hz	20kHz	30%	1	£194	£1.73
JBL 2441	113dB	500Hz	16kHz	30%	5	£287	£2.54

Sens	— Sound pressure level for 1w input at 1m distance mounted on std. horn
c/o	— Recommended minimum crossover frequency taken from test results
HF Lim	— Upper limit of useful high frequency response taken from test results
Dist	— Total harmonic distortion at 20w. RMS sine wave input from test results
Mtg	— Mounting arrangements to following code: 1 = 1.362" x 18tpi screw thread coupling into 0.875" dia. throat 2 = 1.362" x 18tpi screw thread coupling into 0.625" dia. throat 3 = 1" JBL pattern flange coupling with three ¼" bolts on 2¼" pcd 4 = 1" Altec pattern flange coupling with two ¼" studs on 3" pcd 5 = 2" JBL pattern flange coupling with four ¼" bolts on 4" pcd 6 = Manufacturers own non-standard flange coupling system
Price	— Normal retail price including VAT
Price/dB	— Price per decibel of sensitivity

The table gives comparisons between all the units tested, but does not by any means tell the whole story of each unit. What it does do is allow the performance parameters of each unit to be directly compared and evaluated against individual requirements. For example, the HH CD 400 gives a remarkable over account of

itself, with excellent frequency response and good sensitivity at an incredibly low price, but the distortion is 30 per cent and the unit should not be crossed over below 1.3kHz, so the importance of these restrictions must be weighed against its attributes and low price. Notwithstanding this, as far as I am concerned, it must be

8-11 and the Vortec MF-2000, all with identical sensitivities, similar response characteristics, identical distortion levels at an acceptable 20 per cent and at about the same price.

To me however, the Emilar EC-175 is not only a better unit, but is also some £6 less expensive than any of this trio. The Musicmotor is at a further disadvantage due to its non-standard throat diameter.

The Renkus-Heinz SSD-1800 is another very nice unit, not dissimilar from the Emilar in many respects, but it is not quite as smooth in frequency response and is somewhat more expensive for some reason that I am quite unable to fathom (see review).

The Emilar ECH-175 is also a very fine unit, but is considerably more expensive than its baby brother and the only significant difference would seem to be another 2dB in sensitivity and the fact that it can be mounted onto either the Altec or JBL type one inch flange horn entries.

The Electro-Voice DH1506 is a particularly interesting animal, with very high sensitivity and an extended frequency response to 20kHz. It is

unusual in that it makes a professional standard of performance available with a standard screw thread throat coupling, but requires special equalisation for optimum results and is very expensive indeed. The JBL 2441 is of course, the daddy of them all and combines the best aspect of any driver tested into a single package with the sole exception of distortion — which is again high. It has the highest sensitivity of any unit tested, a wide, uniform frequency response, can be used down to 500Hz and is superbly made — but you pay for it!

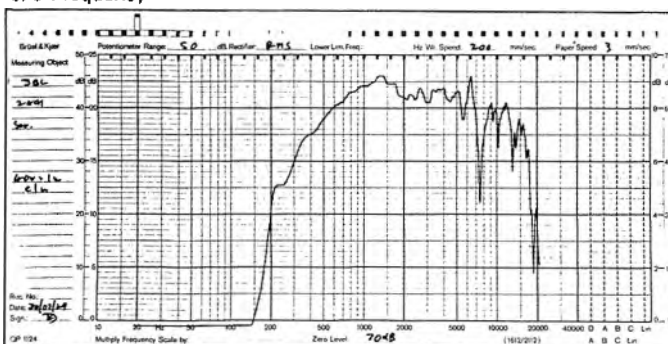
Make of that lot what you will, but I hope that the table will provide a valid comparison and that my own comments in respect of the various drivers will serve to show how comparisons between units can be made in a constructive manner, depending upon your particular needs and requirements. Next month we shall start off another look at the horn flare to see what developments are afoot in that direction since we last considered horns back in the spring of 1979.

JBL 2441 Ser. No. 13630 (USA)

Price around £287 incl. VAT

Coupling: 2" JBL flange — 4 bolts on 4" pcd

Parameter	Manufacturers' Rating	Test Result
Frequency Response	500Hz-16kHz	500Hz-16kHz@ -6dB
Sensitivity	118dB@1mW on 25mm plain wave tube	113dB@1w@1m av. 800Hz-7kHz on std. laboratory horn
Power for 110dB SPL@1kHz@1m	Not stated	0.39w RMS sine wave
THD@110dB SPL	Not stated	3% worst@5kHz
THD@20w RMS Sine Wave	Not stated	30% worst@5kHz
Rated Power	70w cont. prog. 35w cont. sine wave	See text Parameter not measured
Impedance	16 ohm nominal	11-17.5ohm over operating range
Resonance	Not stated	450Hz on std. laboratory horn
Recommended c/o Frequency	500Hz or higher	As stated



This unit is of literally massive proportions, comprising in essence of a 174mm diameter by 90mm deep lump of iron with a hole through its centre, and weighing some 25lb! In actual fact of course, it is a little more sophisticated than that, in that the hole is tapered to provide the early expansion of the horn flare and that a 100mm diameter diaphragm and an elaborate phasing plug are fitted at the rear of the unit. Also, a cast alloy rear cover is fitted and this increases the overall depth to about 130mm and has a pair of heavy duty spring-retaining terminals recessed into it. The front face of the magnet is fitted with a cork gasket to ensure an airtight seal to the horn flange and the four mounting holes are drilled and tapped straight into the faceplate. On our sample however, these were not properly threaded, or else they were gunged up with paint with the result that great difficulty was experienced in mounting the unit to our test horn — a very unusual oversight for this particular manufacturer, as in all other respects, the unit is superbly engineered and finished in the usual JBL crackle effect "battleship grey" stove enamel.

It can be seen from the results that the performance is also up to the usual JBL standard, with very high sensitivity and wide, uniform frequency response. The difference between the published

sensitivity figure and our test result is simply due to the fact that JBL have obtained their figures with the unit coupled to a 25mm diameter plane wave tube with the measuring microphone incorporated into the tube itself at a distance of a few millimeters from the throat of the driver and fed the unit with just one milliwatt of input power, whereas our test is conducted with the unit on a horn, the microphone at one meter and an input of one watt. It is clear that the two conditions are totally different and therefore produce quite different results. The only aspect of any concern is the 30 per cent level of harmonic distortion when the unit is driven hard, but this is not unusual with high sensitivity units and the 2441 is by no means alone among the samples reviewed during this series. The difference between the published upper frequency response limit and our result is probably due to the slight loss of very high frequencies inherent in the type of laboratory horn we are using, and also to the use of a different measuring procedure. In any event, the difference is hardly significant.

As usual, a very expensive, but superbly made piece of equipment, built to do a job of work — which of course it does, and is to be seen driving the upper mid or top end of many a touring sound system at the professional end of the market.

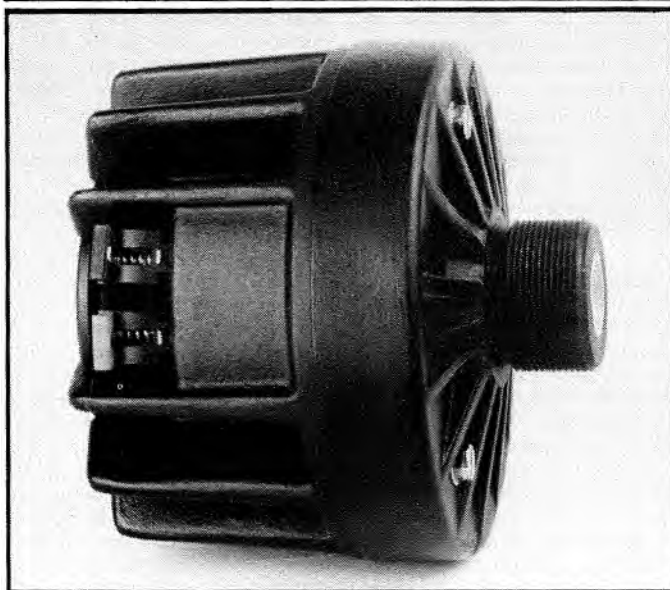
SPEAKERCHECK

VITAVOX Music Motor Ser. No. 069

Price around £126 incl. VAT

Coupling: 1.362" x 18tpi screw thread into 0.625" dia. throat entry

Parameter	Manufacturers' Rating	Test Result
Frequency Response	400Hz-15kHz	400Hz-12kHz@ -6dB
Sensitivity	109dB@1w@1m on std. lab. horn	107dB@1w@1m av. 500Hz-4kHz on std. laboratory horn
Power for 100dB SPL@1kHz@1m	Not stated	0.96w RMS sine wave
THD@110dB SPL	Not stated	3% worst@2kHz
THD@20w RMS Sine wave	Not stated	20% worst@2/3kHz
Rated Power	30w continuous 100w programme	Parameter not measured
Impedance	8 ohm	9-15 ohm over operating range
Resonance	Not stated	1.5kHz on std. laboratory horn
Recommended c/o Frequency	Not stated	800Hz or higher @12dB/octave



Although we did include the Music Motor in our last series of compression drive unit reviews in summer 1979, the diaphragm assembly has since been redesigned to provide a smoother and slightly extended response, and from the results we have obtained on this occasion, this would certainly seem to be the case. The unit is very nicely made indeed, and is of the more traditional pattern with the diaphragm assembly at the front of the unit under the faceplate. It is one of only two units tested this time around which

is still using an Alnico magnetic structure and this is enclosed in a heavily fluted cast alloy housing fitted with a rather neat pair of colour coded spring retaining terminals. Unusually, the threaded boss for coupling to the horn throat is of plastic, and the throat entry diameter is particularly small at 0.625". This is the old UK public address standard configuration and as far as I am aware, Vitavox are the only manufacturer in the music industry still using it.

It can be seen that the overall performance of the Music Motor

under test is quite good and is about average in terms of sensitivity and distortion figures for other units of this type and in this price bracket. The upper frequency response limit does not quite make the makers published figure, but the difference is minimal and is probably due to manufacturing tolerances. Because of the very steep fall-off at the upper limit, the difference is not likely to be due to variations in testing procedure or in interpretation of curves.

The impedance values are a little on the high side, with the effect

that the actual input fed to the unit was in fact slightly less than the prescribed one watt, and the power required for 110dB SPL was slightly less than the figure given.

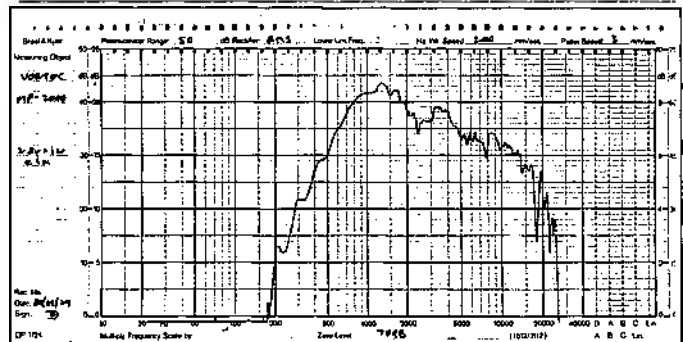
This is altogether quite a nice driver, but it is a shame that it is only really suitable for use on Vitavox horn flares due to its small diameter throat coupling. Not that there is anything wrong with Vitavox horn flares — quite the reverse in fact, but they tend to be pricey and this might explain why not too many Music Motors are found in the field just yet.

VORTEC MF2000 (Japan)

Price unavailable

Coupling: 1" JBL pattern flange — 3 bolts on 2 1/4" pcd

Parameter	Manufacturers' Rating	Test Result
Frequency Response	500Hz-17kHz ± 6dB	500Hz-14kHz@ -6dB
Sensitivity	105dB@1w@1m horn dependant	107dB@1w@1m av. 600Hz-5kHz on std. laboratory horn
Power for 110dB SPL@1kHz@1m	Not stated	0.66w RMS sine wave
THD@110dB SPL	Not stated	3% uniform
THD@20w RMS Sine Wave	Not stated	20% worst@2kHz
Rated Power	60w prog. above 800Hz	Parameter not measured
Impedance	8 ohm nominal	7.5-12.5 ohm over operating range
Resonance	Not stated	1.8kHz on std. laboratory horn
Recommended c/o Frequency	800Hz@12dB/octave	

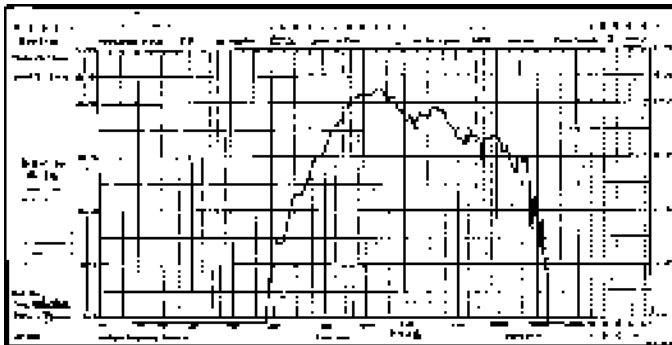


UNIT 8-11 (Japan)

Price around £126 incl. VAT

Coupling: 1" JBL pattern flange — 3 bolts on 2 1/4" pcd

Parameter	Manufacturers' Rating	Test Result
Frequency Response	1.2-17kHz ± 6dB	500Hz-14kHz@ -6dB
Sensitivity	105dB@1w@1m unqualified	107dB@1w@1m av. 600Hz-5kHz on std. laboratory horn
Power for 110dB SPL@1kHz@1m	Not stated	0.75w RMS sine wave
THD@110dB SPL	Not stated	3% uniform
THD@20w RMS Sine Wave	Not stated	20% worst@2kHz
Rated Power	50w above 1.2kHz	Parameter not measured
Impedance	8 ohm nominal	8-15 ohm over operating range
Resonance	Not stated	1.8kHz on std. laboratory horn
Recommended c/o Frequency	1.2kHz	As stated



These two products have been grouped together for the simple reason that they are really the same product being marketed under two trade names. Suspecting that this might be the case, I made some enquiries to discover that these are in fact manufactured by the Foster Corporation in Japan, one version being sold in the States by Integrated Sound Systems Inc. of New York, under the Vortec trade name and imported into the UK by J&C Sound Systems of Ilkely, while the other version is imported direct from Foster by Unit 8 in Isleworth, Middx and marketed by them as model Unit 8-11. The fact that this is one and the same unit is further substantiated by the similarity of the results obtained under test which differ only by what would easily pass as manufacturing tolerances. However, the published specifications for the two drivers are different in many respects and this is due to the fact that the Unit 8-11 version has been re-specified in the UK by Bill Woodman of ATC and I confess that I personally would rather go by Bill's figures than those published by Integrated Sound Systems Inc in respect of the Vortec unit.

Having sorted out the pedigree for these units, it must immediately be stated that they are very nicely made and presented indeed and have a substantial 'feel' about them. They consist of a large, flat, ceramic magnet with the front face drilled and tapped to couple directly to a JBL pattern one inch flare horn and the rear face carrying the diaphragm assembly behind a particularly businesslike phase correction plug. The voice

coil and diaphragm are only 40mm in diameter and are contained within a moulded phenolic ring with self contained pressure cover, and the whole assembly is replaceable with care and two sizes of Philips screwdriver.

Over the back of this, is a very large, elaborate, and superbly made cast alloy cover, which seems to me to be totally superfluous and must add considerably to the cost of manufacturing the unit! Its only purpose as far as I can see, is to enclose a large volume of fresh air and to provide somewhere on which to mount the superb quality spring terminals! Seriously, it is obviously only there for cosmetic reasons and serves to give the appearance of a large and rugged driver, instead of a flat ring magnet with a hole at one end and a diaphragm attached to the other.

The performance is good as well, with about average sensitivity for its type, nicely uniform frequency response curve and only moderate levels of distortion. It can be seen that while the output level falls below our reference level of 6dB below the average sensitivity figure at about 14kHz, the unit is still delivering useful output to about the 17kHz figure claimed by both specs. From our results, I would recommend a minimum crossover of 1.2kHz for both units and would suggest that the Unit-8 spec is more relevant than that given for the Vortec unit.

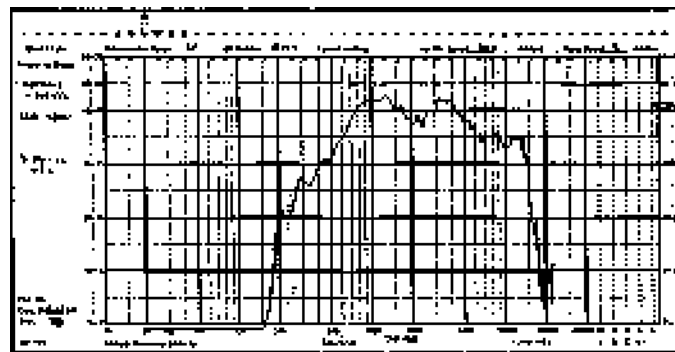
These are certainly nice drivers, very well made and with a good overall performance — if somewhat pretentious in respect of that huge rear cover full of fresh air!

RENKUS-HEINZ SSD1800 (USA)

Price around £150 incl. VAT

Coupling: 1" Altec pattern flange — 2 threaded studs on 3" pcd

Parameter	Manufacturers' Rating	Test Result
Frequency Response	500Hz-16kHz	600Hz-14kHz@ -6dB
Sensitivity	107dB@1w@4ft on horn of Q=7	110dB@1w@1m av. 800Hz-5kHz on standard laboratory horn
Power for 110dB SPL@1kHz@1m	Not stated	0.6w RMS sine wave
THD@110dB SPL	'surpasses' all known driver specifications for minimal distortion'	3% worst@3.5kHz
THD@20w RMS Sine Wave		20% worst@3.5kHz
Rated Power	40w RMS continuous	Parameter not measured
Impedance	8 ohm*	6.5-12.5 ohm over operating range
Resonance	Not stated	1.5kHz on std. laboratory horn
Recommended c/O Frequency	800Hz lower frequency limit	Above 800Hz@12dB/octave



This driver is relatively new to the UK market and is imported and distributed by ATC. It is a relatively simple device and is not unlike the RCF TW-200 reviewed last month in that the unit is entirely contained within a cover, which also provides the retaining clamp and damping chamber for the diaphragm at the back of the magnet. Unlike many units with field replaceable diaphragms — i.e. HH CD400, Peavey 22, the Emilar units, etc., whose replacement diaphragm assemblies come protected by a built-in housing, the SSD-1800 diaphragm is completely exposed and somewhat fragile and some care is necessary in handling.

The method of assembly adopted is rather clever in that the two mounting studs pass right through the magnetic assembly to the rear of the unit, where they are utilised to align the diaphragm and also to retain the rear cover. Although simple, and despite the fragility of the diaphragm assembly (which after all, is only of any importance when diaphragm replacement becomes necessary, which hopefully, will not be too often!) the unit is nevertheless nicely made and presented and well engineered, but seems to me to be

somewhat expensive for such a simple device — especially when compared to, say, the HH CD-400 at not much more than a quarter of the price.

The unit gave a creditable performance, with wide and uniform frequency response and good sensitivity. The impedance curve is about right for an eight ohm nominal rating, and is nice and clean, with the resonances clearly defined. We do not however, necessarily agree with the maker's statement concerning distortion, as according to our measurements, this is about normal for a driver of this type and is certainly not particularly low. I suppose that the way in which the distortion information is given provides the get-out clause, as there are very few published driver specifications which provide any distortion information at all — and those that do are measured at such a low input level that they are usually irrelevant anyway.

Altogether, this is quite a useful driver, but I am afraid that no way can I see £150 worth of retail value in such a simple device.

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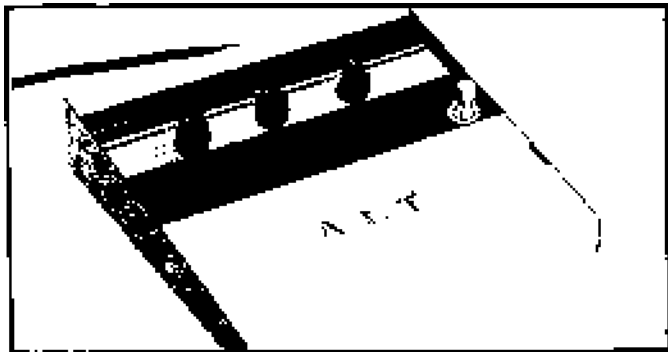
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IN BRIEF

Carlsbro ADT Effects Unit

Until fairly recently it has been expensive to produce delay effects electronically. Many of the popular studio effects such as phasing have either been simulated or produced using expensive digital technology.



The new Carlsbro ADT effects unit uses current so-called "state of the art" (as Carlsbro put it) analogue delay devices. It is possible using these devices to produce short delays of good quality easily and cheaply. It is in producing longer delays for echo or reverb effects that the shortcomings of these devices become obvious, however in order to produce chorus and ADT only short delays are required.

This Carlsbro unit produces three basic effects — double tracking, chorus and vibrato, by varying the time delay applied to the guitar signal automatically. This is achieved by a separate control circuit that can be adjusted in speed by a control on the front panel.

In the vibrato mode the whole signal passing through the unit is varied in frequency by an amount controlled by the depth control and obviously varied in speed by the speed control. In the chorus mode only the speed control operates but this time there are both direct and delayed signals and in the ADT mode an additional longer delay is added to the basic chorus effect.

Construction

The foot pedal is constructed from a single aluminium extrusion with bolt on side cheeks. The top panel is held in place in the extrusion and can only be got at by undoing one of the side cheeks which are attached with self tapping screws into the extrusion.

In use

In general the pedal performed extremely well and I think what probably most guitarists would prefer to just fiddle with the controls until the sound they wanted was obtained. Dealing with the vibrato effect first — the range of control on this setting is quite enormous, it was difficult with both speed

and depth up full to even recognise what notes were being played on the guitar. At lower settings some very nice vibrato effects were obtained.

In the chorus position with the speed at minimum the variable delay produced a kind of phasing effect, however when the speed control was advanced the frequency shift of the delayed signal became greater and so in addition to speeding up the effect the delayed signal was progressively sharper and flatter than the direct. The two together produced a good chorus effect. The ADT effect was the same as the chorus effect but with an additional delay added which was heard as a distinct echo.

At high settings of the speed control the effect was unuseable because it was so great. It sounded like several guitars playing together out of tune. At low settings however the effect was very good and it was surprising just how little an effect was needed to produce a marked change in sound from normal to effect.

In chorus this changeover gave the impression of more than one guitar playing which of course is the general idea.

In terms of sound quality it is quite difficult to fault this pedal. I did find however that on stage it would not always stay put as there are no rubber feet and I am a little doubtful about the colour scheme of black silver and yellow.

In conclusion the range of adjustment of the effects is far more than would ever be re-

quired in normal use except for certain special effects. At moderate control settings the effects produced are certainly impressive and I think that most guitarists could put this pedal to good use.

Dave Mann

SOUND RECORDING PRACTICE —

A Handbook compiled by the Association of Professional Recording Studios

Asking me to review *Sound Recording Practice* is somewhat akin to asking a priest to review the Bible. Not that I'm comparing SRP to the Bible excepting in terms of their authoritative standing within their respective fields.

This is an authority gained, in SRP's case, by having each chapter written by an acknowledged expert in their own field and then having the complete work assembled into a very readable format. The range of topics covered includes virtually every facet of sound recording and its associated areas of film, radio and television sound.

SRP is not a perfect book, there's no such thing, but it is the one that I always recommended to anyone seriously wanting to know more about sound recording or to the professional wishing to broaden his field of knowledge. It has been out of print for some months, but it is now available in its second edition, so it is now time to take a fresh look at the book to see if it can still be recommended.

Sound Recording Practice was first published in 1976, but in the Recording Industry, five years is a long time, state of the art is no longer state of the art and higher technology brings new operating procedures although technical principles of course remain constant.

The second edition sees the addition of two completely new chapters covering digital and automation techniques which, with regard to actual studio practice, were little more than a twinkle in a manufacturer's eye in '76. Each chapter has been updated by their original authors and the chapter on Disc Cutting rewritten by Sean Davies due to the unfortunate death of the previous edition's author, W. H. Livy.

The book is divided into seven sections. The first section is the Technical Introduction by John Borwick who is also the editor of the complete book. This section gives a strong skeleton on to which the flesh of the other chapters of the book can be hung as well as giving a thread of continuity between the different chapters.

It outlines the entire recording process from conceptualisation, through production, manufacture, distribution to the eventual point of domestic playback. Also discussed is the role played by that part of the human anatomy that the whole business revolves around, the ear.

The other sections and chapters are principally enlargements on the basic ground covered in the first section. One major advantage of the variety of authors is that as well as the straight information being relayed to the reader, practical hints are included that otherwise would have involved several years of experience before they were learnt.

Of course the same technique which brings advantages from being written in a practical way also lays some chapters open to criticism from other professionals saying that they think that their way is better but I personally feel that the pro's outweigh the con's.

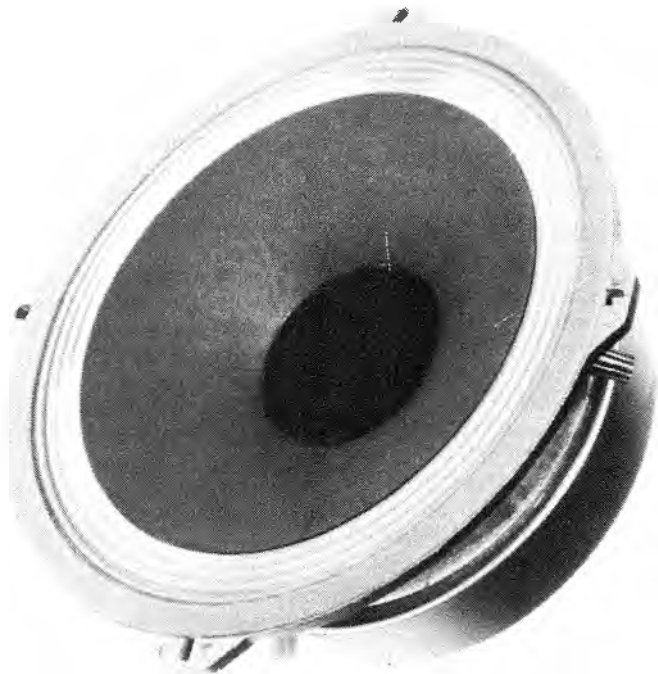


This has to be the best book of its type available at the present time and well worth its cover price in value of information, for anyone who has to deal with pro audio or purely for interest.

Published by the Oxford University Press. Price: £19.50

Keith Spencer-Allen

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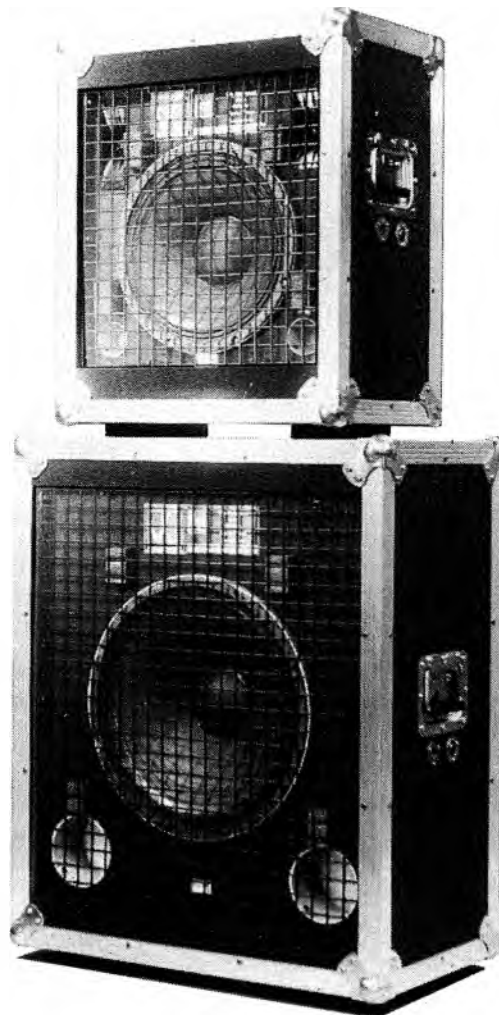
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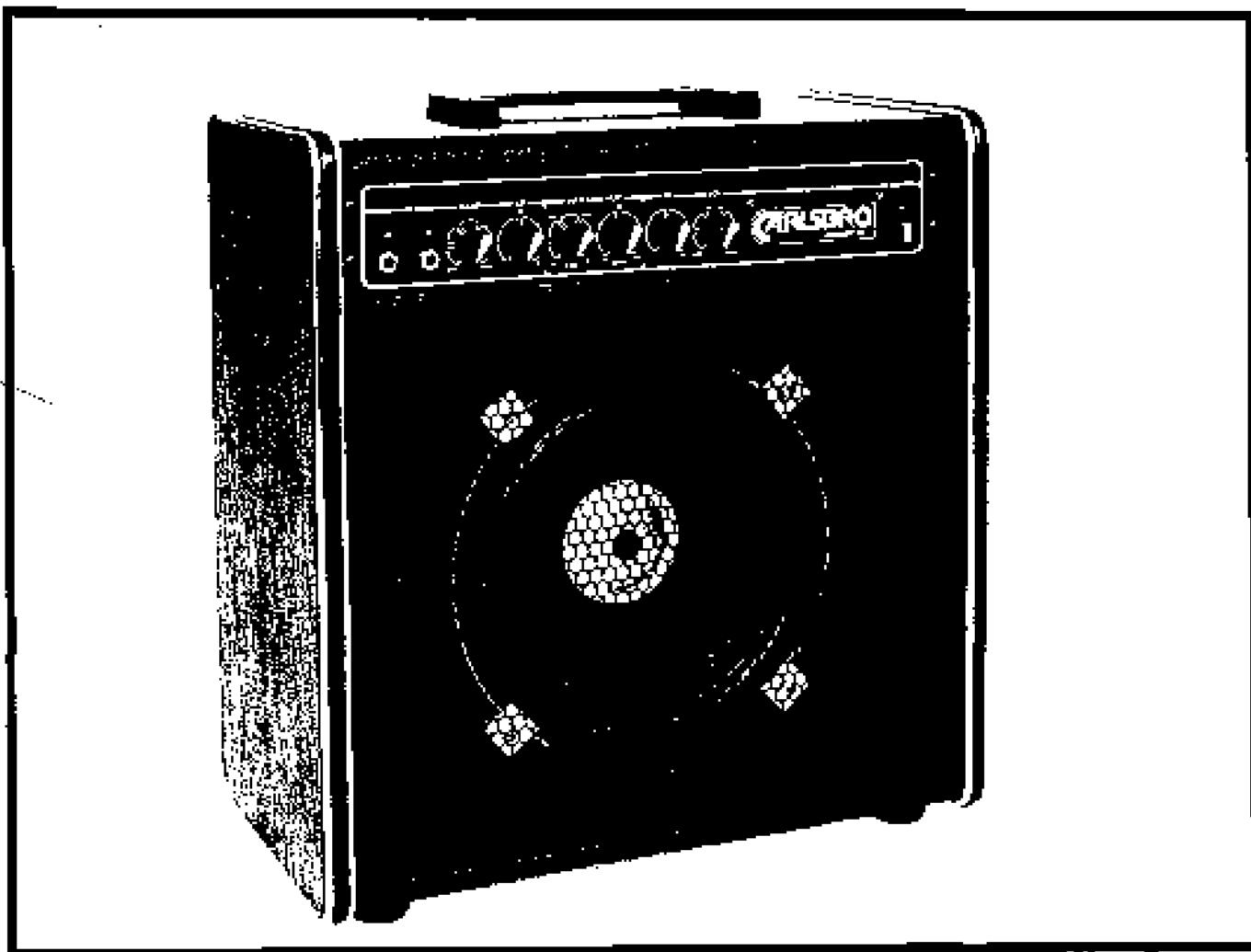
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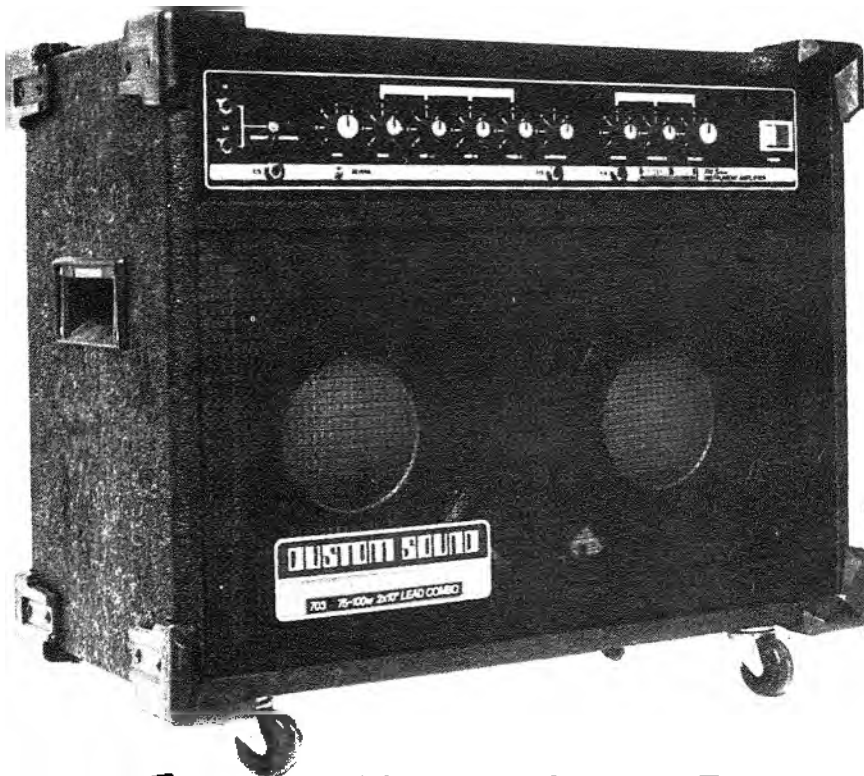
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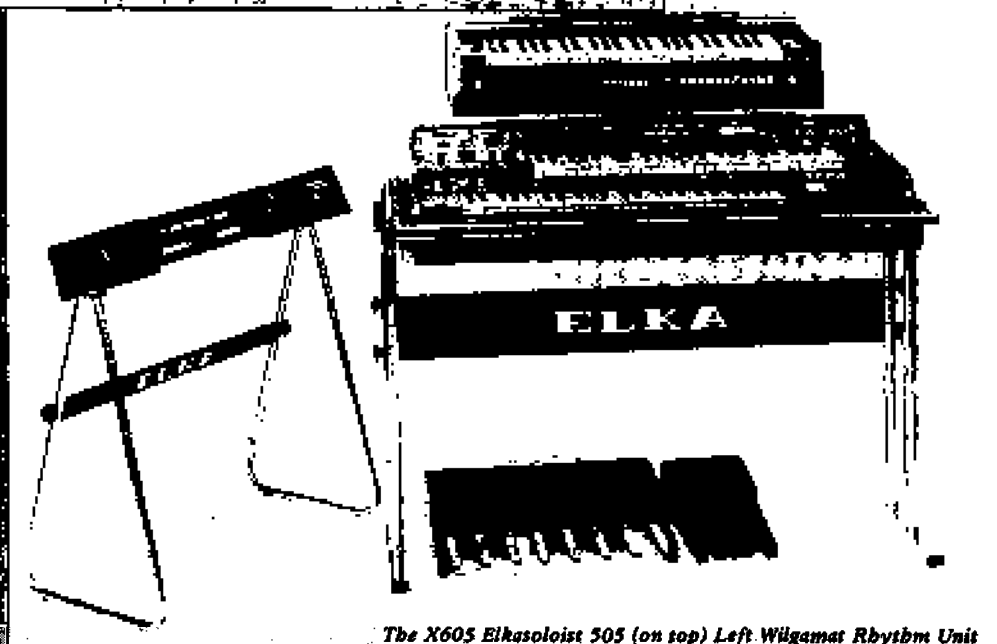
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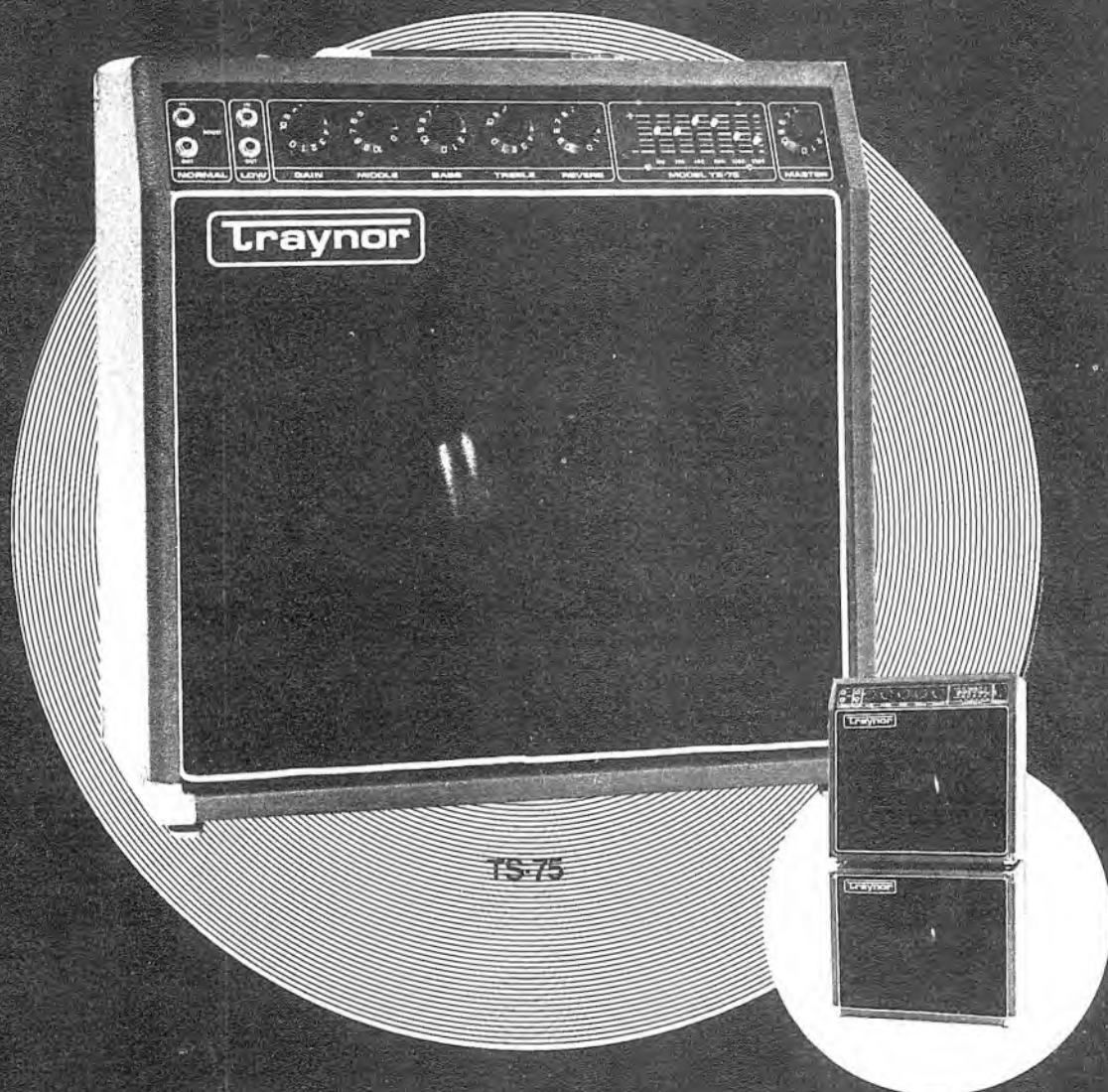
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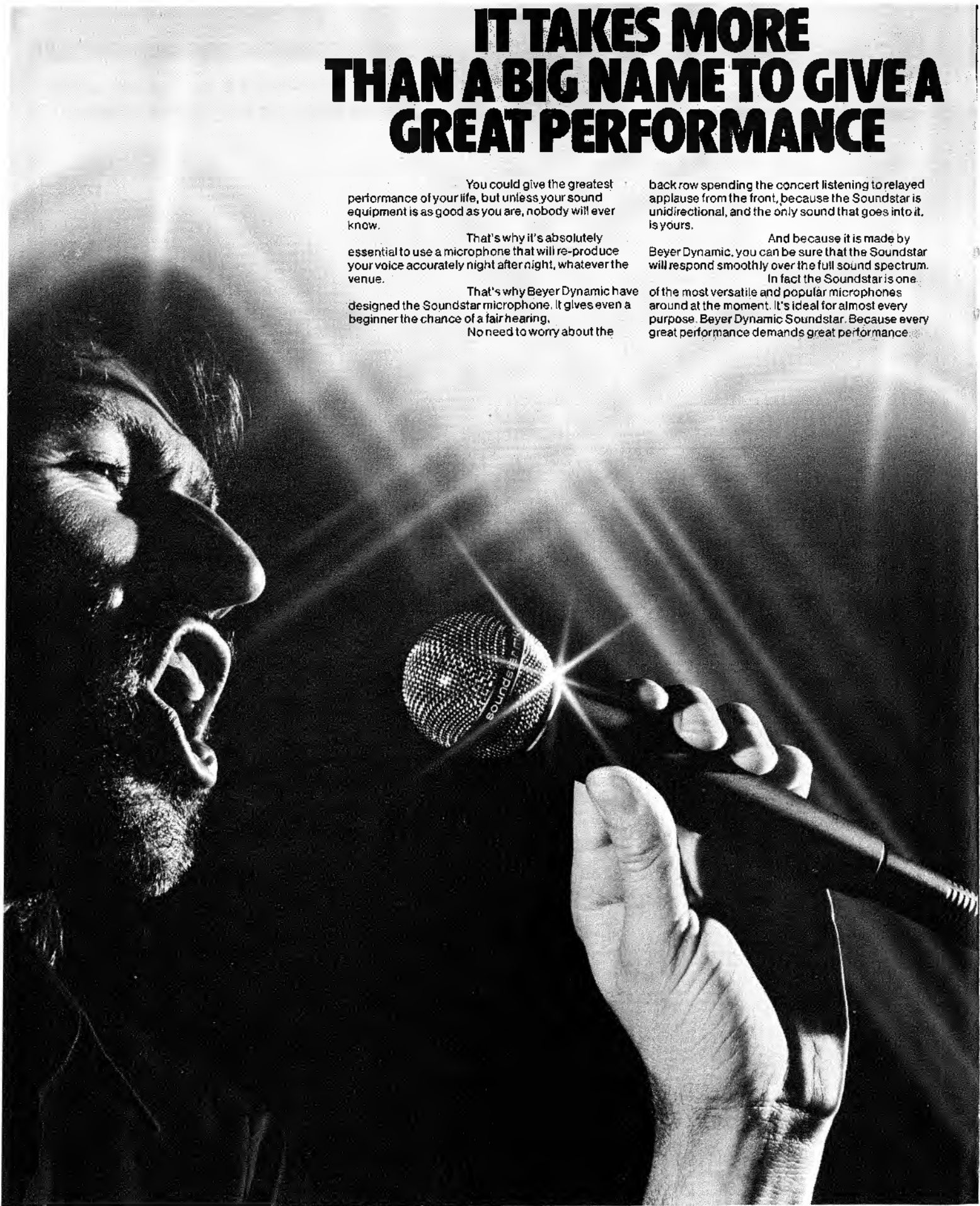
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In fact the Soundstar is one of the most versatile and popular microphones around at the moment. It's ideal for almost every purpose. Beyer Dynamic Soundstar. Because every great performance demands great performance.



For a complete catalogue of Beyer products send to the address below



Soundstar M 400 (C)
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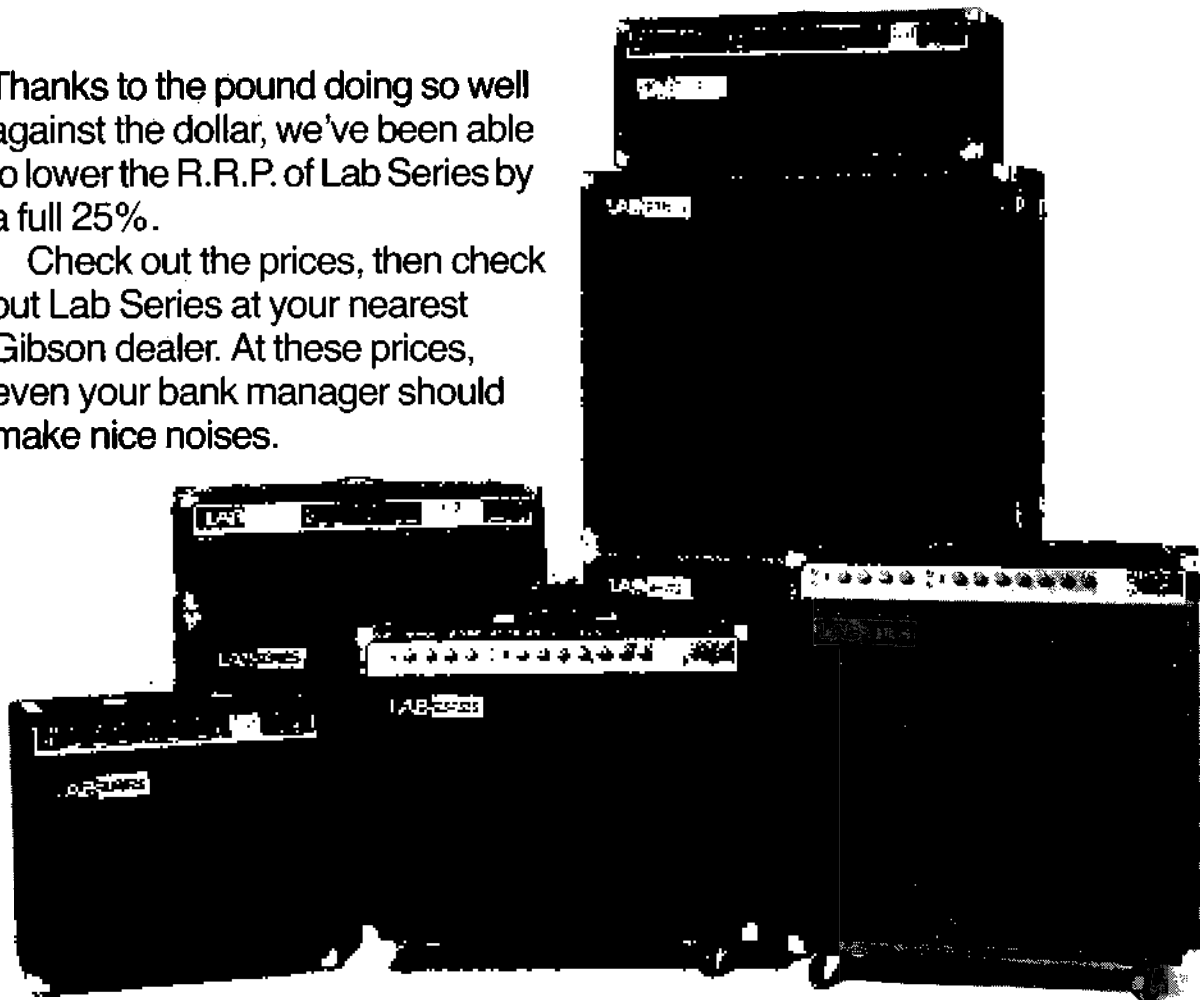
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Tour, in conjunction with musicians everywhere, have developed a range of sound reinforcement enclosures with a power and force unrivalled in this competitive field.

The R1 is the smallest of the range, but make no mistakes, this is a real power system, that can cater for most small venues or, when used in combination, can fill an auditorium with full Tour sound.

The R2 is a natural progression from, or addition to the R1, featuring a pair of very high quality, heavy duty 12" speakers. A very neat compact unit with a power that will surprise you.

The R3 is designed for the larger band who need that little bit extra sonic force, while retaining the clarity that can make or break a

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The R4 is designed and built along the traditional, time served lines of the P.A. speaker system — four high quality 12" speakers mounted in a vertical axis, giving incredible projection across the widest area.

The ultimate in P.A. portability at a very high wattage is the TR series, compact high power units that can be linked to the R series as and when you need to expand your sound.

The TR6 combines a single 15" bass driver, an EV PA-30 horn and 2 Piezo tweeters in a strong durable cabinet that can be stacked as high as you need.

TOUR AMPLIFICATION - ROAD TESTED

For too long now the small band, playing in medium sized venues has had to hand over their sound to either small insubstantial sound combination consoles, coupled with a weak link to a power amp, or massive mixers much too large, and usually much too expensive for this type of group.

Now a new company in the USA have developed the Tour series of medium sized mixers with the compactness of the mini mixer and the features of the monster mixers.

The Showmaster 850 SC is a stereo mixer with the power to fill most large halls. A full 160 watts plus reverb and a complete eight channel line makes this a very versatile and very compact unit that should become a very popular mixer with all bands who need a powerful versatile sound mixer without having to hire a van! All the channels feature dual inputs, clearly marked A and B giving little

change for a live mis-mix which can so easily ruin the best of performances, which also expand the mixers full capabilities for the creative group.

The Stereomaster 450 SC is the Showmasters younger brother, featuring just half the Showmasters 8 channels while retaining the reverb and stereo facilities. It provides the perfect size for the small band playing club size venues, with a full 100 watts, easily enough for most applications.

Both of the mixers feature high quality woodgrain cabinets, colour coded controls stereo Vu meters, monitor facility, and volume, treble and bass on each channel. The Master Network controls feature a versatile Pan system over left and right channels, monitor, volume, treble and bass, plus an effects control, allowing effects such as phaser to be mixed in over the whole range of channels.

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For the vocalist, there are few monitors that come anywhere near the clarity and power of the Tour TM 12. An essential unit for club and auditorium, the TM 12 cuts through the loudest stage noise by utilising the combined force of a single 12" Bass Driver and a powerful Piezo 3" x 5" horn.

With the T 42 Tour have brought out an amazing guitar amplifier. Four very powerful 12" drivers mounted into an infinite baffle create a real stack sound from a single cab! For those who prefer ear damage, the T 42 is also stackable!

Last, and certainly not least is the Z-2 a really powerful twin Piezo horn system that tops off your Tour stack perfectly. The drummer will never lose the cymbal sound, the guitarist his high leads, a dominating unit that really puts the 's' in sound!



Price List

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 Guitarman 50W 12" speaker, dual vol etc. 149.00
 Studio 100W 2x12" speakers, dual vol. etc. 269.00
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 T4 Enclosure 4-12" Heavy Duty speakers 200W 189.00
 T5 Enclosure 1-15" speaker 109.00
 T25 Enclosure 2-15" speakers 159.00
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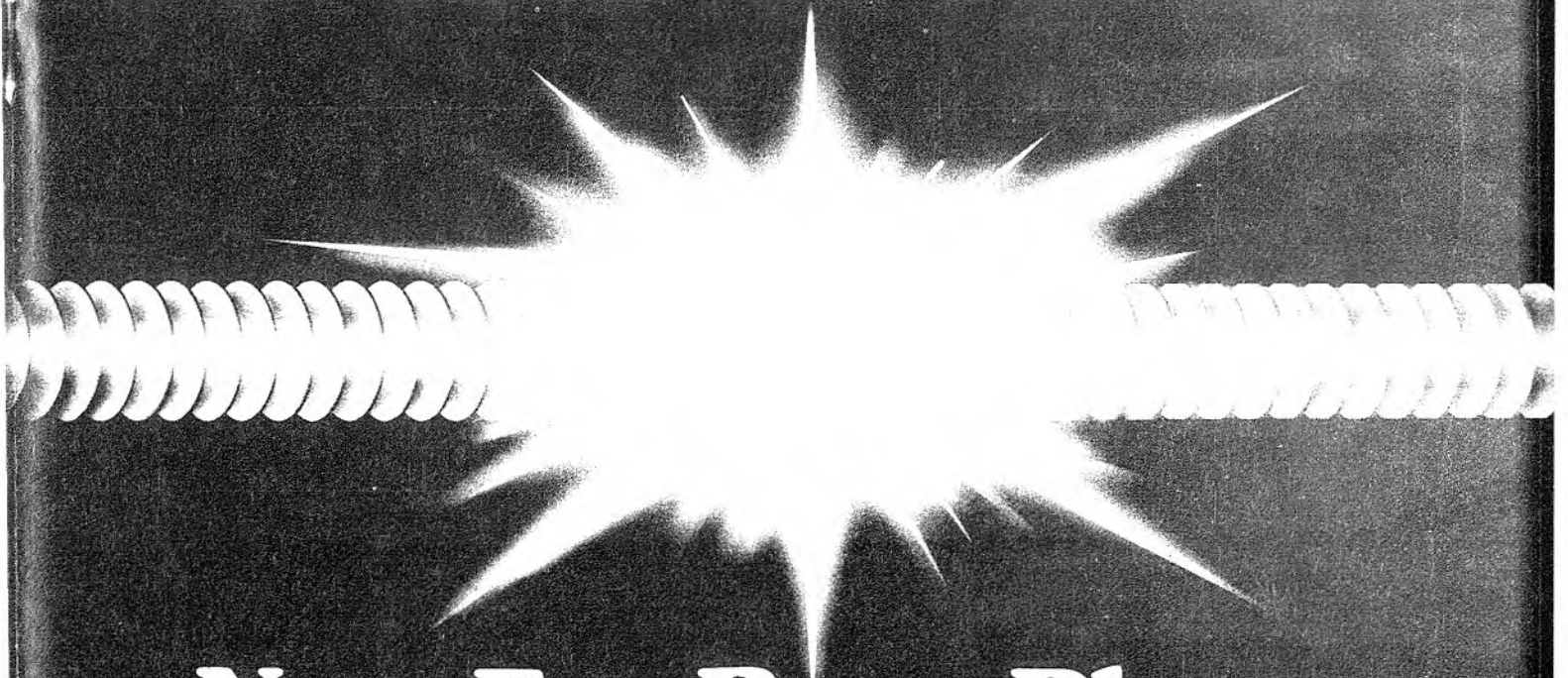
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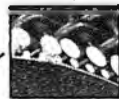
Each was dropped seven times on its side from six feet onto the office floor. Nothing much was happening. So we repeated the series, this time dropping each microphone on its nose. Seven times from six feet. Still no problems. They looked good and sounded good, but we were getting tired.

So we moved to an unyielding slate floor. Here it took three more drops on its side from six feet, and three more on its nose from four feet to finally affect the ATM41. A truly remarkable record!

But what about our ATM91 Fixed-Charge Condenser? It should have given up long before a dynamic. But quite the contrary! The ATM91 withstood four side drops onto slate from six feet, three drops right on the

nose from four feet, and another six drops on the nose from six feet and still tested OK for sound! Granted it looked anything but new, but it *still performed*.

Our little test left us arm-weary but convinced that the ATM Series microphones could easily earn their "Road Tough" name in the field. That's the testing which really counts. Try us.



Part of the secret of ATM toughness is this 3-layer windscreen. An outer heavy wire, a finer wire screen just inside, and an inner layer of woven bronze. All soldered to each other and to a solid brass ring. There's nothing else like it on any microphone.



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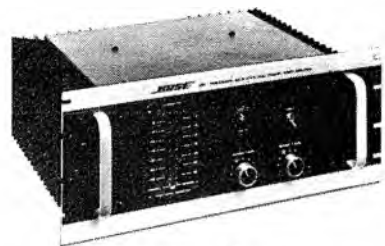
purity and lack of distortion that's the envy of many other pro speakers. Power radiation is flat and total, sound dispersion and transient response excellent.

Match it with the massive dual-channel power of the Bose 1800 amp (400 watts per channel into 4-ohm loads), and you've the ultimate in clean, powerful sound reproduction.

Such a big heavy sound should require a big heavy system. But the 802's are small, light and compact, moulded of mica-polyethylene for supreme strength and light mobility.

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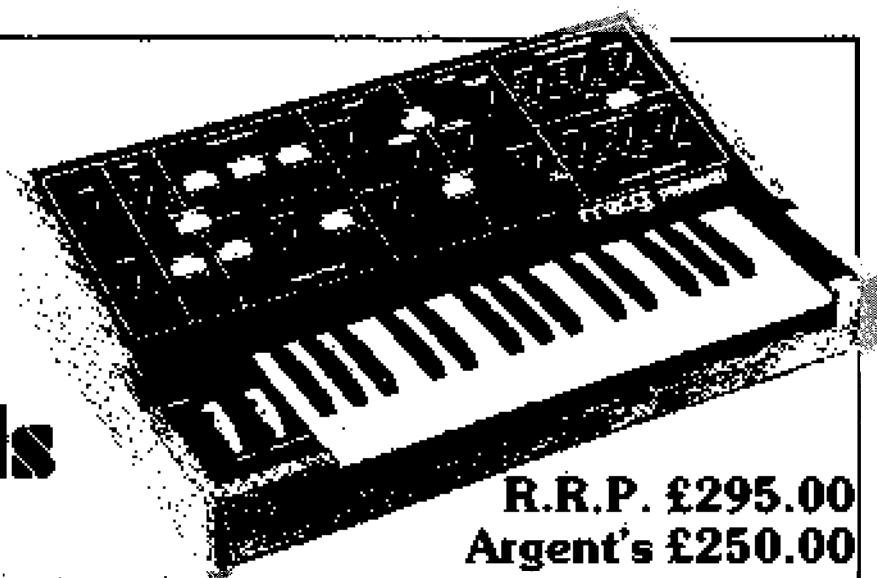
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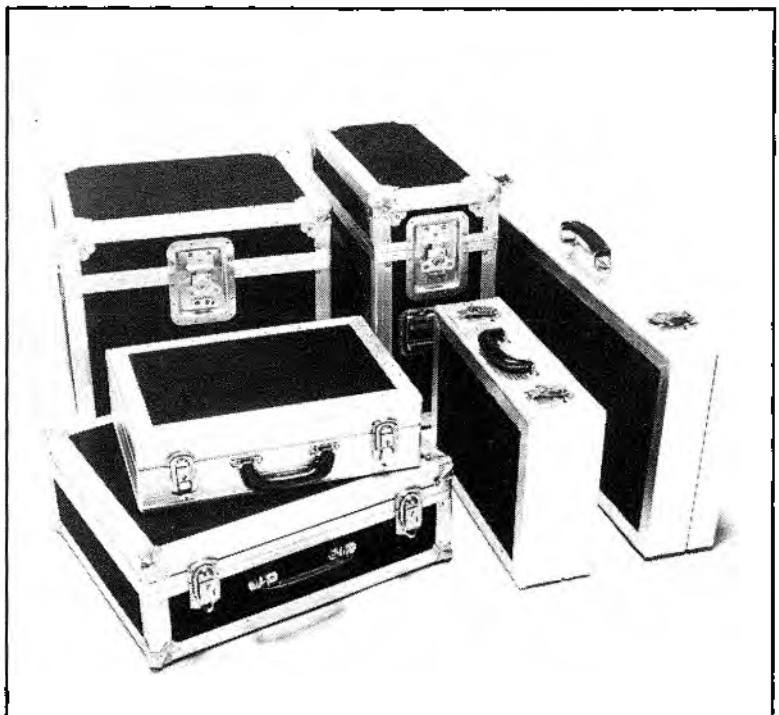
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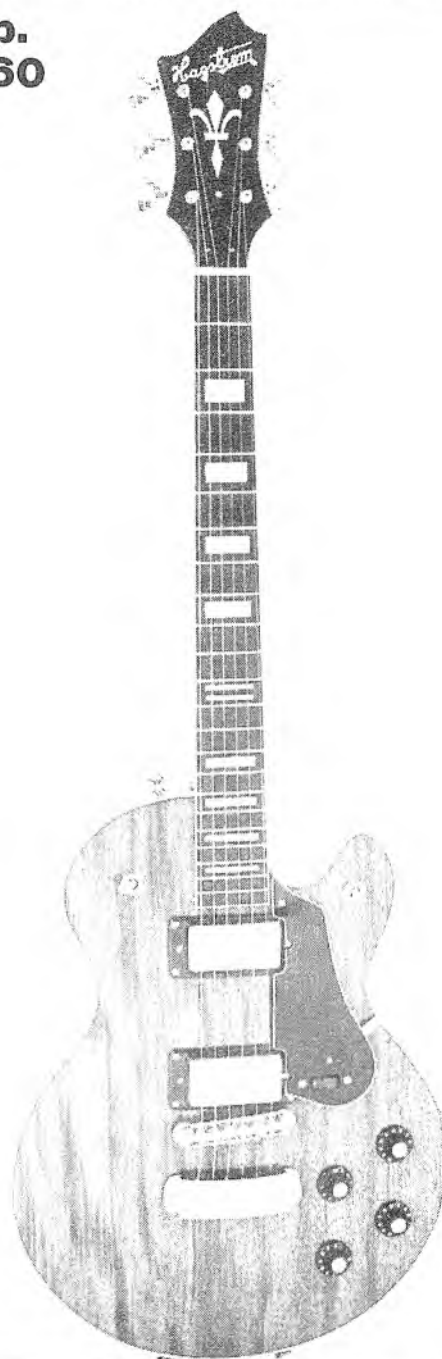
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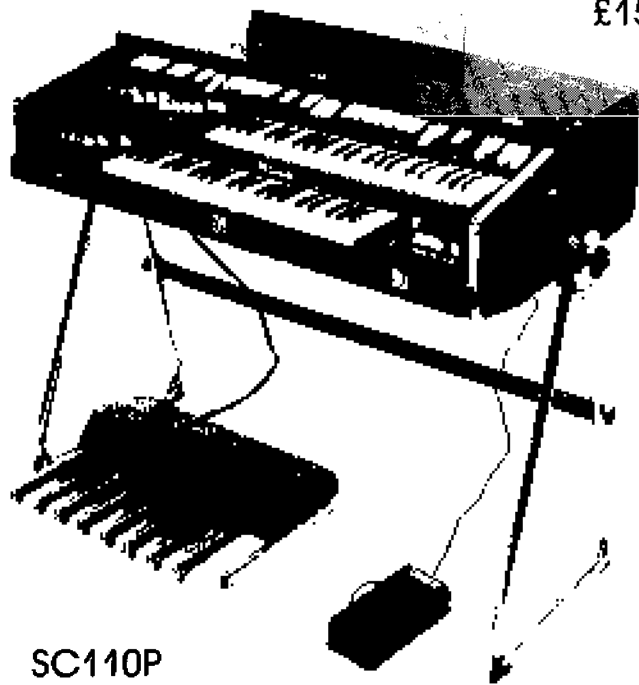
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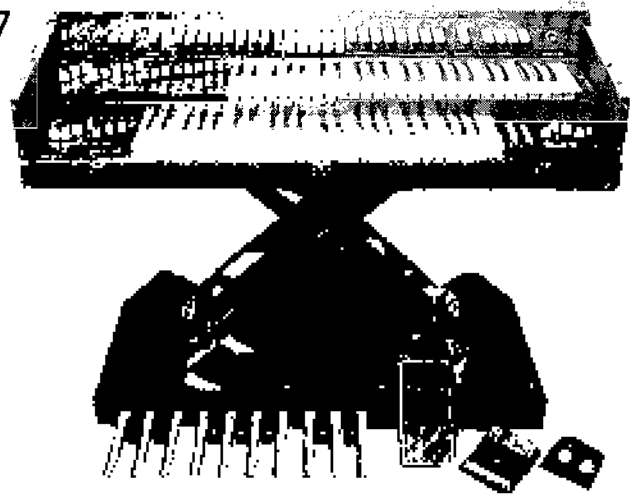
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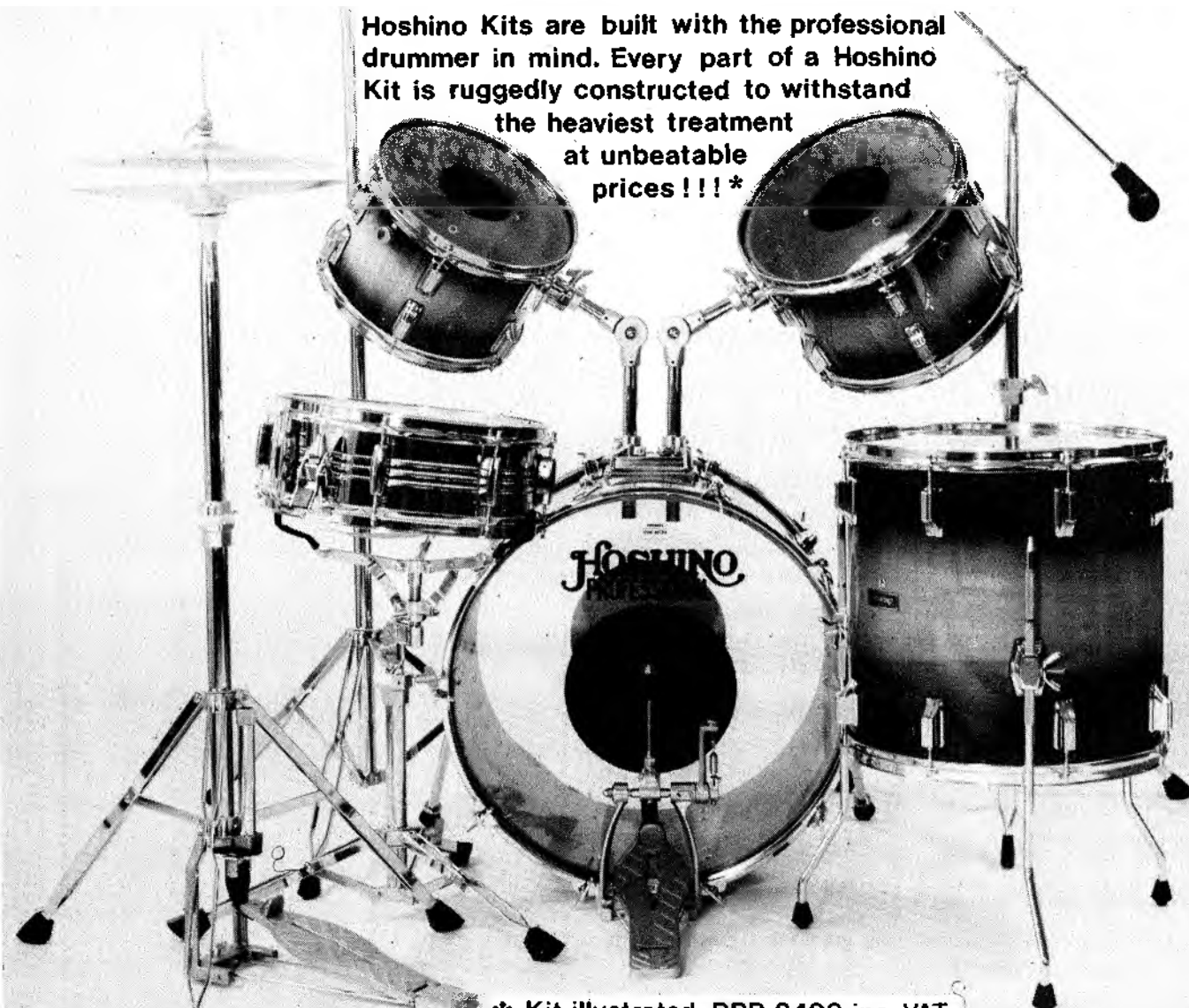
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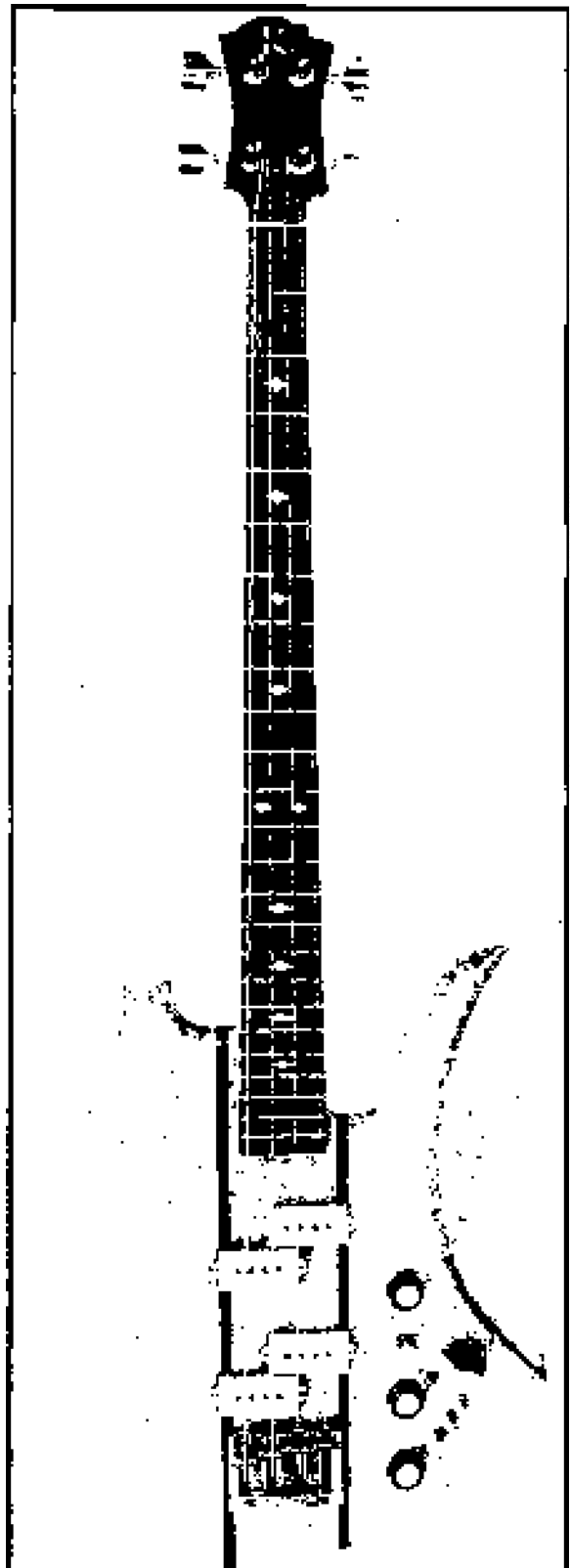
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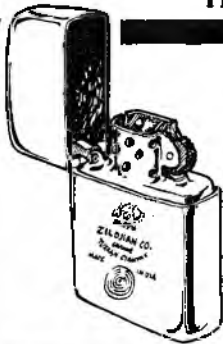
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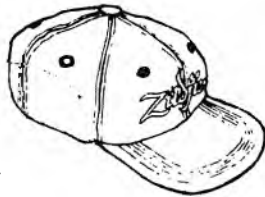


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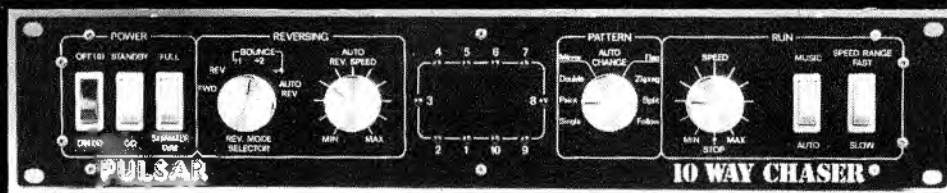


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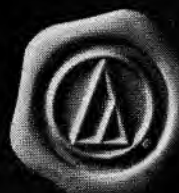
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DRUMCHECK

SONOR XK949 £1689.90 inc.VAT

This is the second nine drum set I've tested recently (the other one came from Italy). I'm not sure whether this is likely to prove 'the shape of things to come'.

I might as well tell you how to "crack" Sonor's code. This set is designated XK949. The first nine means it's one of their top of the range "Sonor-phonics" sets, the second number, the four, means it has a 24-inch bass drum, the third number determines how many drum pieces in the outfit. A five drum set would therefore end with a five. (1084 is a four-piece *rosewood* set with an 18 inch bass drum.)

This set is unique in that it's the first one Sonor has produced with *double* headed concert toms. It's made up of 10 x 6½, 12 x 8, 13 x 9, 14 x 10, 15 x 12, 16 x 14 and an 18 x 16 floor tom. Additionally it has a 24 x 14 inch bass drum and a 6½ inch deep metal shell snare-drum. Accessory-wise, Sonor supply the usual foot pedals, a pair of boom cymbal stands, a snare drum stand and *three* of the aforementioned new deluxe double tom tom holders, one for the bass drum and the others mounted on tripod bases. All the tom toms mount in a *modular* fashion which is to say that if you desire to have your drums fixed in any other way to the normal slightly curved line it's simple to do. I've seen the 15 and 16 mounted low-down next to the floor tom and in line with it. You could, of course, mount the 10 inch toms above the 12 or any other set-up your play-

ing style demanded. It's a very flexible system — all the player needs is a little time to experiment.

These drums are like all "Sonor-phonics" shells built from nine ply beechwood without glue rings and their two inner joints are staggered and cut not at right-angles but diagonally butted at roughly 30 degrees. This has become standard practice to cancel out any shell weak points for several manufacturers of late. The shells end up covered in plastic at close to half an inch thick and their glueing process is carried out in an oil heated press which resembles the mouth of a cannon. "Sonor-phonics" shells have a 45 degree inverse edge camber with a very small radius at head contact point. All the shells are, as I stated in my last article, deliberately made slightly undersize relative to the head and the counterhoop. This gives more clarity to the sound because the head fits over the shell in a timpani-type way and the counterhoop with the head inside it does not touch or in any adverse way interfere with the shell. The sole head contact point then is at the bearing edge — which is a very insignificant fraction of the overall head area.

Bass Drum

This set has the largest standard bass drum produced by Sonor. It's 24 inches by 14 and has 20 cast "T" handled tensioners and pressed steel claws. These timpani-type tension screws have, as I said last

time, a slightly less coarse than normal thread which, although it gives slightly "finer" tuning control, could, in some cases, be more prone to unscrewing. However, as you can appreciate a "fine" thread will not move in such a drastic way as a coarser one. Having said all that, Sonor have coped with this particular detuning problem in a thorough way. It's called "Sharplock" and definitely does maintain tension. Unfortunately, for reasons best known to themselves, they don't fit to their bass drums.

Sonor's spurs can fairly be described as of the non-adjustable out-rigger type constructed from thick bent rod shaped into a triangle with one side extended by two inches or so past the apex, then fitted with their optional rubber or spike tipped foot which is now used on every stand except for the tom tom legs. The whole spur is held in a bass-drum-shell-fixed cast clamp block by its shortest side. The triangle formed by the spur is planned cleverly to angle the tip frontwards to efficiently stop any forward movement. The adjustable jaw of the block itself forms a square hole to retain the round spur more securely.

It isn't really feasible to remove the spurs to pack the drum away. The triangle is contorted along its two longest sides to fit snugly against the shell. The drum is completed by two pressed steel chromed hoops, *both* fitted with rubber



pads to take the bass drum pedal, and a pair of felt strips to dampen the sound. The sound is a lot bigger than any other Sonor drums I've ever played but without the overall roundness of the rosewood one. It's still a quality sound though, with good "up front" tone as far as the player is concerned. From the audience point of view it has plenty of penetration. It's really a stimulating drum to play.

Tom Toms

The XK949 has seven tom toms from 10 to 18 inches in diameter, all have triple flange hoops and screw-driver slotted tension screws. The 10 inch drum has 10 foam-padded internally sprung nut-boxes, the 12 has 12 as has the 13; the 14, 15 and 16 have 16 and the 18 inch floor tom has 18 (one more per head than usual, mind you it's a case of "what you gain on the swings you lose on the roundabouts" because the floor drum has one less leg than most other manufacturers fit to this larger tom.) Each tom has one of Sonor's internal under batter head operating dampers made from really thick spring steel with ½ inch thick pads which are slightly larger in diameter than anybody else's I've seen. These are really good and as I've said before, are second only to Camco's old mufflers. Also I've mentioned before, I don't like the way any *internal* pads effect the sound. The best dampers for me are the ones which work on top of the head since they kill the head after it has been struck and returned to its rest position. Sonor make these sort of dampers, 25111 and 25112, which clip to the rim and are adjustable in pad pressure via a wing-bolt. These are cheap enough and good for recording but be warned, they don't fit so well on any other make of drum.

All the toms are fitted with Remo Ambassadors both top and bottom but I feel their already good, strong sound would be made a little more live and penetrating without them. I feel they are crying out for CS heads. The nine ply shells result in a strong sound for all the toms except for the 10 inch drum (whose shell is actually 9½ inches in diameter). I

have done some experimentation on this particular size of drums and it's my considered opinion that on *smaller* drums a thicker shell is definitely a disadvantage. I feel that a six ply or even thinner shell makes for a clearer sound. However, a pair of CS heads would help *this* particular nine ply 10 inch drum.

Sonor have introduced a new locking system for their slotted tension screws. The nut-box insert now has a horizontal slot cut through its thread and this locates a half-round "D" shaped wire spring. The tension-screw has two flats machined on opposite sides and the spring's flat side clamps hard against these, gripping in tight. It is in essence a good idea but takes a lot of getting used to from a tuning point of view because it changes the feel of the screw in its insert-nut. It feels as if the screw, or rather the head, is under tension even when its not. Incidentally, these "snaplocks" are available separately to fit and update your old "Sonor" set.

The floor tom tom has three bent rod legs with spur type block holders and normal rubber feet. As I said these feet are strangely the only ones on the whole set which don't have the benefit of their famous screw-adjustable and lockable rubber/metal spiked ends. I still can't understand why.

Snare Drum(s)

The drum supplied with the "949" set is the metal shell D506. Last year I reviewed the D505 which is just ¾ inch shallower but exactly the same in every other respect. *This* drum has a 6½ inch deep, one piece, ferro-manganese shell with a 45 degree inverse flange, a centrehead to strengthen the shell and a recessed snare "touch" area which is a slight dip to let the snare rest more uniformly and maintain even tension all around the snare head. Most good quality snare-drums these days have 10 tension screws per head and Sonor's is no exception but theirs locate into double ended nut boxes and are slotted to take a screwdriver type drum key. The snare strainer is pretty unique in that even though it's not a parallel action one, its ten-

sion is adjustable at both strainers and butt ends. This contributes to an even throw-off and helps to eradicate the buzzing and rattling caused by uneven "snare-drop". The strainer itself is part cast and has a cam action on/off mechanism with a "fine" adjustment on its thread. The lever locks up against the pressed-steel frame which in turn locks the mechanism to the drum and is thoughtfully sheathed in rubber. Its butt end too is cast and adjustable. The 22 strand snare is cord-attached to the strainer and the string passes through shoe-type eyelets in the snares themselves. It also has a slot in it to enable the drummer to have the option of plastic strip or cord suspension.

The D506 has the usual snappy sound which all the Sonor snare drums possess. I found the 505 to be too responsive for me but this slightly deeper drum, even though it has the same feel and cutting quality, has the extra bottom end to give more "balls" to the sound. While I was at the Sonor factory I saw the machine which actually makes the snare drum shells from one flat disc of metal in one operation. What I didn't know is that their triple-flange rims are also made in this way. As far as I know the Sonor rims are the only triple-flange ones made from one single piece without a seam. The company claim quite rightly that this makes the rim itself stronger. I would hazard a guess that it possibly helps the sound too, making it perhaps a little rounder and clearer. (Certainly a cast one-piece rim sounds different to one with a join in it.) All snare drums leave Sonor's factory tuned by a stroboscope at each of the tension positions, and all are fitted with Remo's slightly thinner Diplomat heads.

In a previous article I said I was surprised that Sonor didn't make a rosewood shelled snare drum to go with their otherwise excellent rosewood sets. Well, now they do. There are two shell depth sizes, 5¾ and 6½, designated 515 and 516 respectively — the one I played was the slightly deeper 516. (I've just noticed from my new catalogue that the German company no longer appears to

make a five inch shell, only the two sides I've mentioned.) The rosewood drum shells are made from nine plies with their centre cores of beech and their inside and outside ones of genuine Brazilian rosewood. The shell diameter is slightly undersized at 13¾ inches to afford a timpani type, virtually unimpaird seating for the head. The rims are of course triple-flanged, and the 10 nut boxes are Sonor's internally sprung and padded ones which locate the slotted, waisted tension screws. The snare mechanism is adjustable at both ends like the 506, and the bearing edges are the usual, slight "Sonor-phononic" ones found on all the wooden drums. This drum too has the recessed snare touch area and the 22 strand snare is fixed in exactly the same way. The drum has the usual damper and the company factory-fit Remo Diplomat heads which I feel is a bit weird, especially in the light of the fact that they normally fit see-through Ambassadors to their other rosewood drums. A CS head would be my ultimate choice for the D516 snare drums or maybe a *reverse* CS. This drum too has a "snappy" sound but somehow it's more prevalent than on any other Sonor drum. The sound seems to "bounce" somehow. It is really "super-responsive" even when played close to the rims. It sounds to me as if *detuned* it would work very well in the recording studio but also sounds as if it would make a very good concert-type, orchestral drum. Its price too surprised me, at £133.50 it's a lot cheaper than its Chicago-built, rock maple shelled rival.

Accessories

The hi-hat stand supplied with this set is the same one I reviewed last time, the 25456, which has been updated like the BD pedal with a convenient toe-stop. As I said before, it isn't the best one they make because it doesn't have an adjustable spring; however, the company supplies three easily fitted springs of different strengths. The hi-hat has adjustable feet with tripod legs and a rubberized two piece foot-plate. There's a hefty bottom cymbal cup and a substant-

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DRUMCHECK

ial turned top cymbal clutch with a large height adjustment screw. The connecting rod is made from hexagonal rod which effectively stops the clutch from turning and slipping in use. 25456 now has a cast height adjustment clamp fitted to the top tube to ensure the unit sets up at the same height each time. I tested the pedal with the normal middle strength spring and it certainly felt good; smooth and nicely balanced.

The other pedal supplied (the 25317) is also not the most expensive one produced by Sonor, it has a two piece footplate rubberized like the hi-hat's and it clamps to the drum from a convenient position half way up the left hand side of the cast frame. The strap is made from industrial-fibre with a ribbed bottom which fits around a pivot-bar on the footplate and returns to be joined back to itself with a nut and bolt. This eliminates the wear at strap contact point — the position most straps are prone to break at. The other end goes around a very large circular boss joined to the cam bar which I presume serves to de-gear the action and results in a longer strap than usual. The bearer position relative to the drum's head is adjustable on a splined ratchet. Each post contains a needle bearing which I understand will last for a long time. Two adjustable sprung spurs are fixed below each of these posts and as with the hi-hat the pedal is supplied with *three* extra expansion springs of different strengths. This pedal has a feel and balance which definitely needs to be "got used to" but like the hi-hat is very smooth and feels well engineered.

The tripod based snare drum stand doesn't have a very large bore down-tube (by modern standards) but it does boast features unique to itself. It has substantial legs fitted with the screw adjustable lockable rubber or spike tipped feet. The basket type holding mechanism locking is *almost* unique to Sonor — beside the normal centre-gripping arms actuated underneath by a knurled thumb-screw there's a lever-operated, quick-release mechanism which works on a cam and once set-up properly is very quick to use. The height

adjustment is held securely by a "T" bolt shaped like a bass drum tensioner and the playing angle is held by a pair of very large cast "T" nuts, one on the pivot point and one just below. There's another bass drum tensioner-type screw to lock-out the tripod legs.

As I mentioned, Sonor have gone and "beefed-up" the bottom of their deluxe double tom holder. It now has a one inch diameter non-slip splined down-tube which has a drum key adjustable memory clamp fixed to it which locates precisely into a shaped hole *inside* the larger than before castblock. Beneath this block is a cast plate with a three inch long pipe cast into it, strengthened by four ribs to steady the down-tube not just where it has penetrated the shell block but some distance below it too.

The height position of this tube is locked solidly with a "T" screw which squashes a shaped nylon wedge inside the unit against the splines. To the top of this tube is fixed a large two piece cast plate which sandwiches the angle arms and keeps them from revolving horizontally. If Sonor are going to fit "memory-jogging" systems to this new holder they should go all the way. The two positions where the angle arms are locked (at tom tom receiver and down tube clamp) are crying out for them — I would have said far more than the overall height adjustment was. These arms are locked into position with an entirely new system which instead of using two tried and tested wing-nuts use a pair of independently moveable lever sprung locking nuts each made in *four* pieces. The nut is actually moved by a 2½ inch cast lever which can be moved out of the way of its internal locking splines by defeating the spring once the clamp has been tightened enough. The reason it's necessary to move it away is because the two levers can (and do) foul one another while tightening is in progress. I'm sure it's a very sound engineering principal is this but so is the wing-nut and it is far less complicated to use (and easier to describe). Other than this the tom tom holder is "more or less" the one which the company started out with

some years ago. Basically a cast ratchet tilter holds the angle adjustments and is attached to a splined tube which locates into a female carrier fixed to the tom tom's shell. These carriers are very solidly-built with a cast tube-retainer behind them (inside the drum) which keeps it steady for a few inches instead of the usual inch or so most holders of this type give. The top two ratchet arms (left and right) locate into the cast sandwich block and can be adjusted back and forward (or, indeed, up and down) and are locked by the four piece screws I mentioned earlier.

The whole thing looks strong and works very well. It can also be adapted via its plate to support another tom tom or cymbal arm or perhaps a microphone. The whole top unit fits onto a tripod base with double-strutted legs very like the cymbal stands for non-bass drum set-up.

These cymbal stands have amazingly wide-spreading and substantial double legs, with as usual the adjustable feet. The leg spread is adjustable and lockable again with a bass drum tensioner type screw as is the cymbal height in two positions. There's a stop at the bottom of the largest tube to prevent the legs from sliding off and a removeable cast tilter at the top which accommodates the boom arm. The catalogue lists two ordinary cymbal stands *and* two boom arms which appear to give the owner of this set a good alternative. The ratchet tilter is thoughtfully constructed with

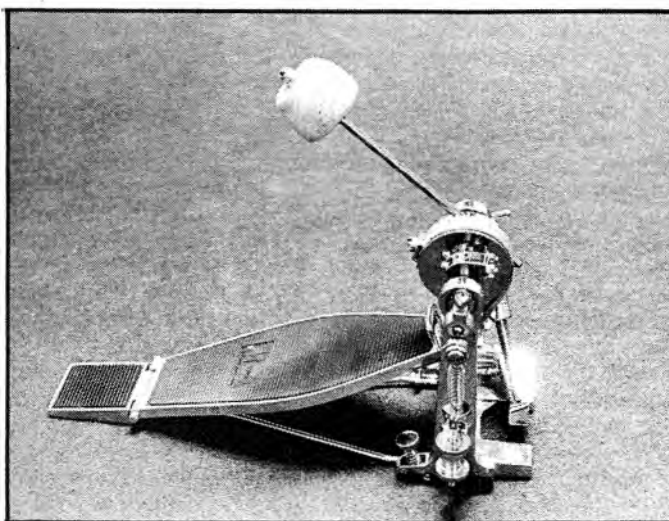
a skeleton of steel inside the casting to strengthen it (indeed, all of the ratchets on the set have this facility). The boom is adjustable in a telescopic way but does not have a counter weight. Mind you, with wide spreading legs like it possesses, I would have thought it difficult to unbalance even with a 24 inch cymbal on it. The actual ratchet tilter has thick felts to protect your cymbal and a wing-nut with a thoughtful locking-washer below it. (I don't know why they don't use one of their normal "T" handled tensioner matching wing-nuts here, it would be much better cosmetically.)

Conclusion

The set I saw was finished in metallic pewter and looked pretty good. Alternatively, one could specify one of eight other plastic finishes including solid black or white (metallic ruby is my favourite), or for extra bread you could go for one of five natural wooden finishes. From my factory visit I now know just how painstakingly all these finishes are applied and I certainly haven't visited a manufacturer who did them better. Sonor's chrome finish is now excellent too, since they spent all that bread on their own triple-stage chroming plant.

Of course, as usual, this set is not cheap (I seem to write this every issue) but it is the nine drums and, if it's any consolation, cheaper than the last nine piece set I reviewed.

Henry Roberts



BERNARD 'PRETTY' PURDIE

Father Of Funk Drumming

When Arthur Conley opened his '67 hit "Sweet Soul Music" with the line "Do you like good music?/That sweet soul music," he could have also been asking if you liked Bernard "Pretty" Purdie. THE soul drummer behind James Brown, Aretha Franklin, and countless others during their finest moments on record, Purdie is the heart of the backbeat, the modern father of funk. With over 3,000 album credits to his name, "Pretty" Purdie has spent studio and/or road time with artists like The Isley Brothers, Roberta Flack, The Stones, Jeff Beck and Steely Dan.

A skilled historian for the beat of the last 20 years, Purdie likes to tell stories. A delightfully animated speaker, quick with a smile and a warm sense of humour, Bernard Purdie is also a man who seems to make his own luck.

"When I was 10," he begins, "I got a chance to play with a big band. I would accompany my teacher to the gig and get him drunk. I'd have a bottle of gin ready for him and he'd be drunk by half time, so I would finish the gig. I never got paid, but that didn't mean anything to me. The guys in the band knew that I'd be there because they knew inevitably he was gonna be wasted.

"Everybody wants to make you a natural," he goes on. "Natural means that I was a natural for learning. I was playing since I was six. Born in Elkton, Maryland June 11, 1939, I was number 11 of 15 kids. My mother wasn't about to send me to music school, music didn't exist. I was lucky because the guy who lived around the corner, Leonard Haywood, was a drummer who taught music. He allowed me to sit on the third step in his house while he taught the kids who could afford lessons. I was there twice a week for seven or eight years.

"I couldn't do anything, I'd just listen. I wasn't allowed to speak, because I didn't exist. He would let me play when he wanted to make an example for somebody. I would come down and do exactly what he said and then he'd stop me. One time I spoke and he said 'OUT! You don't exist!' I was so hurt because I'm lookin' at my whole thing going down the drain. I begged and pleaded with him all week and he allowed me to come back

saying, 'The next time you open your mouth that's it.'"

IMRW What did you use for practising?

B.P. I had a pair of sticks and I practised on a bread can. After that, I wasn't allowed to play the bread can, because it was too loud, I had to play with my hands. I could only play the sticks on the sidewalk. Didn't have a practice pad, we couldn't afford one.

IMRW Was this how you learned your rudiments?

B.P. Let me explain something, rudiments are something we all must learn, that's the alphabet. Besides rudiments, he was teaching me all the things that I'm doing now. I'm doing the exact same thing he did 25, 30 years ago. He taught me feeling, attitude, stability, flexibility, manoeuvrability, and just plain old down to earth *feel*.

IMRW How about a mini-lesson on the subjects you just mentioned?

B.P. Feeling should be the last one

"My best performances were with Aretha Franklin"

you mention, even though it's the first one everybody talks about. That's what the people get. People get feeling first, even though it should be the last thing that the drummer worries about, or any musician for that matter.

IMRW It takes all those other things in order to project it.

B.P. That's right. But no matter what happens, if you don't like the feeling then anything else he's doing is out the window. So for the public, feeling would automatically come first. They don't know what he's playing, but they like the way it feels.

Co-ordination means making your limbs move in a systematic way so they go together to make one beat. Even though your arms and legs are doing things separately, they must bring everything about to the point where they mean one thing.

Attitude is what you're doing with

co-ordination, it's how you go about making it feel good to you. So you see, feeling is adding to everything you do.

Stability means staying power. You have to be able to stay and last for any length of time. You have to build from that as a baby. When a baby wants to walk, he's got to crawl first. If he wants to run, he's got to walk. Unless you continue to play and rehearse, you will never have stability. Rehearsal makes stability, there's no other way.

Flexibility means to be able to manoeuvre, which brings about going into the studio. This is another world. Every session, every song I do, means I've got to be somebody else. They might want the feeling of Ringo or the sound of Chicago. You name all the groups and I have to be flexible enough to make that sound commercial enough so you'll buy it. That's flexibility, but that's what the studio man does.

Stan Getz is a fantastic player, but he plays one way. Stan would have a problem, to some degree, joining just any kind of band; R&B, Rock, Blues, Reggae. He would have problems playing all these different kinds of music because he never had to be that flexible. He's a star within his own right, so he doesn't have to.

IMRW Don't you trade off something when you become a studio musician?

B.P. Yes, you lose who you are. Stan Getz knows he's Stan Getz, but we lose who we really are because we have to wear so many hats. I'm one of the lucky ones. I was able to create my own sound and still be flexible enough to play with anybody, anywhere.

IMRW That type of flexibility is something you learn, it's not a trait you start with.

B.P. Right, you've got to have something to put your hands on, you must have a direction.

IMRW After two years at Maryland's Morgan State College, I'm sure your inclination wasn't towards the studio.

B.P. I never knew there was such a thing.

IMRW But skill-wise you could read music.

B.P. Sure, I did that when I played with the big band. I had to, but there was never any drum music. I read the



trumpet, trombone and sax charts. That would tell me enough to make sure I'd get my licks together. In the Fifties and Sixties no one wrote drum music and charts were usually never given out to the drummer. Besides the guys were lazy and didn't know how to write drum music because they didn't have to take it in school.

IMRW Do you prefer a chart?

B.P. Most people don't realise that I get twice as much freedom when you give me the music, I don't worry about what I have to play if I've got the music. I can play what is there and then take all the liberties I want around what I have to do. You don't have to think about direction. I know exactly where you're going, so I can start off immediately adding stuff. I'm halfway through a song and I've already added stuff because I have the ability to read ahead. That didn't come until 1962 when Stick Evans taught me to read faster.

IMRW Did he teach you to read in groups?

B.P. Not only in groups but pages in front of myself. I'm down there early, working it out and arranging. I have an almost photographic memory and that helps too.

IMRW What brought you from Maryland to New York City?

B.P. Definitely a dream. I was afraid of New York from what I'd read in the

“Working with Steely Dan has been super exciting”

papers, but I knew I had to go there to make it happen. I came up with a whole band from Baltimore after being in college. We were super country, real naïve. When we got here, we stopped in the Bronx to see the guitar player's cousin. We took our equipment across the street to a club and played for free. We had a ball and the place was packed within an hour's time. Somebody said they should get Mickey and Sylvia. I knew them from the song "Love is Strange". Sylvia came down and asked us to come to her club (The Blue Morocco) and audition. She didn't like the rest of the band, but she liked me. She asked me to stay and I did a session with them. Less than a week in New York and I'd done a studio date and gotten \$80. I freaked out. I thought I'd hit the big time, I was a star. For the next six months I worked in a laundry.

IMRW How did you break into the studio scene?

B.P. I went downtown and told everybody I was good, I could do the job. I begged for a couple of years. There was no such thing as demo tapes, somebody had to give you a shot. I didn't know anybody so I'd go where musicians hung out. I'd buy drinks and cheesecake for people I was told were musicians. Finally I found out who was what in the industry. I had been buying for the guys who weren't working! Anyway I didn't get a shot for a couple of years.

IMRW Who gave you the break?

B.P. Barney Richmond and Buddy Lucas. I had already done a couple of demos with Les Cooper and Lonnie Youngblood. I was making the rounds but I hadn't been making records. I found out Barney and Buddy were contractors and bugged them for six months. My first break was the song "Just One Look."

Barney came into this restaurant looking for a drummer. He was looking for Joe Marshall, Panama Francis, Sticks Evans or Gary Chester, but none of them were there. I was the only drummer in the place. He said, 'Can you read?' I said I can do it. Barney took me to Allegro studios and Buddy was there. Buddy said 'You've got Mississippi Bigfoot here.' That's the nickname he gave me because I

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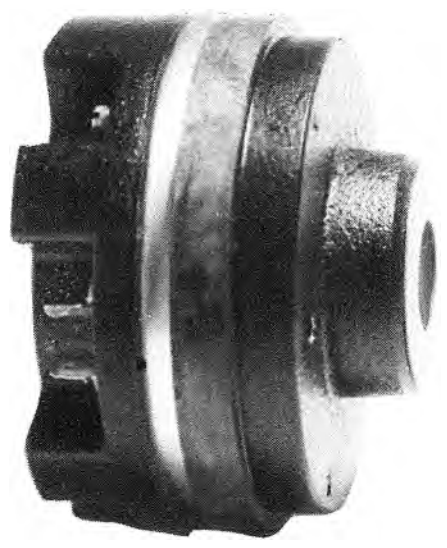
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BERNARD 'PRETTY' PURDIE



had big shoes. When we started "Just One Look" Buddy said, 'Hey, he can actually play.'

He started talking me up around the area and I became the demo king of New York. I was making \$10 a shot for every demo and some turned out to be masters, but of course I didn't know that. Now I'm getting to meet some of my idols, and they couldn't duplicate what I was doing. That's the only reason why I was about to move from demos to the masters. There was no other drummer down there playing what I was playing, and people liked it.

In the early 60's until about 65 it was really heavy. I had a ball. During that time I did "Mercy Mercy" by Don Convay, "High Heel Sneakers" and all the Motown records.

IMRW Pianist Richard Tee once told me that the Motown sound was really New York, not Detroit.

B.P. They were cut in New York and sent out to Detroit and fixed up. Of course some became masters, but what could we do? There was no law against what they were doing. Songs like "Wonderful One" or "Can I Get A Witness" were two of over 500 tracks I did for Motown. Smokey (Robinson) wrote those songs because they had tracks and he'd play piano on top of them and make it sound like it was done there.

IMRW Do you like the illusion of playing with tape, playing with musicians who aren't really there?

B.P. I love it. It was one of the biggest things in the world, to make something happen that didn't really happen. My job was to stop it from being an illusion. That's where I made my money for many years, fixing up what other people *didn't* do.

IMRW Do you have any strong memories of working with James Brown?

B.P. There was one time when I didn't work with him for two years and then we did a session at Beltone Studios. We ended up with a 23-piece band, horn and rhythm section. James came in late and said 'Purdie this is your big chance. Let's see what you can do.' The song was "Goin' to Kansas City" and he started his two bar count. On his second bar I started a roll on top of his count and came down with a big crash with the horns. James heard all this music coming out and he jumped in the air. I hit every one of the licks with the horns and we were cookin'. I went into my star bag. It was done in one take.

IMRW You also did so much with Aretha Franklin, stuff like "Respect" and "Chain of Fools." What do you remember about working with her?

B.P. When I was coming along my teacher told me that the way I play, I could go in any direction, but he said my best foot would be with lady singers. I realise my best performances were with Aretha Franklin. That was the height of my playing and what I have done. It really did a number on

me. No matter what she'd sing, I'd try to put my foot in the spots she might possibly miss. I was inspired by her singing. She told me that I inspired her when she sang, so it was mutual.

IMRW A couple of my favourites are the *King Curtis* and *Aretha Live at the Fillmore* albums.

B.P. Those are the best live albums I've ever done, and I've had a lot of them. That happened because of Gene Paul at Atlantic records. We came in one morning and started experimenting with the sound. We came up with something close to a studio sound. Sure enough that was the night both those albums were taken from. The first night we showed off for all the musicians in the house. The next night we got even tighter and we burned. We ended up with 45 minutes of Ray Charles. The people got seven or eight (on the live Aretha album) but we had 45 minutes of groovin' with Ray Charles. It was smokin'.

IMRW Have you done anything recently that's been exciting?

B.P. Working with Steely Dan has been super exciting. They know what they want and what's right for them. For me it's an esteemed pleasure because I know I'm gonna sound good when they're finished with me. I'll sound even better than what I liked in the studio. This new album is even better than *Royal Scam* and *Aja*. *Royal Scam* I consider to be a classic album and this is even better.

IMRW When you record do you use your own drums or rentals?

B.P. I use rentals. I don't change my sound. Rentals don't bother me. I get what the producers want.

IMRW What about your own drum set?

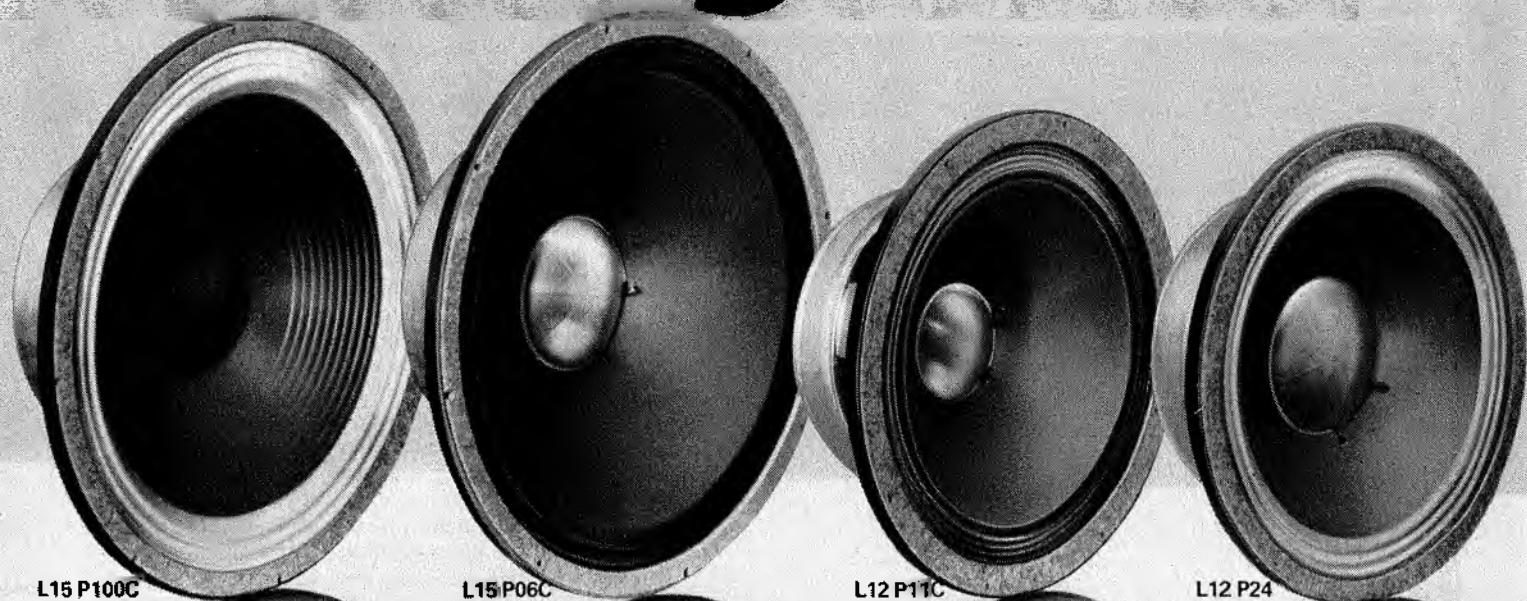
B.P. I use Sonor drums. I have a 16" floor tom and two tenor toms, a 13" and a 14". The bass drum is 22 inches. I have two snares, a 6 3/4" and 6 7/8". I use the lighter drum for small places 'cause it's very loud. I use Sonor footpedals and hardware. I prefer the 1970 footpedal, I think its the best they ever made. I also use Zildjian cymbals. 13" high hats and 16", 17", 19" and 20" cymbals. My sticks are Bernard Purdie models made by Sonor. They're light enough for jazz and heavy enough for rock.

IMRW With more and more studio musicians making their own bids for recognition, would you like to see your name at the top of the credits?

B.P. I want to play live more now than I ever did. I realise I've always wanted to be a star. Secretly in the back of my head I've wanted to be out front. It's not easy. To do it right, with taste, that's the whole thing. I realise I want to be up there more so now because I'm actually getting good!

John Stix

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Continued from page 52
the competition between lighting companies to see who can hang the most lights on a tour, the Floyd system utilised only one relatively simple overhead truss, and relied instead on two clusters of lights of various optical characteristics each mounted on a hydraulic platform trailer stationed one at each side of the stage and a huge hoop with a fine mesh screen stretched over it, set vertically at the back of the rear stage behind the drum rostrum, and lit by lamps crossfired across it from the perimeter hoop.

The two hydraulic platform clusters included Par 38's, pin spots and manually operated follow spots, and each platform could of course be moved to practically any required position and at any elevation from floor level upwards within the reach and height capabilities of the hydraulic platform unit. These four installations — one truss, one illuminated hoop and the two moving platforms, coupled with a certain amount of additional lighting directed upwards from the stage floor, and extensive use of pin spots from the galleries, was all the lighting that seem to be in use on the rear stage behind the wall.

However, midway through the second half, when the band appeared in front of the wall, two huge lighting trusses, one over 80 feet in length, adorned with over 200 assorted coloured Par lamps, descended from the roof along with two manned follow-spot "pods". The effect was mind-blowing.

Well — was it all worth it? It must have taken a week's work at least to set up the hall for this show and many months of preparation beforehand. Literally armies of roadies, managers, engineers, technicians and security staff were employed — to such an extent that mobile administration offices and a crew canteen had been set up backstage. The equipment alone was worth a fortune quite apart from the production costs and staffing. It was an extravaganza in the full sense of the word.

I think that the unequivocal answer must be affirmative. It was without doubt a most fascinating spectacle to see, and the technical production was brilliantly executed. All the cues were perfectly timed between pre-recorded backing and sound effects, lighting, other effects such as the plane, the marionettes, the films, the building and destruction of the wall, etc., and the band playing away on stage. Everyone involved obviously knew exactly what had to be done and the whole show went like clockwork.

The sound quality was superb in every respect — ab-

solutely clean, with all the vocals clearly audible above the instruments, and due to the careful alignment of the loudspeaker arrays, there were very few seats in the whole of this huge auditorium where the sound was anything less than good. Average sound pressure level was about 104dB(A) over most of the auditorium — which as far as I am concerned, is quite loud enough to make the old adrenalin flow, but not unnecessarily loud, and this must be the sensible level at which to run sound systems for rock music.

The system seemed to be easily capable of maintaining

this level in this huge hall with no evidence whatsoever of stress — even at the occasional peaks of 108dB(A) there was no problem and no deterioration of sound quality. Of course, the plane, the collapse of the wall, and other occasional sound effects when all 70 2x15 bass bins were brought into play was quite mind blowing and one's head was simply swimming in a sea of low frequency which seemed to come from everywhere at once — which of course it did!

As far as I am concerned, full marks. Floyd have done it again!

Ken Dibble

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一億総シンセ時代到来!?

何と僅か860gの登場! ウォーク・シンセ



エレクトロ・ハーモニクス ミニ・シンセサイザー MODEL EHO400

いやはや、アメリカという国は一体何が飛び出して来るかわからない所だ。世界を破壊に邁く原爆が飛んでくるのは困るけれど、ここに紹介する嬉しい楽器なら大歓迎だ。とにかく、このミニ・シンセは本当に本物のシンセサイザーなのである。そのうえ、僅か860gと軽量、スピーカー内蔵、バッテリー作動(DC 9V・006PX 2、またはACアダプター)、プリント・キー等々の特長があげられる。要するに、手軽に持ち運べ弾く場所を選ばないという事で、海、山、公園は勿論、トイレの中でも、歩きながらでも、寝ながらでも、車の中でも等々と、実に広範囲に渡っているのが嬉しい限り。また、裏面のアウト・プット・ジャックにアンプを接続すればパワフル・サウンドもバッチリで、ギタリスト同様、ステージで派手に動きながらのソロもOK。アウト・ドア、イン・ドアの両方ともOKというから実に泣ける。

では実際に機能性の方はどうであろうか。読者諸君の中にはシンセサイザーといえは、「高価で手が出ないもんね?」とか、「ボク、メカニックには弱いよ?」とか、「先天的に鍵盤楽器は弾けないのだ?」とか誤った先入感を持った人が多いと思うが、このミニ・シンセはそれらのイメージを完全にぶち壊して

しまった。何と云っても、プレイヤー・サイドからみてセルロイド紙にプリントされたキーは驚きであろう。このプリント・キーは電卓の液晶スイッチと同様、タッチ・センスで軽く触れるだけで音が出る仕組みになっているゆえに、ピアノの様に肉体的訓練(運指etc)を積まなければダメノという様な事はなく、指でプリント・キーをなぞるだけで既にキーボード歴10年に匹敵しちゃうかもね!例えば、低音を押さえておき高音部くり返しリリースすれば、いわゆる驚異的なフレージングもハッチリ可能だ。備えている機能はごく簡単であり、カラフルなスライド・スイッチを写真左側より説明してみます

○オクターブ
このスイッチによりオクターブの切り換がいとも簡単に出来ちゃうのだ

○ピッチ・ベント・スライダー：その名の通り上下にスライドさせる事によりピッチの調整、そしてリード・ギター顔負けのチョーキング・ニュアンス(ベンド効果)などをかもし出せる

○サブ・オクターブ：このバーをスライドさせる事によりオクターブ下の音がブレンドでき、重低音のコントロールが可能

○フェイズ&フェイズ・レート：フェイズを

ONにするとコーラス効果が得られ、かかり具合はフェイズ・レートをスライドする事によりOK/また、フェイズをOFFにするとフェイズ・レート・バーがトーン・コントロール・バーに早変わり

さて、これらのバーはあくまでも音を創るうえでのサポート的役割にすぎないが、これから説明するVCFセクションこそ、このミニ・シンセの切り札ともいべき強力な武器なのだ。まず、スウィープ・スタート・フリークエンシーとスウィープ・ストップ・フリークエンシーで決められた音色を、スウィープ・レートでコントロールした時間でスウィープできるユニークさ。という事は、プレイ中スウィープ・ストップ・フリークエンシー・バーを動かせばアタックは決まった音色で始まると同時に、音色の変化を暗くしたり明るくしたりといった芸も可能。さて、スイッチ(ブルー部)の説明をしてみましょう

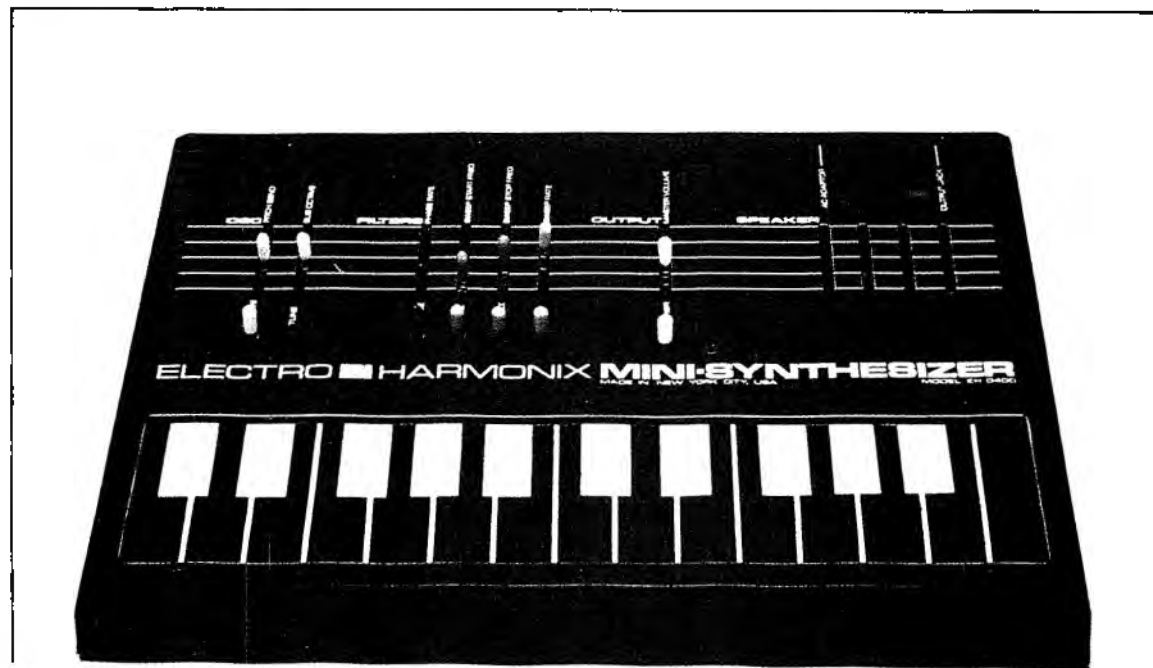
○インパクト・センサー・ON/OFF：このスイッチの切り換によりフィルターにタッチ・センサーが接続される

○2X フィルター：切り換によりVCFにサブ・フィルターが加わり人の声に似た音色が得られる

○Q：フィルターのレゾナンス(共鳴)の鋭

さ(強弱)を切り換るとにかく、コンパクトなボディからは想像出来ない程パワフルな音色が出てくるのでブツたまげる。あえて言うなら、オーバー・ハイムに代表される極太の音色とでもいおうか、さすがロックの国アメリカ産ならではの音色だ。最少限のコントロールで最大限の効果が得られる歴史に残る!このミニ・シンセをどう使いこなすかは君のアイデア次第だ。ちなみに価格の方は¥49,000とメチャ安

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So what is the function of MINISYNTHESIZER? Readers of this article think that MINISYNTHESIZER must be very expensive to purchase or I am weak for mechanic and no musical talent to play. But this is wrong preconception. Nevertheless, this MINISYNTHESIZER broke all such imaginations completely.

From the player side, you will surprise to see printed keys in celluloid paper board. This printed keys are same as electric table liquid crystal (so called touch sense)—just touch lightly—you can hear the sound so it is quite different from heavy piano play as physical exercise or finger exercise. MINISYNTHESIZER is just touch the keys with your fingers then you feel as have played for ten years expert.

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Explanation from left with color slides:

Octave: Depends with switch turning control can be simple.

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Sub Octave: When slides this bar possibly lower sound can be controlled.

Phase & Phase Lead: When the Phase switch is "ON" can get chorus effects. When Phase switch is "OFF" changes tone speedily.

All these bars are support for production of sound.

The next six controls all affect the MINISYNTHESIZER's filter to change the tone of the sound. The filter can be swept, starting at the frequency set on the SWEEP START control, and stopping at the frequency set on the SWEEP STOP control. SWEEP RATE controls the time it takes for the complete sweep. Higher settings produce longer sweep times. If the two frequency controls are in the same position, there will be no sweep, just a tone change. The tone can be changed when the filter is not sweeping just by moving the SWEEP STOP control.

Impact Sensor ON/OFF: Depends when this switch changes filter touch-sense can be connected.

2X Filter: Turns VCT when change of subfilter add second filter can get similar to a human voice.

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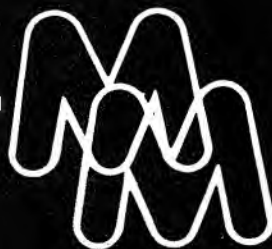
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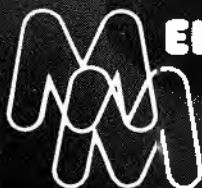
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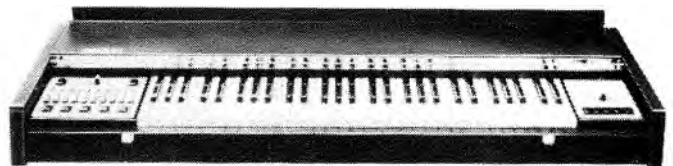
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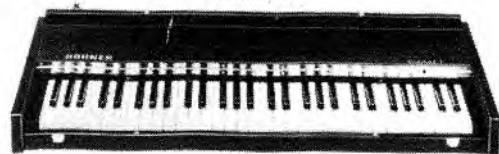
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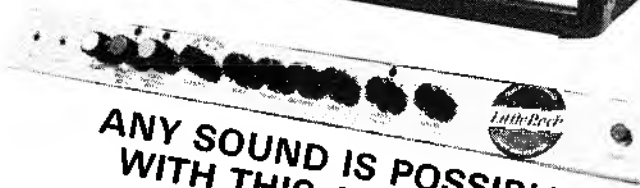
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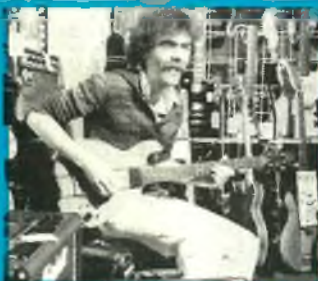


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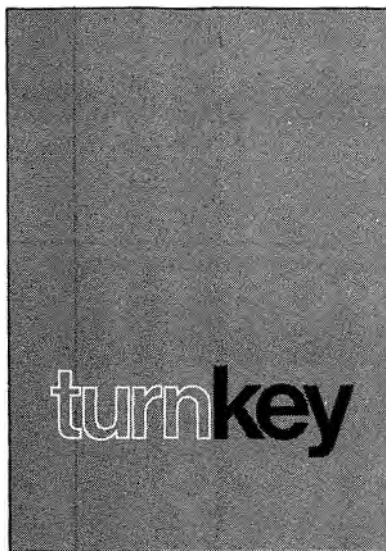
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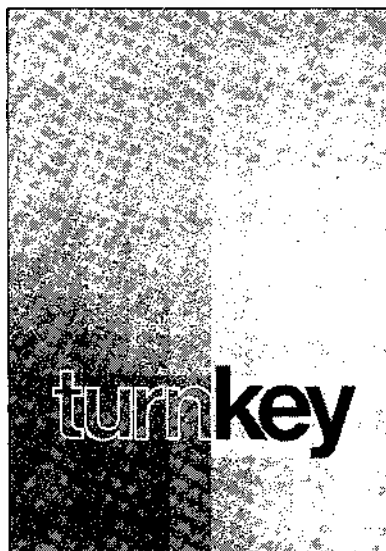
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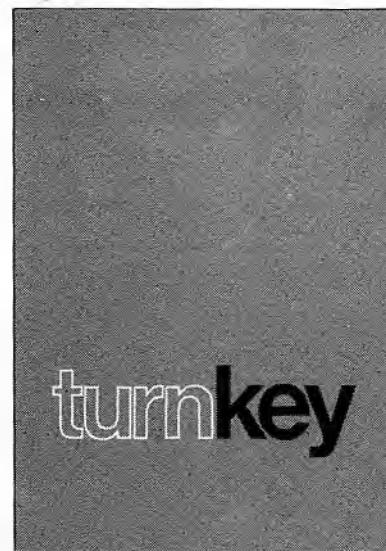
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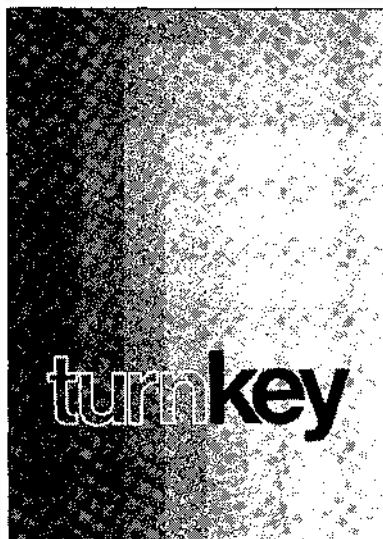
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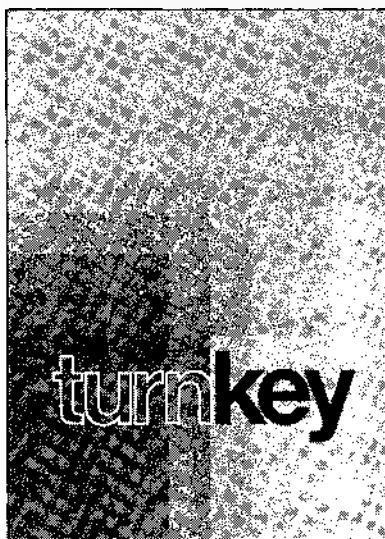
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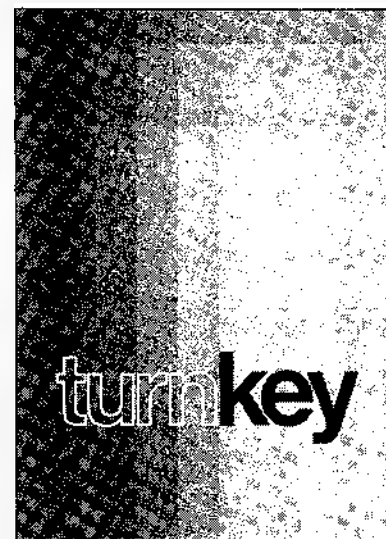
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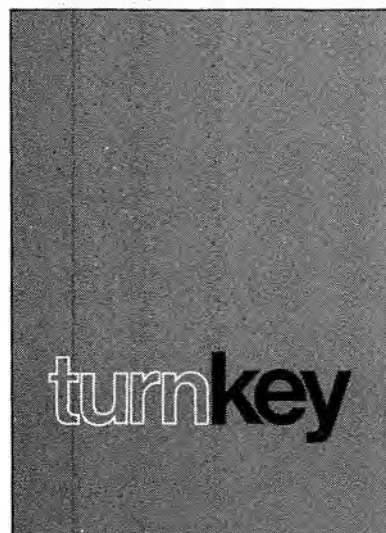
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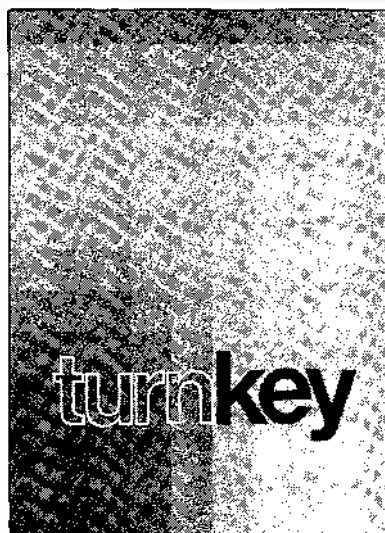
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Studio Diary

There is lots of news from the studios this month. From mid August to September the Basing Street Studios guest list goes like this:

Peter Grant's daughter **Helen Grant** was doing some tracks with the expert help of Maggie Bell... Heavy Metal band **Vardis** did some mixes with Robert Ash engineering and Mick Raymond producing... The **Tourists** were working with engineer Steve Holroyd... **Charlie Dore** was in... Logo Records artist **Rick Adams** laid some tracks with Andy Lyden engineering... Howard Kilgour worked on some backing tracks for the **Piranhas**... More backing tracks were recorded, this time for **Roxy Music** and Andy Lyden was engineering... Andy also worked on a jingle for Billy Gray Music... The **Expressos** came in with engineer Pat Moran... A backing track was laid for the **Gibson Brothers**... Producer Mark Miller-Mundy worked on some tracks for **Barry Reynolds** with Bob Potter engineering... The **Thompson Twins** were in... a backing track was produced for **Grace Jones**... **Barry Tyler** was in with engineer Steve Lipson and Hugh Murphy producing (for more news of this see Ridge Farm)... **Taurus** were in for a while... Robert Ash engineered some tracks for the **Boys** with their producer Mick Tauber... **Marianne Faithful** has been working with engineer and producer Chris Kinsey (the guy who always works with the Stones)... **Basement Five** did some recording with producer Martin Hunnitt and Chris Magel at the desk... **Inner Circle** were mixing... and so was **Carl Wallinger** who was doing some work for **Barry Blue** with Rod Bowkett producing and Andy Lyden engineering... Other visitors included **Mark Ashton** (ex-Rare Birds)... **Johnny Brit-**



Shakin' Stevens photo by Paul Cox

ton... **Sniff and the Tears**... And the "raved about in these quarters" band — the **Q Tips** who were in again with Al Kooper... As you may remember the studio has been operating at half strength as Studio One has been closed for refurbishing, but they can hardly complain about lack of work can they?

New Studio Regal Sound, who we ran a feature on last month have opened and started business with London Pop Rock group the **720s** who recorded two singles and two B sides. They were working with Dave Pusey and Dave Lockwood who seem to do a co-production/engineering job... Herts band **Gabriel Dogs** did some demos with Stefan engineering... The two Daves also worked together on a single for a band called **Fool**...

Ridge Farm have been entertaining Liverpool band **Echo and the Bunny Men**. The studio's engineer has been on holiday and this time they were using Simon Hayworth and in the production chair was Bill Drummond... **Bonny Tyler** was in when I spoke to them. She is completing an album, the backing tracks of which were recorded in Portugal with the RAK Mobile. The



Tourists photo by Simon Fowler

time at Ridge farm was spent doing overdubs and mixing. The engineer was once again Steve Lipson and Hugh Murphy was producing...

Surrey Sound have had another Liverpool band in — **Tear Drop Explodes**. They were working on a single with Martin Moss at the controls and Mike Howlett producing... Nigel Gray was producing a band called **Urge**. Martin Moss was engineering and assisted by Pete Buhlman... **Lo! Creme** and **Kev Godley** did a remix of their single with Nigel... New Wave band **The Pinkies** were doing their first single for Loose Records with Nigel and Pete Buhlman... Nigel was also producing an album for rock artist **Roy Sundholm**. The musicians on the album were Gary Tibbs from Roxy Music on Bass, Andy Duncan on drums and Simon Climie on guitar. They tell me these are really good tracks and worth keeping an eye out for... Nigel was working on tracks for two bands — both newly signed to his record label — **Fay Ray** from Bangor and **Angie Rox**...

B. A. Robertson was finishing off his album at Mayfair Sound. The producer was Terry Britten and John Hudson was engineering... John and Brian Tench did some overdubs for **Land-scape**... **Ultravox** came in to mix live tracks to video... and they have also been working on a single for **Billy Connolly**...

Trident's engineer Steve Short did some masters for **Pierre Chereze** who was looking after the production himself... **Secret Affair** did some backing tracks for TOTP among other things... Excellent new band whose name is as yet tentative — **Modern Jazz**. The producer was Simon Jeffes and the engineer Colin Green... Steve Short was working for a couple of other bands — **Prelude**, with producer Ian Green... and **Famous Names**. This band is one of the first to be signed to the new Trident Record Label... Chris Stone engineered some tracks for **Honey Baine**... Other artists included **Jack Lancaster** and the **Angelic Upstarts**... The cutting room saw discs for, among others, **Shakin' Stevens**... **Mike Oldfield**... **Manfred Mann's Earthband**... **Orchestral Manoeuvres**... and **The Ruts**.

Some of the recordings from the Castle Donnington Heavy Metal 'do' were mixed at Wessex Sound... Producer Roger Glover worked on some tracks for **Rainbow**. Gary Edwards engineered... **The Clash** were still finishing their album, working with engineer Bill Price... Gary Edwards was also engineering and co-producing **UFO**... Steve Jones and Paul Cook's new band **The Professionals** were in with Bill Price...

Peter Skellern was paying a visit at Maison Rouge to mix some tracks for his album. His engineer Steve James came with him... **Andrew Lloyd Webber** layed down some tracks... **Split Rivet** were in with producer Stephen Sinclair... Maison Rouge have recently launched their own Production company called Salamander Productions which involves Robin Black (one of the studio's managers) and Tony Taverner as producers. Sounds interesting!

Janet Angus

Studio of the Month

Strawberry South



Strawberry studios in Dorking, in a word, is huge. A former cinema, it is one of the most thoroughly equipped studios I have ever visited. Every conceivable need is catered for and in a most attractive and comfortable manner.

One of the first things that struck me was the amount of daylight around. It's not as stupid as it sounds — if you can come out of the actual studio and go and sit in a sunny room to do some writing or just to relax it makes a hell of a difference. It feels much less like you're being cooped up in a dark cell for the duration of your work.

Taking a tour of the place you start off in the reception area which again is very comfortable. Here, the Studio Manager's office opens off the main area, and also a small kitchen, presumably for whipping up a quick cup of coffee (well that's what they used it for when I was there).

Carrying on, you walk into the control room. More about that later. Upstairs is the writing room — a novel but fantastic idea. It is quite small but has quite a nice feel to it. Apart from the piano and Technics two track on which you can record rough demos, this room has full links with the control room — foldback/studio monitors/and four mike lines.

Next comes the playroom. Well what else could you want? Billiards, snooker, darts, hi fi — linked with the control room — video and TV. There is also a large kitchen up here where you can either cook for yourself or have someone do it for you. This room looks out on the "garden" which I must admit is in a slight state of disrepair, but at the moment they are negotiating to buy a bit of connecting land, and so extend the area, and no doubt landscape it.

Right at the top of the building you come to

Strawberry's pride and joy — the two natural echo chambers. One is rectangular in shape and the other is a perfect cube — thus different delay times can be achieved. They are both stereo.

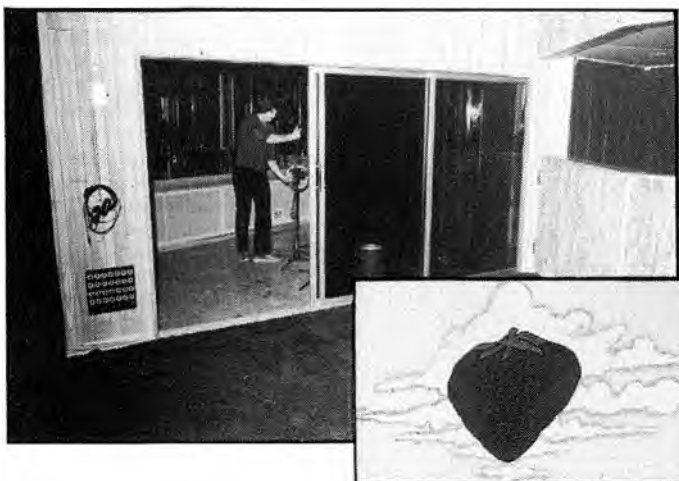
On this floor too there are yet more rooms. One of these is designated "the crashing out room", but for the most part it seems to have been used for playing with the Scalectrix! There is also a bath/shower room.

Downstairs again there is a loading bay at the back of the building, a car park and a kind of storage room which is quite handy. The workshop areas are fittingly huge, and above this in the balcony and projectionist's room there is a lot more space which as yet hasn't been utilised for anything. Incidentally, this is the part of the building where the ghost hangs out. He doesn't do you any harm, he just walks about it seems. He used to be the projectionist you see. Well, all

the best studios have a ghost.

As you might imagine, recording in Dorking isn't that handy for popping home at night when you feel like a sleep. Strawberry has taken this into consideration, and if you go out of the main building and round to the front, you then come across two really nice flats which go with the studio, but are totally cut off so that once you are out of the studio you can really feel it and be totally independent.

The rooms have a vaguely Scandinavian feeling about them — lots of pine and stuff, and they are quite spacious. So, although they say that they accommodate six to eight people you could in fact double that figure easily and still be quite comfortable. There is a breakfast room and a large kitchen. One thing you certainly won't go short of in this place is kitchens. There is also the possibility of someone to come in and cook your breakfast for you, and there is also a laundry



room, and two bathrooms.

As far as I can see every possible need is catered for, and the atmosphere is great — very friendly and relaxing. Staff consists of Studio Manager and Chief Engineer, Keith Bessey, Assistant Engineer Steve Cooksey and Receptionist come “keep everybody happy” person — Angela. As far as I know the catering staff are not employed full time.

A bit of history now. In case you didn't know already, the studio belongs to IOCC. It started its life about four years ago (it was smaller then as most of the rooms hadn't been built. When I went there before you had to balance on planks of wood and bricks to

time it has expanded enormously and about two years ago it was opened up for public consumption.

There have been some changes in the original design which is great. It is very rare to get a room absolutely perfect first time round. The changes in the control room are very small but they just make that little bit of difference.

The back wall has been taken out to remove the excess bass which was hanging around in there and also to get rid of some annoying standing waves. The desk was also moved slightly. It doesn't sound much, but the difference is amazing. They have recently managed to obtain a curve which is completely

operation — the tape machines and stereo remotes and the most often used effects etc etc are all within easy reach.

Eric Stewart's version of the story goes that they wanted this desk, but nobody would make it for them so they had to do it themselves. It also has quite a novel shape, being semi-circular which obviously aids the engineer when he is trying to reach things. It is a very versatile desk, says Steve Cooksey, with computer mix — Allison Series 65K — which is still being expanded. There are 28 computer operated faders with six sub groups.

The tape machines are a 3M M79 24-track, two Studer A80 two tracks, a Studer B62, and a Technics two track — all the machines have varispeed. They have both DBX and Dolby noise reduction systems, all channels of which are individually switchable. Monitors are JBLs in Eastlake cabinets and the inevitable Auratones which in this case are cleverly disguised in foreign boxes.

In addition to the natural echo chambers they have two stereo EMT plates and an AKG BX20 dual channel spring reverb. Ancillary equipment includes an Audio & Design stereo Complex Limiter, DBX 162 stereo Compressor, two Gainbrain Limiters, Neve Limiter/Compressor, three RM Noise Gates, Orban Parasound DeEsser, two Klark Teknik Graphic Eqs, Orban Parasound Parametric Eq, two MXR auto flangers and two Auto Phasers, two AMS Digital Delay lines and one Harmoniser and a Cooper Time Cube.

The studio area itself is 125 square metres which includes a live isolation booth, drum cage, and piano bay, all of which have variable acoustics. The studio has four foot of acoustic padding in all directions (yes that includes the ceiling). The floor is built of layers of rubber and concrete.

A lot of studios have a problem with lack of roof height. Well you can't say that of an

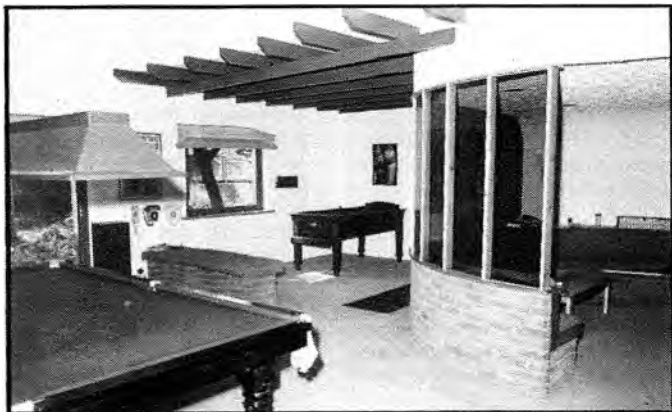
old cinema. As Eric said, when the ceiling is too low the sound gets up there and then just starts bouncing around the room again. Whereas with a high ceiling (the building's roof is 60 feet up) the sound can just shoot up there and bounce around in the space between the ceiling and the roof instead. The walls are treated with various things which include cork tiles, pine and a lot of curtaining. There are curtains everywhere which can be pulled across or opened as the work requires. There are bass traps built in all round the edges of the room.

The piano bay houses a beautiful seven foot four Bosendorfer grand. It's almost worth using the studio just for that!

The studio design is basically Eastlake with a few IOCC variations. They didn't want it to sound just the same as all the other Eastlake studios and they now feel that the studio has an incredibly natural sound to it, and they are convinced that it is this sound which makes all their customers return again and again.

Apart from the piano, the studio has a few percussion instruments. If you need anything else that you haven't got yourself they can get it for you.

Dorking takes about an hour to drive to from Central London. The town is really nice and quiet. The studio has always kept a low profile as far as the natives are concerned — most people know that there is a recording studio in town but they don't really understand what that means. Past visitors to the place include Bethnal, Sad Cafe (quite obvious really seeing as how Eric's their producer!), Gallagher and Lyle, Gary Brooker and Clapton. Rates are around £50 an hour, £700 a day, and £4,500 a week (use of studio 24 hours a day). Of course these are often negotiable. Strawberry can be contacted on Dorking (0306) 87852/3.



get into the control room!). The reasons for its location are simple — the building was standing there empty, and Dorking is very near Eric Stewart's home. Since that

compatible with Strawberry Mastering in London. The desk is unusual being a Formula Sound, custom built, 28/24, using American API Modules. It is designed to be a one-man

Janet Angus

Studio Test

RCF BR200 Monitor

Although the RCF range of professional loudspeaker components is now well established in the UK, less known are the range of 12 enclosed loudspeaker systems aimed at the domestic hi-fi and studio monitor market. On their home territory, RCF have over 70 per cent of the domestic hi-fi market to themselves, which is no mean feat in face of strong competition from the Japanese and UK hi-fi loudspeaker manufacturers.

The BR200 is the top model of the range, but is not representative of the other models in terms of concept or intended application in that it is physically very much larger than any of the other models in the range and employs drive unit components from RCF's professional/music industry range rather than specifically designed hi-fi components. The only other system in the range to use these components would seem to be the BR10, which utilises another of RCF's many 38cm (15") loudspeakers in a smaller reflex enclosure with the TW103 dome radiator.

The BR200 really is a brute of a loudspeaker with a particularly business-like appearance due to the large slant plate acoustic lense across the full width of the cabinet. The cabinet is solidly built of 24mm thick material and is further stiffened up with internal braces. There is a large removable panel at the rear of the cabinet to provide access to the horn and compression driver of the TW201 acoustic lense assembly and also to the crossover network, while the rest of the cabinet is built as a sealed unit for rigidity.

The 38cm low frequency drive unit is mounted by means of eight clamps from the front of the baffle panel and access is easily obtained by prising off the lower grille frame. Behind the upper grille is a blanked-off aperture which looks as if it was originally intended to receive a third driver — probably another horn of some sort to extend the upper frequency response as a three-way system. The cabinet is nicely veneered all over in oiled teak and the standard of workmanship and finish is of a very high order indeed.

However, the attention to detail is not all that it might be from a practical aspect. For example, there are no feet or runners of any description fitted to the base of the cabinet and the unit simply stands flat on its veneered underside. Also, there is no provision whatsoever for any form of carrying



handle, thereby making the system very cumbersome to move about.

The energy control for the acoustic lense assembly is positioned almost in the exact centre of the back of the cabinet where it is very difficult to get at when the loudspeaker is in position for use, and the control itself is very coarse in that the slightest amount of movement makes a considerable difference to the treble output level and there is no indent or even marking to help locate the normal, or flat response setting. In fact, the control is completely uncalibrated in any way.

Also, on a loudspeaker system of this type, I would have expected to find direct connections to the drive units brought out on terminals to facilitate bi-amping — but not so. Obviously, it would not require a great deal of ingenuity to effect modifications along these lines as and when required, but most other manufacturers in the studio monitor market seem to treat such aspects as a matter of course.

Due to the fact that at the time of my receiving the sample BR200 for evaluation it was the only one in the UK, it was not possible to listen to any stereophonic pro-

gramme, but I did have the system in my possession for some three weeks and therefore had plenty of time to assess its performance on a wide variety of music.

The first and foremost impression is of an amazingly full, clean, and open sound quality that is very rarely obtained from a single loudspeaker fed with a mono signal — and this was so no matter what listening position in the room was chosen. Switching between the BR200 and one of my own hi-fi loudspeakers — which are quite reasonable loudspeakers themselves — really made my loudspeakers sound quite thin and closed-up by comparison and quite unable to fill the room with sound to the degree achieved by the BR200. Used as a pair on a stereo signal, my loudspeakers are fine and are frequently commented on by friends, but one on its own was no match for the BR200 (mind you, it is only about one sixth of the size of the BR200!).

Any type of music, from Welsh male voice choirs to Genesis, from Dvorak or Sibelius to Boomtown Rats or Queen was handled with that same transparently clean and open sound quality. My only criticism is that there is a slight

peakiness in the midrange — which is more noticeable on classical music than on rock, and some colouration at the bottom end was evident, which again, was only really noticeable on classical material and if anything, tended to enhance rock music. It was a very enjoyable loudspeaker to listen to and did not produce listening fatigue. It would be interesting to play with a pair in stereo just to find out how the stereo image is projected with such a wide and uniform forward sound propagation.

Most of the impressions gained by listening were borne out in the laboratory. The frequency response curve does indeed show a slight presence rise of about 3dB between 1kHz and 3.5kHz and the polar response curves do show a remarkably wide and uniform forward propagation which is never narrower than 84° or wider than 116° in the horizontal plane at any frequency between 500Hz and 16kHz — a performance obviously attributable to the TW201 acoustic lense assembly.

The sensitivity figure is also very good indeed at 98dB for 1 watt at 1 metre. The distortion figures recorded above 2kHz are largely in agreement with those recorded on the TW200 compression drive unit in last month's 'Speakercheck' feature and while the figures are acceptable at a sound pressure level of 98dB, the level of 12 per cent recorded at 110dB is a little on the high side for a loudspeaker of this type.

Interestingly, there is a substantial peak in second harmonic distortion at about 90Hz and this is probably responsible for the low frequency colouration noted during the listening evaluation. I do consider the manufacturer's claims in respect of frequency response to be a little over the top however. Our results show a sharp high frequency fall off at 14kHz and this is largely in agreement with the figures recorded for the TW200 driver on its own.

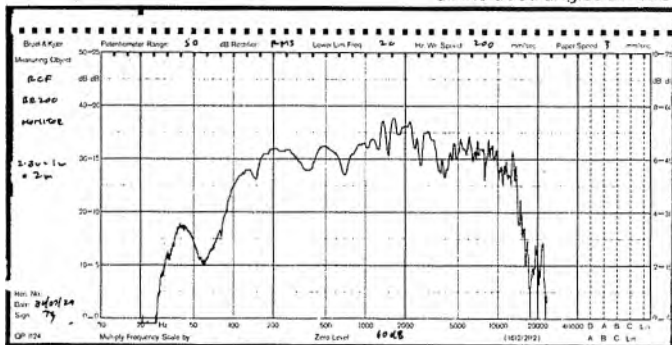
No way can the unit be said to have a useful response to 20kHz, as by even 16kHz, the response is some 16/17dB down. Similarly, I cannot see the low frequency response going down to 20Hz although it is important to realise that with an enclosure the size of the BR200, the anechoic chamber at GEC-Hirst cannot be expected to provide accurate measurements much below 100Hz.

Therefore, while the system certainly has a low frequency perfor-

RCF BR200 Studio Monitor

Recommended Retail Price: £1150 per pair including VAT
 Dimensions: 85cm wide x 106cm high x 65cm deep (incl. lense)
 Weight: 66Kg (approx. 145lb)
 Drive Unit Compliment: 1 x RCF L15P/06C 34cm (15") LF unit
 1 x RCF TW-201 Acoustic Lense HF assembly
 Crossover Frequency: 2kHz
 Cabinet System: Tuned Reflex
 Performance specification and Test Results:

Parameter	Manufacturers' Rating	Test Result
Useful Frequency Response	20Hz-20KHz unqualified	100Hz-15kHz@ -6dB (See Text) unqualified
Sensitivity	102dB unqualified	98dB@1w@1m av. 150Hz-10kHz
Rated Input Power	200w RMS unqualified 200w to DIN 45500	Parameter not measured
Total Harmonic Distortion	Not stated	1% below 2kHz; 3% above 2kHz@98dB SPL@1kHz@2m (Input power 5w RMS sine wave) 12% uniform@110dB @1kHz@2m (input power 80w RMS sine wave)
Impedance	8 ohm	5.5-18.5 ohm over operating range excluding fundamental resonance
Fundamental Resonance	Not stated	50Hz
Polar Response	Not stated	116°H x 134°V@500Hz 84°H x 80°V@1kHz 115°H x 88°V@2kHz 97°H x 56°V@4kHz 115°H x 27°V@8kHz 107°H x 30°V@16kHz all included angles at -6dB



Frequency response at 1 watt and 1 metre

mance that is considerably better than our figures actually show, it is unlikely to be doing very much below about 40Hz. Maybe RCF should fill the blanked-off aperture in the upper panel of the cabinet previously referred to, with a third component to extend the HF response after all if they are really after a response to 20kHz as claimed.

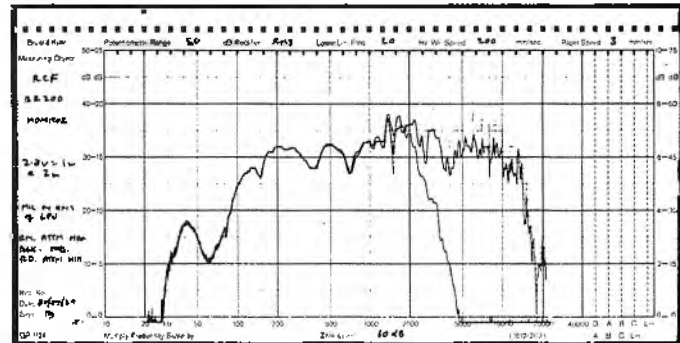
Altogether it is a most interesting loudspeaker, but I am not quite sure as to its intended application. For use as a studio monitor, I would expect the HF response to actually reach the 20kHz claimed in the maker's specification, and would also expect

a somewhat tighter bass characteristic. Also, the unusually wide forward propagation might be too good for good stereo imaging — although I note that the current Tannoy Buckingham monitor also has a lense over the midrange driver (albeit of midget proportions compared to the lense fitted to the BR200!) so maybe there is a move towards wider frontal coverage.

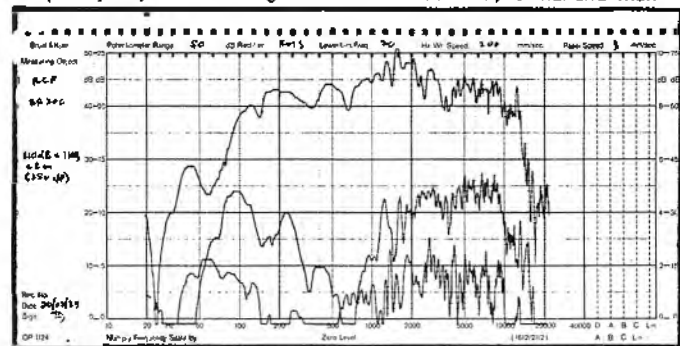
The BR200 has about the most uniform frontal coverage I have yet come across. It might also find application in up-market discotheque systems, but while producing a superbly clean sound, I would be looking for a somewhat tighter

bass sound for this application. I know one thing — I wish I had a pair of them for use as PA for the folk group that I play with, as with

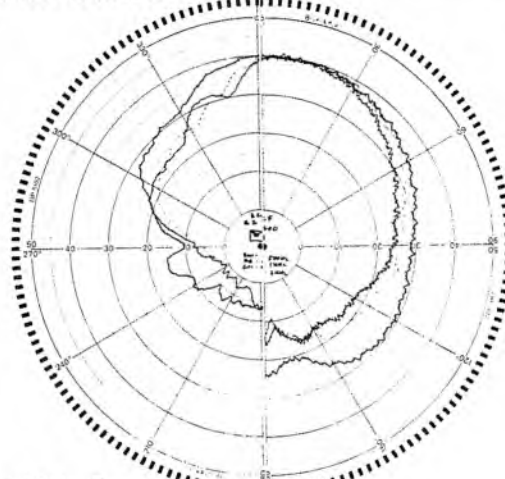
an all acoustic line up, and usually playing in fairly close proximity to our audience, the clean sound and wide dispersion would be ideal!



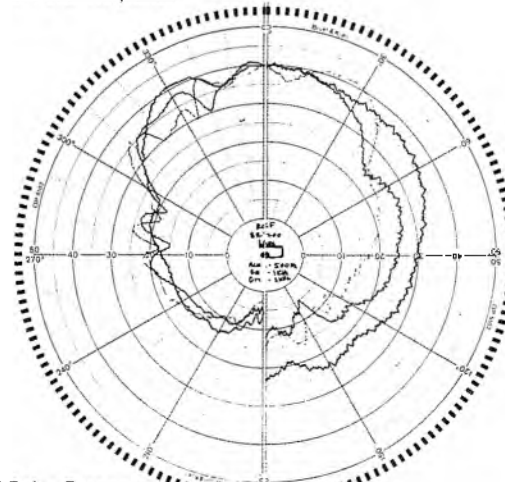
Frequency response showing HF attenuator at min, normal and max



Distortion at 110 db SPL



Horizontal Polar Response



Vertical Polar Response

Studio Test

REBIS Equalizer RA204 and Noise Gate RA201

Rebis Audio are a small company from Stourbridge in the West Midlands who are onto a rather good thing if these items on review are typical of their quality. I am referring to the Rebis 200 Series of rack mounting effects, processing and ancillary modules of which there were 11 items at last count. (The range is expanding so rapidly that there may well be several more by the time you read this!) Included at present are a De-Esser, Compressor/Limiter, LED Meter, Timer, Disc Pre-Amp, Oscillator, ADT/Delay, Modulator and a Mixer in addition to the Parametric Equalizer and Noise Gate reviewed here.

All the modules are of the same size — one inch in width and 5¼ inches in height. As part of the 200 series, Rebis manufacture a rack to contain 16 modules in a 19-inch rack space. This is the easiest method and fairly reasonable in price but should you only require a couple of modules, I would see no problems in mounting them in a mixing console or other cabinet. All the modules require a DC voltage of between 24-40 volts which is again available from Rebis in the form of a power supply capable of powering a complete rack's worth of modules.

The major advantage of this system is that each module only does one function, which makes operation simple but also keeps costs down as you don't pay for features you may not use very often. Blank panels are available for the rack so you may start off with only a couple of modules and expand as finances permit.

Each module is similar in design with a black front panel with white legends. All the electronics are on a single PCB which is very neatly laid out and features an integral 15-pin edge connection at the rear of the card. This carries all the power, signal and other requirements for the module. Each module is wired on the same configuration so no

rewiring is necessary to change modules or move them about within the frame. The PCB is attached by four pillars to a metal panel which screens the electronics and gives increased rigidity to the module, making the complete assembly surprisingly strong. We chose to review two of the first modules available and probably some of the most popular — the Parametric Equalizer and the Noise Gate.

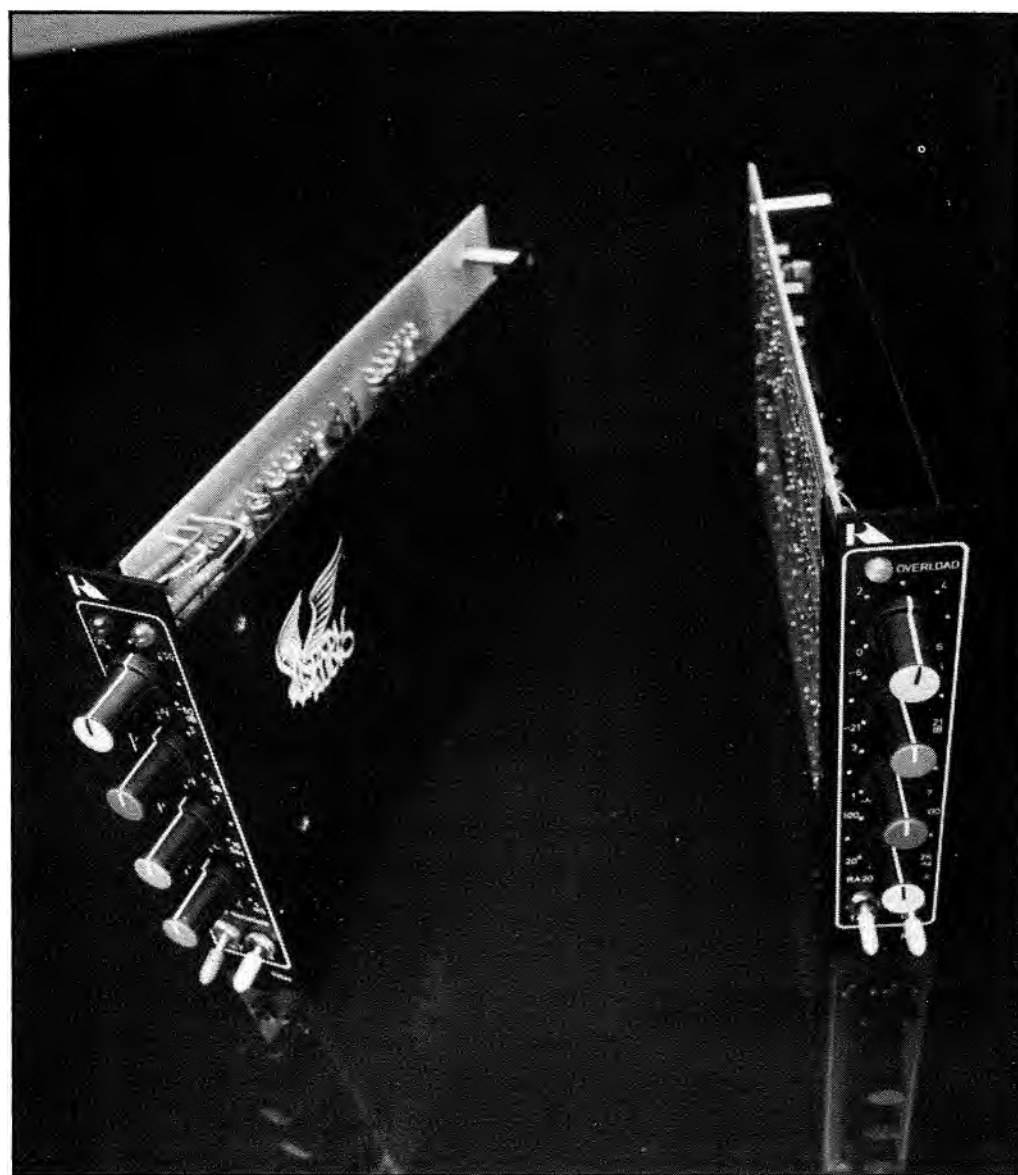
Parametric Equalizer RS204

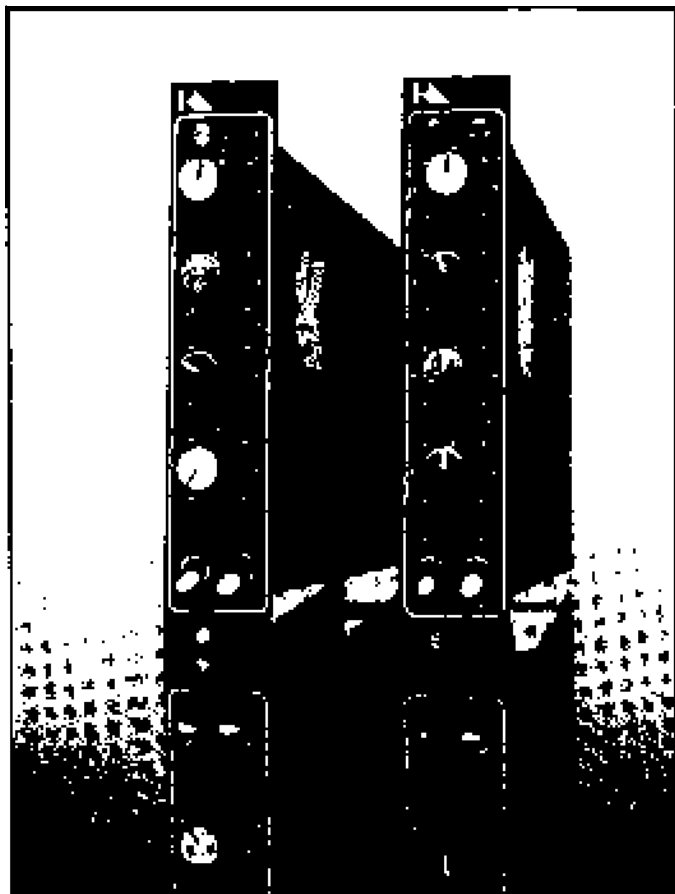
This module is a single band parametric equaliser but it of-

fers a wide degree of control within that band.

The front panel begins with a yellow LED to indicate Overload and immediately below this a level control to match the levels with the equalizer in and out. Next comes the amount of cut or boost control offering +21dB at the extremes of the knob. This is an extreme amount and would I hope never have to be used except for special effects but better too much than too little. The Q control varies the width of the frequency band around the selected frequency

to be cut or boosted. This control gives as much scope in altering the nature of the sound as does the frequency selection control which follows. This is continuously variable from 20Hz to 2kHz and with the $f \times 10$ switch in, from 200Hz to 20kHz. I found these ranges to be sensibly split and the module easy to use and used with respect for the large cut and boost available, it should be a very worthwhile addition to any small studio or sophisticated PA rig. I can see this being particularly useful where you have a desk which





is perfectly alright but you find the EQ section leaves a little to be desired. A couple of these units are much cheaper than a new desk incorporating such facilities.

Noise Gate RA201

Noise gates can be very useful tools but used wrongly, they can make matters very much worse. More controls on a unit let the experienced user achieve good results but in unexperienced hands it can make matters very much worse. Simply put, a noise gate operates in the reverse manner to a compressor and so when a signal falls below the selected threshold, expansion occurs and the output level is reduced by the degree of attenuation set. When a signal above the threshold passes through the unit, the level is restored and it passes through unaffected. Simple enough but in practice, it is a

little tricky.

Noise gates can be used in many applications including reducing the spill between microphones, automatically closing down unused mikes, simple noise reduction on multitrack tape machines and in units with a keying facility such as the RA201, as a musical effect.

The RA201 is similar to the parametric in the front panel layout. At the top of the module, the red and green LED indicate the operation of the noise gate. When the green LED is illuminated the signal is passing through the module unaffected but with the red illuminated, the signal has fallen below the threshold level and the noise gate is operative.

Then follows four controls — sensitivity, attenuation release and attack. For those of you not quite familiar with the operation of a noise gate, I will describe how I would set it up.

The first thing to decide is whether it is possible to use a noise gate at all on the signal. Only when it was absolutely essential would I ever consider using one on a complete mix as it would almost be certain to interfere too much with the sound. The easiest sounds to gate are those where the noise level to be removed is well below the wanted signal level. Examples of this are removing the hiss from a guitar amplifier when the guitar is not playing, removing the rest of the drum kit from the tom tom mikes and so tighten up the drum sound and the 'musical interference mode' of tightening up a sloppy bass player technique by clipping his sustain. We will take our first example of the guitar amplifier to illustrate the method.

My first step is to set the gating threshold and on the RA201 this is done by adjusting the sensitivity control which is marked from +20dB to -60dB. If this level is set too low then even the noise gets through and set too high, nothing gets through. I play with this control until I do not hear the hiss of the amplifier when the guitar is not playing. The guitar may be sounding rather unnatural at this point as the noise gate is probably chopping the sustain and attack of the guitar sound. This is the stage where it becomes tricky. You have to decide the degree of attenuation you require versus the effect it has on the guitar sound — will you hear the abrupt cut off of the amplifier noise or the clipped attack with all the other sounds going on at the same time in the mix? If the answer is that you will hear it, then the next step is to adjust the release and attack controls. The release controls how quickly the noise gate becomes operative after the signal level drops below the set threshold. If the guitar is playing in a very damped manner and there is no sustain on the notes, we will be able to keep the release fairly short and the gate will

cut the amplifier noise very quickly. The RA201 offers release times of 0.05 to 10sec. If the guitar sound is sustained or you wish the attenuation of the amplifier hiss to be gradual then longer release time is required.

The attack is then adjusted so that when the guitar plays, the gate does not clip the front of the signal. Ideally the attack should be on the shortest time but often this will cause a click to be heard as the gate responds, so you have to lengthen the attack time a small amount until this disappears. The RA201 can be adjusted between 0.02 and 4 msec.

The next step is the degree of attenuation. With our guitar amplifier it may be possible to use the maximum degree of attenuation offered by the RA201 of 40dB but as we have said earlier this is very dependant on the type of material being processed. Often you have to compromise and select say 25dB to avoid losing the sustain of a note or to avoid the too extreme contrast of the noise gate switching on and off a noisy amplifier. The successful operation of the noise gate depends on juggling these controls with respect to the context of the tracks.

The Rebis RA201 also has a key facility. The level detection circuitry on the noise gate is turned off and the noise gate is permanently on until an external keying signal is received to turn the gate off and let the signal through. There are many ways of using this, such as using one track to key another e.g. bass drum keying a bass guitar track to keep them tight together or a guitar track keying a double track guitar to keep the beginnings of phrases in unison. A noise gate is a very versatile device and the RA201 is a very useful tool and can certainly be recommended and cannot be faulted at its price.

Keith Spencer-Allen

The Producers

Todd Rundgren

It could be the set for the next installment of "The Empire Strikes Back". Up here in Bearsville, New York, just milliseconds away from flower-peopled Woodstock, sits Todd Rundgren's video workshop, recording studio and his ultra-modern secluded home. Everywhere you look there are computers, video cameras, mini-robots — all those technical toys that keep your average *Omni* reader from feeling the pangs of future shock.

Thirty-two year old Rundgren has been blessed (or cursed) with the techno-wiz image this setting implies ever since producing, engineering and playing all of the instruments on his third solo album, *Something/Anything*, in 1972. Yet Rundgren has never fallen prey to serious accusations of inhumanity, even with his love of knobs and digital delay. Unlike Gary Numan, no one could ever say Todd Rundgren has a pocket calculator for a heart. His technical reputation has simply helped make him one of the most sought-after producers of our time: shaping the sound of Tom Robinson, Rick Derringer, Patti Smith, Grand Funk, The Tubes, Meatloaf and many others. He has worked on projects as diverse as the legendary debut of the New York Dolls on record right on down to his latest dalliance with that Sunkist commercial pin-up, Shaun Cassidy.

And these production jobs (particularly his lucrative work with Meatloaf) have financed Todd's other endeavors; from the video studio to his Irwin Allen-style pyramid tours with Utopia. Rundgren as a performer has never broken out of cult status, only selling between 150,000 and 200,000 copies of each of his and Utopia's albums. Respectable, but it ain't *Bat Out Of Hell*.

Through all his works, however, whether it be solo records or straight production jobs, a distinct *Todd Rundgren sound* has emerged. Generally,

this involves a crisp vocal up-front with sudden and clean thick rushes of backup chorales over bright, bouncy synthesizers and a thumping bass. Rundgren's approach is rarely mired in its own thickness (*à la* Phil Spector) — the overall feel is both crystal clear and full bodied. Hi-tech with heart. The quintessential pop of Rundgren can be heard in great old tracks with "Couldn't I Just Tell You", with trim guitar work bouncing off a taut backdrop of bass and drums. And the voices are everywhere — the same rich backup vocals one can still hear on the last Utopia record on catchy heavy metal cuts like "Rock Love."

A perfect example of how individual Rundgren's production sound has become was recently demonstrated by Cliff Richard's single, "We Don't Talk Anymore." Rundgren had nothing to do with the song, yet Richard's voice perfectly recalled Todd's high, smooth backups, plus there was the same buoyant keyboards, the firm bass and drums *and* an arrangement that could have stepped out of any of Todd's more AM moments. "I heard that song for itself, I never heard myself in it," Todd insists, sitting on the grass outside of his recording studio. "I think that sound is more identifiable as something I might do in producing someone else's albums rather than a sound I have myself."

Rundgren admits to having a fairly set production style. "I think my sounds are common throughout. I only hear things a certain way. *Most* producers only hear things one way. That's why people choose them — to have it all coming out of that ear. The secondary reason is for what direction you may steer them in."

Rundgren never asks to produce people's albums. They all come to *him*. Some (like Hall & Oates with their *War Babies* LP) know exactly what sound they want. (For them it was an



The Producers

imitation Bowie sound — glam-rock USA). Others come to him empty-handed, looking for guidance. "I most enjoy doing a production if it's a real collaboration," Todd says. "I like it if the person has a strong direction or good performing ability. On some of the records I've had to take an inordinately large role as producer. I either have to give an album direction it doesn't have or try to doctor up performances that aren't there."

For Todd's most recent production (this past spring), he took on someone who had almost no idea of what he wanted. Shaun Cassidy, who has burdened the world with some anemic pop tunes ("Hey Denie" was one of the better ones), was ready to try something/anything different. "We decided to make a dance record; I guess you could call it a new wave dance record," Todd says. "I thought he could do that successfully."

Even if this decision does not represent a purely crass commercial move, it is still wisely timed with "new wave" being the latest movement to co-opt. Generally, such commercially viable moves for Todd are geared more to his sensibility than his wallet. Still, Rundgren can often act as smart businessman, taking a cut of his production jobs rather than a larger up-front fee. This proved to be a great investment in the case of *Bat Out Of Hell* which sold over five million units worldwide. Still, Todd claims to have been shocked by the big buck success of Meatloaf's album (a strange assertion since Todd's Wagnerian production is just the sort of empty schmaltz the public almost always laps up.) "I don't consider big productions to be automatically commercial," he challenges. "I find it (Meat's material) tense music. It's demanding emotionally so I didn't think it would necessarily appeal to so many people."

One production effort which

stands far outside of Todd's trademark Mr Clean whoosh of sound is the first New York Dolls record; a proto-minimalist work and one of the most brilliantly sludgy LPs ever foisted onto the public. "That album came out rawer than it should have because of sloppiness," Todd says, obviously not feeling that this messiness made the disc more coherent conceptually. "They spent a good deal of time trying to get what they thought were certain types of sounds, but ultimately they wanted to be involved in the mixing process and at the same time they didn't want to take as long as it takes to really mix an album. They demanded it be mixed in the worst room in the Record Plant just so they could get it over with before something they had to do in Long Island. It was mastered on Mercury's antiquated equipment. They could have gone some place good like Sterling or something. A lot of the mixes are muddy and not as good as they should be."

Rundgren also had some problems working on the second Tom Robinson LP. "The day before we started the album, their drummer quit. They had to use a new guy who was much better than the other drummer. He had a lot of personality in his playing and was a session player. That made the album sound studio-ish. He played freer because he didn't know the songs. He just used his session musician's intuition to pick up on what was happening. Someone who knew the material would be more defined and straightforward. Also, a lot of the emphasis that was originally on the guitar on the first album shifted off because a new keyboardist came in and he was real good. You had to let him play. So a lot of people were upset about that because the sound wasn't based on hammering guitar anymore. We thought the album was more focused than the first

(*Power In The Darkness*). The band expected it to be a big seller when it was released."

Of course, the album turned out to be a commercial disaster, but Todd has become used to an up-and-down trend to his career, both as an artist and a producer. Back in the last Sixties, Rundgren was a wizard, a true pop star with *The Nazz*. (In a 1969 issue of *16 Magazine* the editors wrote how Todd "speaks a special kind of language that can be understood only by puppy dogs, pussy cats and little brothers and sisters"). Yet Todd immediately began widening his career after that band's demise by putting in some engineering work along with his early solo efforts. He



engineered The Band's *Stage Fright* record in 1970, but he didn't really strike people as a particularly gifted studio wiz until he did the one man *Something/Anything* LP. Though Todd's main instrument is guitar, he played every sound on the double set. Today, he admits he couldn't perform on them all with equal prowess. "The drums are always the hardest to play," he explains. "The bass is uncomfortable as well. On guitar you can clutter up the notes because you're playing them in bunches. On the bass you have

to be more precise. It's hard to be fancy. To play drums is not just bashing away. To keep the same meter going without speeding up is a real trick. It's also hard to get an un-sterile sound on the drums."

From doing this "one-man-band" solo record, Todd picked up another production signature which would prove helpful in his later work with others. He developed an especially lush feel to his background vocal recordings, something he later heard on Queen's more operatic numbers.

Today Rundgren continues to do solo recordings while also working with Utopia — a Marxist ideal of a band in which all the writing is credited to the group as a whole.

Also filling up his hyperkinetic schedule is the video studio, where he's busy creating programs he hopes will one day be bought by the major networks. Visions of Utopia videos running right next to "Three's Company" and "Those Amazing Animals" dance in his head. The studio is an impressive structure just down the street from Todd's house and Rundgren makes it clear that ultimately, his work here is not geared for the home video disc market, though he has done some quickie home video pieces involving songs off the *Adventures In Utopia* LP. "Only ten thousand video-disc machines are owned by people in this country, so it still doesn't mean anything commercially. I want my videos broadcast on TV. That's the only way it can get to people. If not a regular network, then cable TV would be okay. HBO is a big enough network."

Rundgren seems to understand what he's up against trying to get his fantasy-oriented videos through to Freddie Silverman (NBC Pres.) and his ilk. "TV executives are not inspired people. They aren't aiming for the lowest common denominator so much by intention, they just can't get it

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up any higher. People *would* accept better material but the people in power are too uninspired to give 'em anything better. Then they justify their lack of inspiration by calling the public dumb and they quote ratings to back it up. But the public aren't given an alternative."

The videos Rundgren is interested in are not necessarily music-oriented. He knows how many of these rock pieces simply feature the band goofily mugging for the camera to serve purely as a record company promotional gimmick. "A lot of times, these aren't very interesting because the music isn't that interesting in the first place," Todd reasons. "Even if a song is a hit, most of them are uninspired visually."

Rundgren goes in more for "Star Wars-style" special effects videos. His studio has lots of backdrop artwork for intergalactic scenes; exactly the sort of escapist fantasy that occasionally renders Rundgren's recent lyrics so irredeemably childish. Still, Todd seems committed to comic book star talking — choosing as one of his first

video projects a visual track for Tomita's synthesized version of Holst's *The Planets*. RCA commissioned the project but after Todd had completed half of it and they found out the price tag on the rest, the whole effort was dropped. True to character, this does not phase Todd. He is confident his videos will one day be appreciated by what he sees as his most important audience, the masses.

Right now, Todd is more concerned with Utopia. They've got to finish a new group album this Summer and at their futurist studio here in Bearsville they've just completed a bouncy instrumental track in record time. As the band takes off for the weekend, Todd lays around on the grass outside, taking a place in the sun. His main hope for the album is that it lives up to his standards of immediacy. "I always try to be *direct*," he intones. "I don't know what direction that may be in though. All I know is I can't seem to keep moving in the *same* direction."

Jim Farber

TECHNICAL INFO.

Todd Rundgren

Though Todd Rundgren likes to function as a musical octopus with a hand on every instrument, his main axe is still the guitar. Todd's fave is a vintage black Fender Mustang which he's used for some five years now.

Live, Todd has a rather unique system for monitoring his guitar. The output from the guitar amp goes directly into a small acoustic chamber which has a single 12-inch speaker and a microphone permanently mounted inside. That microphone is the sound used for the PA and the monitor system. There's also a slave output which is passed through a voltage controlled amplifier, controlled by a knob on Todd's mike stand. That allows him to vary the volume of what *he* hears on the guitar, so he doesn't have to rely on the general monitor system.

On stage, Todd also uses a "Nasty" (John Nady) wireless guitar system so he can jump around and give the audience something interesting to look at as well as listen to.

Roger Powell

Many times when critics complain of technological overkill in Utopia, the person they lay blame on (after Todd) is synthesist Roger Powell. After all, Roger did do some early work with Robert Moog and currently writes a regular technical column for *Contemporary Keyboard* magazine. Yet Powell's work with Utopia is in fact quite straight-forward and his keyboard set-up live is relatively simple. With three main synthesizers he covers it all, starting with an RMI/KC2 keyboard computer, on top of

which sits a Prophet 5; and then there's the Probe, a hand-held fiberglass-enclosed keyboard that's very lightweight. Generally what Powell finds most disturbing about the current synthesizer scene is that "the age of convenience is here. There are a lot of pre-set synthesizers around that don't challenge the user to explore anything outside of what a research team has pre-determined. In true synthesis you should make your own decisions."

Kasim Sulton

The third "equal-partnership" member of Utopia is bassist Kasim Sulton. Like Roger Powell (who released a solo record on Atlantic in 1974 titled *Cosmic Furnace*), Sulton is involved in solo projects outside the band. In all of his studio work Sulton uses Fender Precision basses, though he switches to Kramer basses live since they're smaller instruments. "I'm a little guy and if I used a bigger Fender on-stage I'd look kinda strange," he says. For amps, Kasim uses two Ampeg SVT's — normal size.

John Wilcox

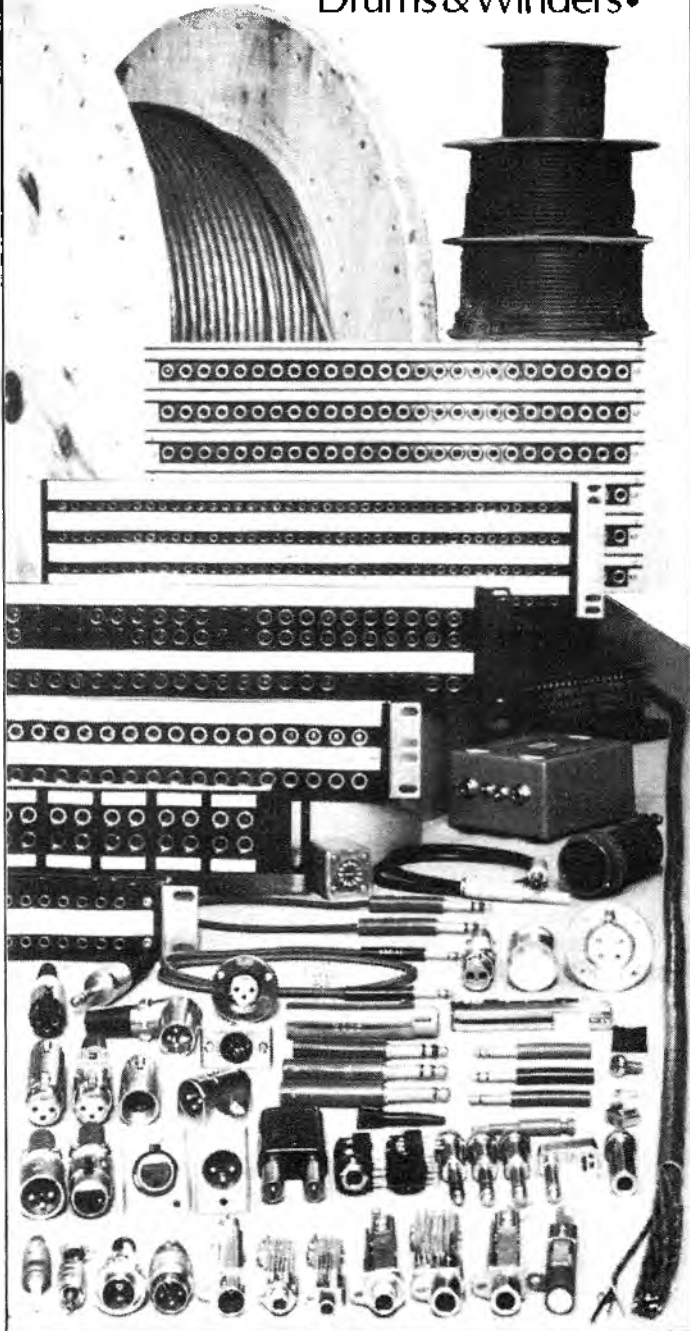
As if to further confirm Rundgren's claim that he was "born to synthesize", even John Wilcox's drums are synthesized on stage. Though such drums can often sound blurry, Wilcox claims the bass drum sound here is better than most natural drums. For both of his kits, Wilcox's basic set-up is the same: It includes two upper tom-toms, a floor tom-tom, a bass drum and a snare. John uses Zildjian cymbals — a ride, crash and a pair of high-hats.

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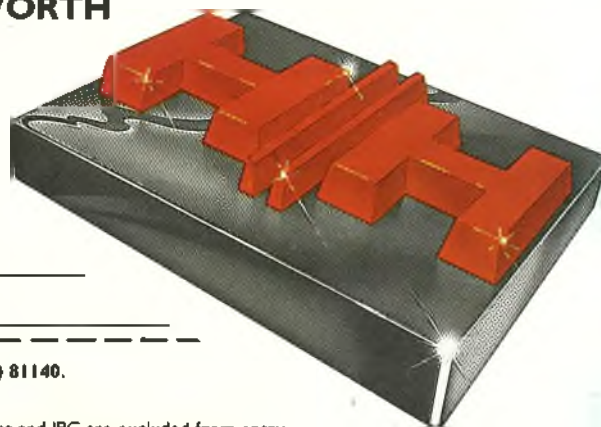
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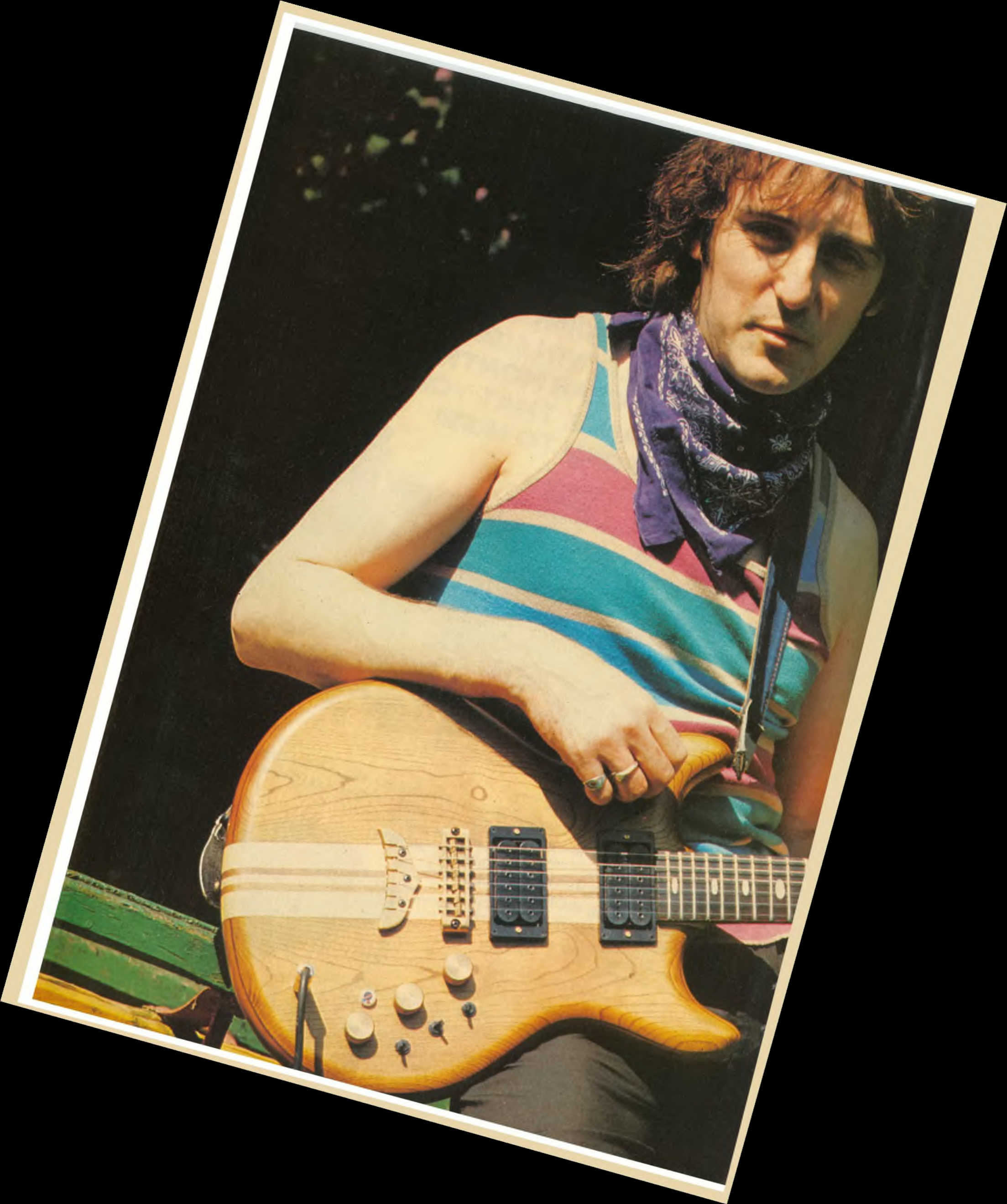
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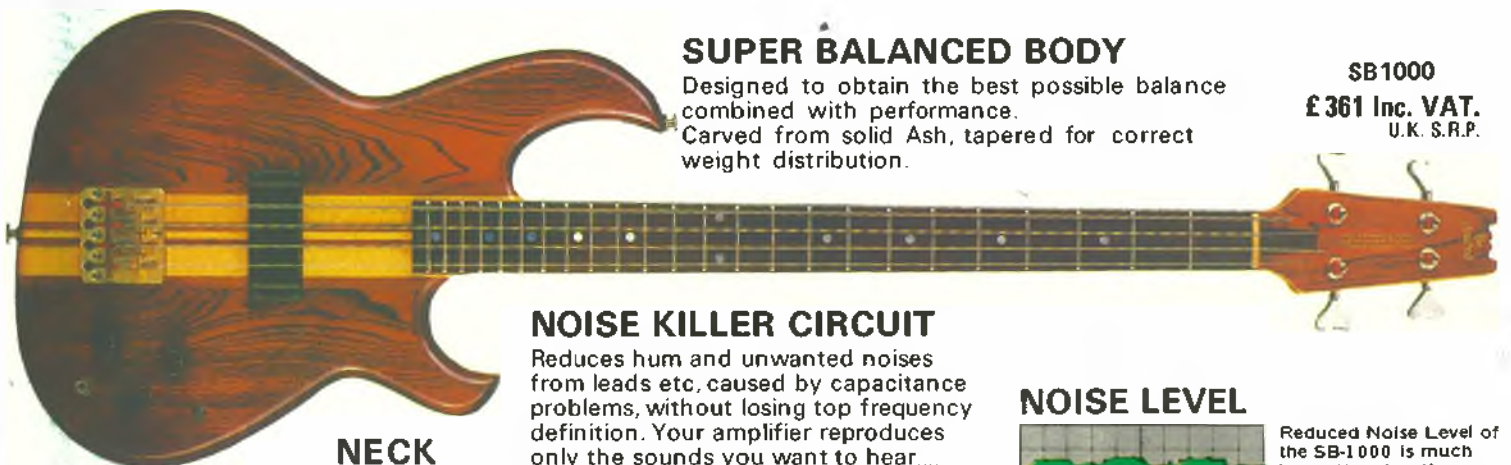
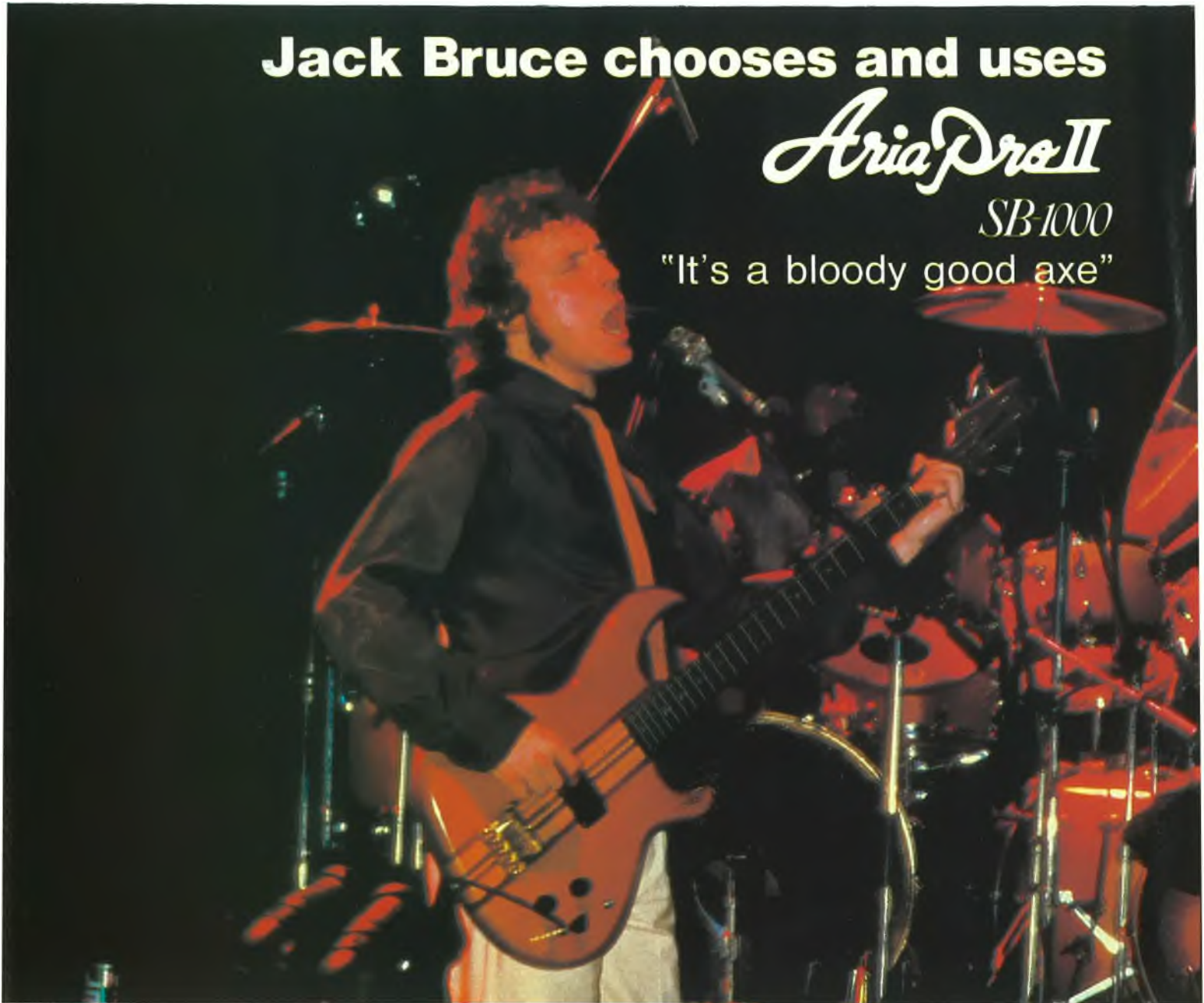
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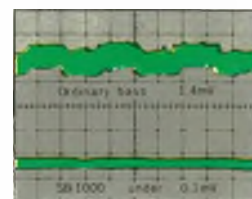
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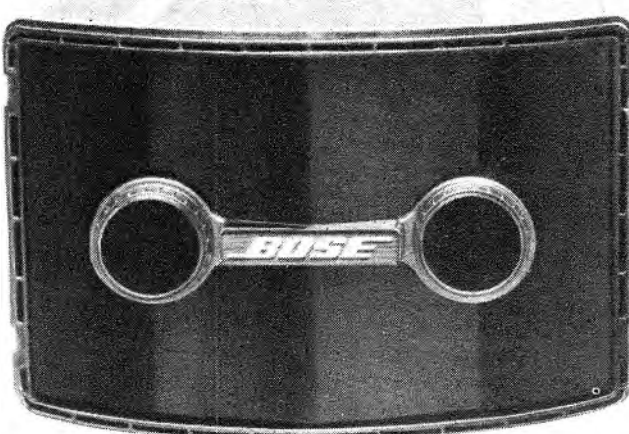
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Wopalong Studio

When I was told of a studio complex in Luton by the name of 'Wopalong', I told them to pull the other one — I mean whoever...? Well I now retract any comments I made and I'll admit that not only does it exist but impressively so. To be truthful, Wopalong is only half operational at present but by the time you read this, all four studios should be working. But I'll begin at the beginning.

Wopalong is a company formed by Don Larking and John Baccini, as is Superwop Music, the associated publishing and production side. Before this Don had started a small four track studio just around the corner from where they are now situated.

Initially this was little more than a weekend operation but in the following four years it grew into a fully equipped 16-track studio. Some early publishing success prompted them to move into their present premises 18 months ago which is a disused hat factory. The initial idea was for a completely inhouse facility for Superwop, but it has become much more than that.

Wopalong is situated in Guildford Street, which for a road so near to the town centre is relatively quiet. Of the four studios the building will eventually contain, only two are at present working.

The first studio operational was the 16-track on the first floor which was originally intended to be a songwriters workshop/music room but since putting the recording gear through the door it's never come out. The studio is not a large area but it is really crammed with instruments. Immediately you walk in, the comfortable working atmosphere hits you.

The studio is fairly simply treated with two walls Airtex finished while the opposite walls are acoustically treated as is the ceiling. One interesting feature of the room is the drum area which is structurally isolated from the studio and is in the form of an open booth recessed into the wall. The drummer can still feel part of the sessions while being acoustically isolated.

In the control room the desk is side on to the window with a *real* daylight window on the other side of the room. By most standards it's a rather small room but all the equipment is there — MCI series 400 desk, Ampex MM1000 16-track, Lockwood Academy monitors driven by Cerwin-Vega amps with MXR graphics for room tuning, Philips PRO 51 mastering machine, Eventide Harmoniser, BEL noise reduction, flanger and compressors with mikes from Neumann, Beyer and AKG.

While I was nosing around, the studio was being used by

isolated from the structure of the building as well as the control room. The studio area is hessian and wood finished with air conditioning. It was originally intended to be a voice-over studio and will probably be used for this in the future particularly when Chilton Radio opens in a year's time. In the meantime it is equipped with a Concord 28-channel console, Scully eight track, BEL noise reduction, flanger and compressors, Lockwood Academy 11's, Philips PRO 51 mastering machine and a wide selection of microphones. The feelings

estimate the studio to have a comfortable seated musician capacity of 30. Equipment for the studio has not yet been finalised but Don said that it would probably be an MCI desk and tape machine.

What is probably the most exciting development at Wopalong is the video studio on the top floor. This is a large open area with a high ceiling running almost the entire length of the building. Aside from the control room, changing rooms, storage areas etc, the studio has a stage built at one end which is decoupled from the studio floor.

Don showed me the equipment waiting to be installed, which includes two Philips LDK2 broadcast cameras, Vision mixer, Rank Strand 26x500 watt lights, Rank Strand lighting mixer, JVC Edit U-Matic, Eela audio mixer and copying video cassette recorders for VHS, Betamax and an ordinary JVC U-Matic. There is a grand piano on the stage purely for use as a stage prop and a vast back projection screen waiting to be mounted.

The idea behind the video studio is to make the highest quality videos possible without going to broadcast standard but at a reasonable price. The Edit U-matic will give them the ability to make the video equivalent of the 'drop-in' and the wide selection of copying machines will enable them to make copies in most of the common video formats.

Don said that most of the time the video would be made with the band miming to a backing track with live vocals but it would be very simple to do it all at once as all the studios are interconnected and any of the other studios can be used if multi track is needed.

When all the studios at Wopalong are completed they will offer a very comprehensive choice of facilities in a helpful and unhurried atmosphere. The attitude of everyone I met at Wopalong is best summarised by Don. "When a client spends money with us we will do anything we can to make sure that they get what they want." And I'm sure they mean it too.

Keith Spencer-Allen



the Barron Knights who are regular clients. They are volunteering favourable comments about the sound and general atmosphere which on my short stay I think I agree with.

Still on the first floor but moving towards the rear of the building you pass through the relaxation area which contains a kitchen, colour TV and will soon have Space Invaders. Don said that this room was also sometimes used for recording drums if a very live sound was needed.

Just beyond this area is the eight track studio which was being christened at the time of my visit. It has been constructed so that the studio is

of the musicians working on the test sessions were that despite the inevitable teething troubles, it will be a fine little studio.

The ground floor will be the reception area but at the moment this requires a large degree of imagination as this has not been started as yet. The rest of this floor is the 24-track studio which is nearing completion. There will also be a separate entrance for equipment straight onto the street.

The studio area will be divided into two sections, a live wood panelled area next to the control room and a larger area beyond that separated by large glass sliding doors. I would

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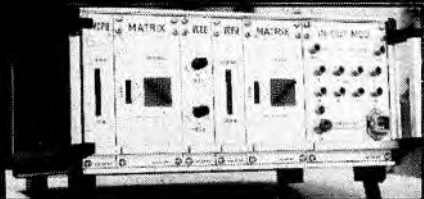
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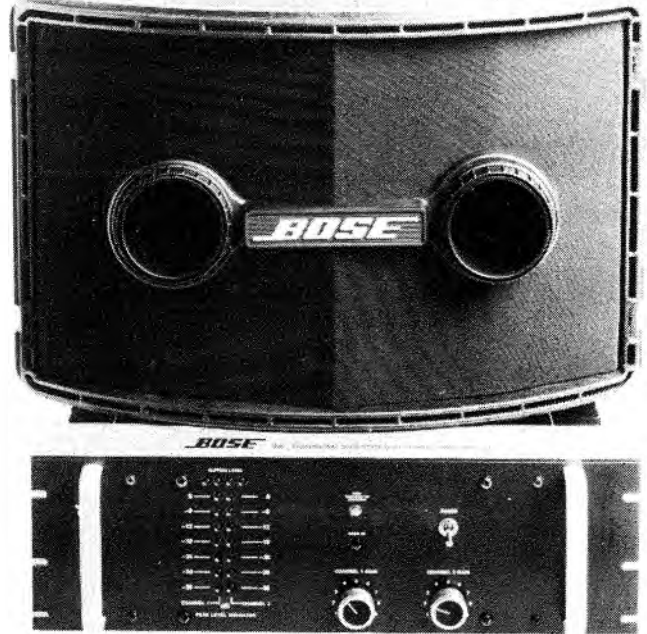
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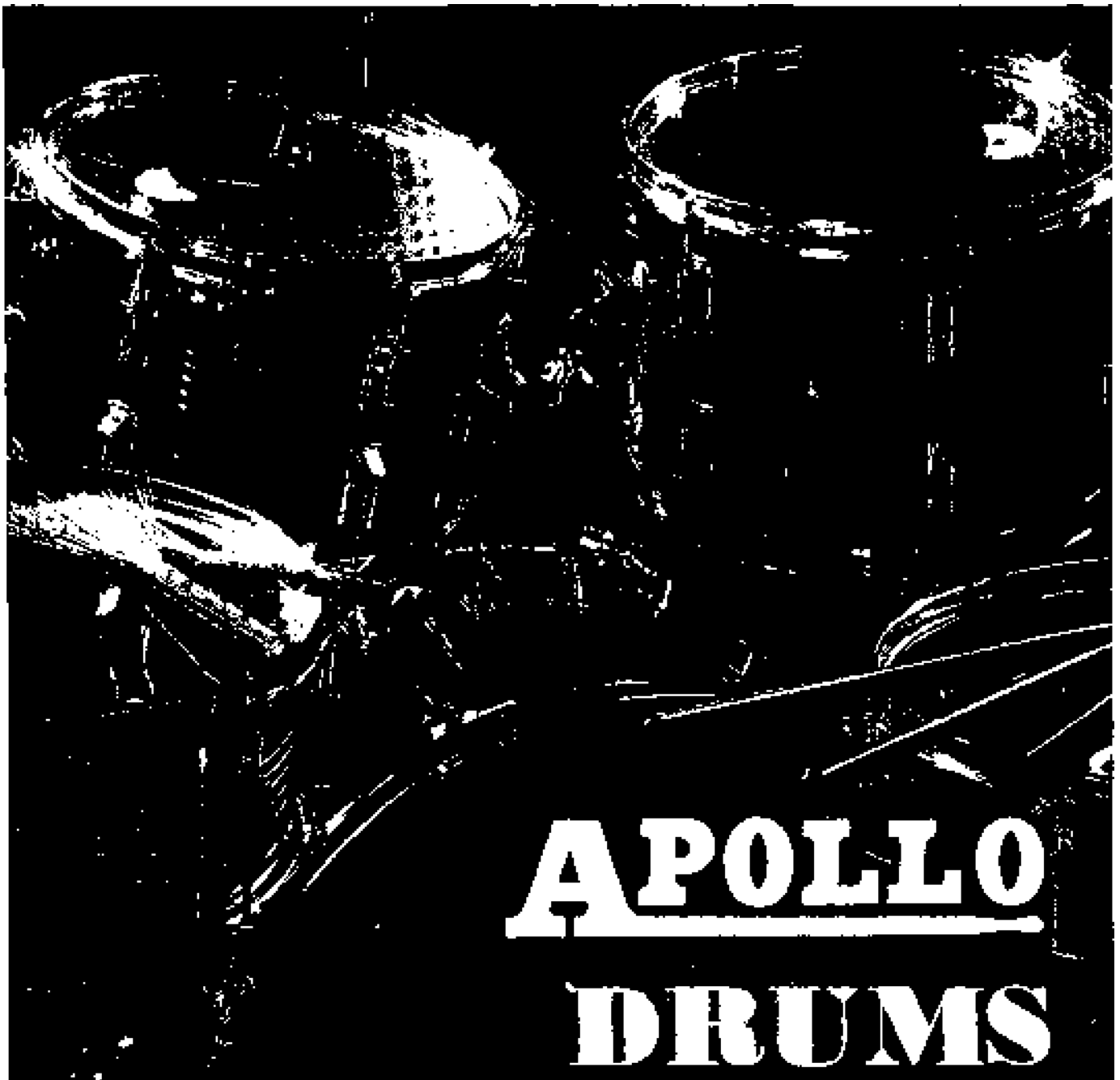
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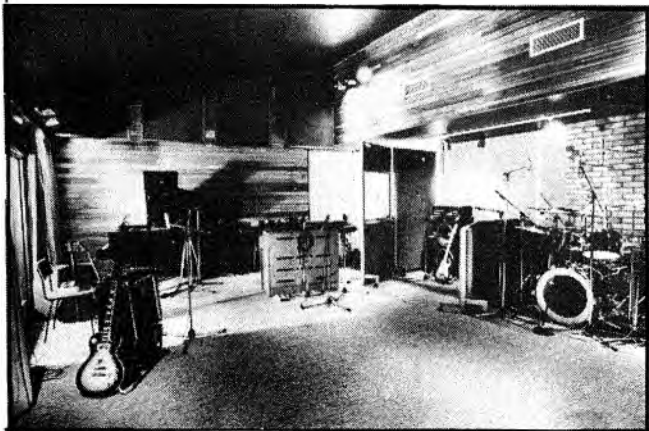
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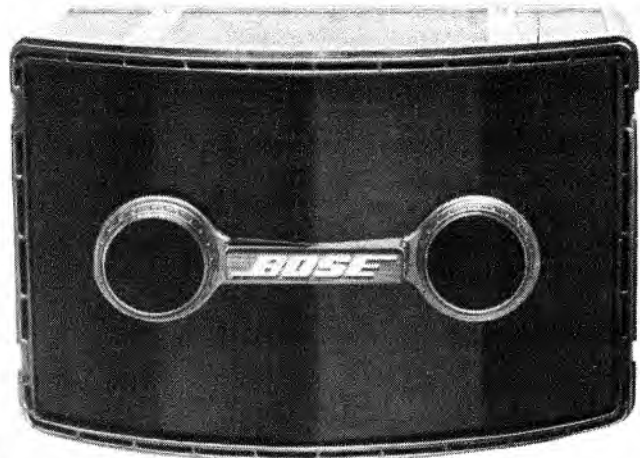
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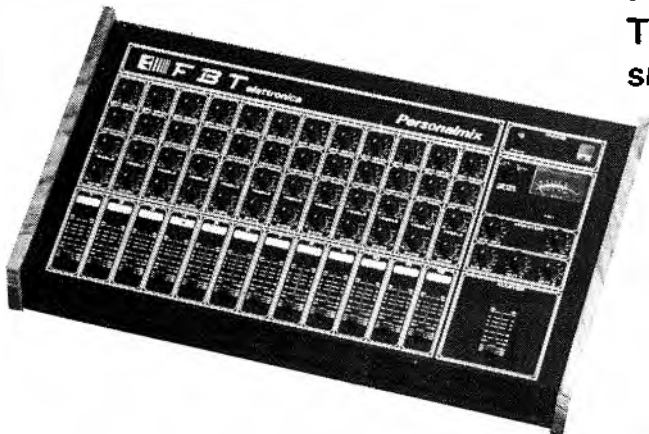
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SMALL THINGS

Mike Vanden: Mandolin maker

A few weeks ago, I received a telephone call from a man who said he was called Mike Vanden, and would I like to see a mandoline he had made. Although there is considerable interest in country music in England, and several importers offer Japanese made Gibson-style mandolines at moderate to quite high prices, we do not hear much about mandoline makers in this country.



On the appointed day, Mike Vanden arrived with the two instruments shown in the photo: an F-style mandoline and an A-style octave mandola. I was impressed with the sound and workmanship of both instruments and surprised to hear that the mandoline costs less than some of the Japanese ones. It also costs considerably less than the going price for a good Gibson original.

I cannot say how closely it follows the design of the F-model Gibson mandolines: I have yet to see two old in-

struments or photos which look exactly the same. However Mike Vanden's version manages to sound sweet and loud, at the same time, which seems to be one of the prerequisites of a good arch-top mandoline.

Mike has been making instruments for about five years

specialising in carved, arch-top mandolines and mandolas. He has also made classical guitars and is planning to produce some arch-top guitars in the near future.

Retail prices are about £285 to £385 for mandolines and £385 for the larger octave mandola illustrated. Delivery is

about six to eight weeks for mandolines. Normal trade arrangements are available to music shops. The mandoline illustrated has a 13 7/8 inch, 352mm scale length and measures 31mm across the fingerboard at the nut, but other dimensions are available to order. **Stephen Delft**

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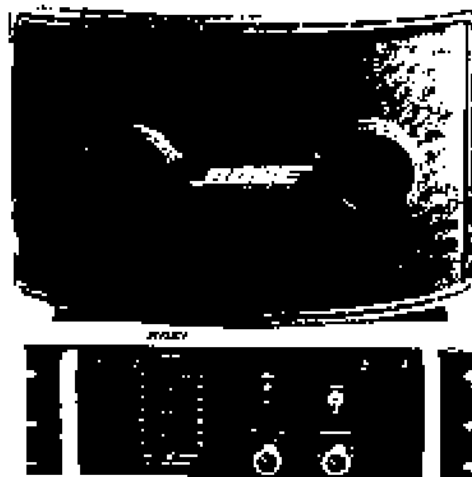
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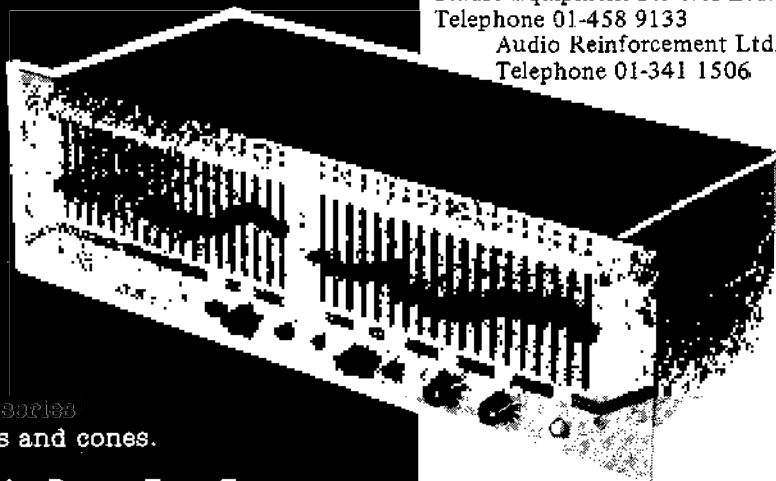
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GARY BURTON

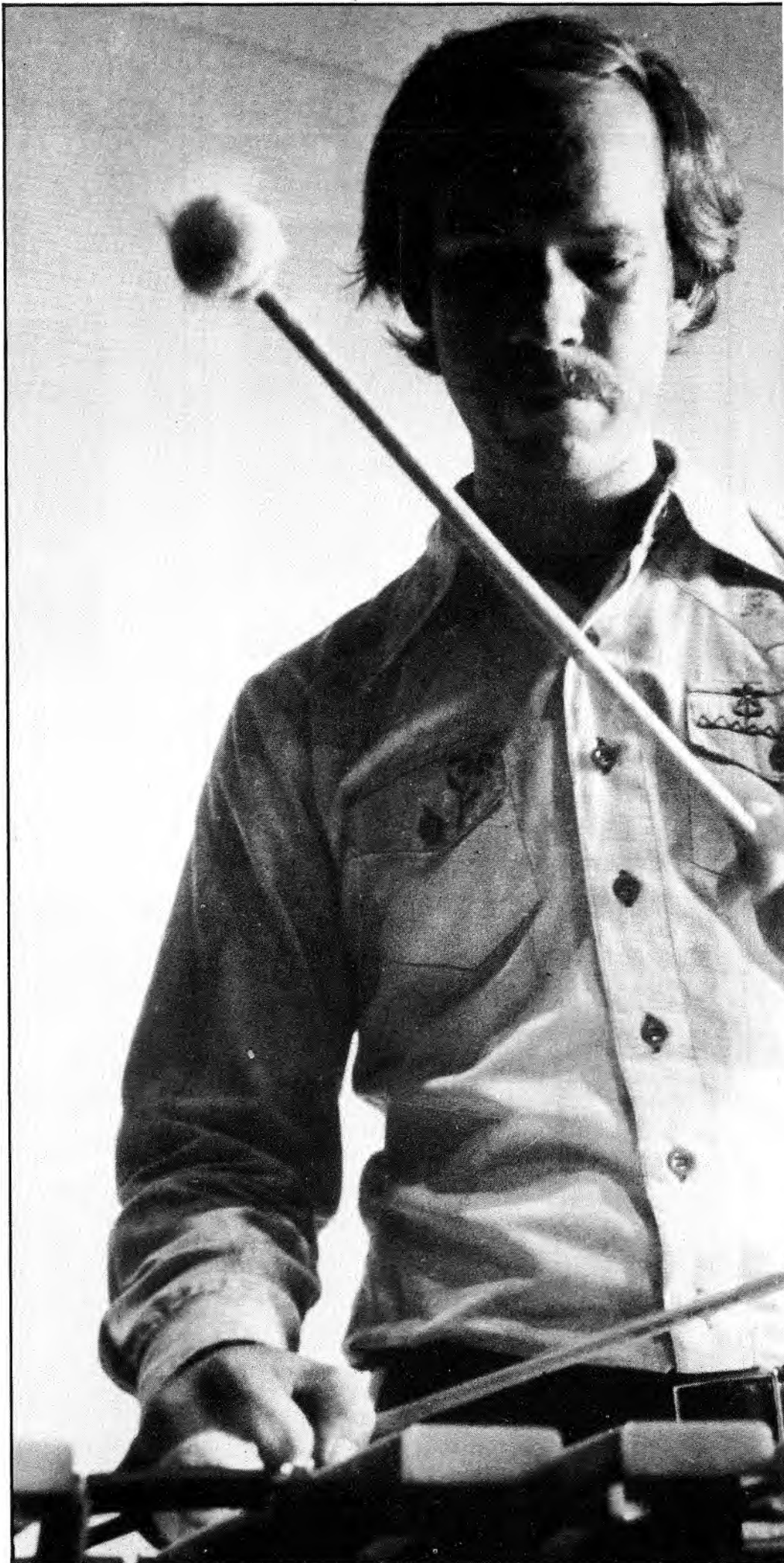
One of the main reasons the vibraphone, or vibraharp (an electrified version of the xylophone, an instrument developed in the United States from its sister, the wooden marimba), is not readily acknowledged as a jazz instrument is the simple fact that so few people play it. This was reiterated by vibist-singer Roy Ayers on a recent edition of *Soul Train* where, while talking with host Don Cornelius, he listed the vibists in jazz which amounted to slightly more than a handful. He left some names out but there really haven't been that many: Lionel Hampton, Red Norvo, Milt Jackson, Terry Gibbs, Bobby Hutcherson, Ayers, Dave Friedman, Charlie Shoemake — And, of course, there's Gary Burton.

Though he maintains a rather low profile, Burton has played a crucial role on today's jazz music, a role he reluctantly acknowledges, for he was one of the first traditional jazzmen to use rock rhythms, beginning the jazz-rock or fusion wave back in 1967 before Miles Davis' *Bitches' Brew* turned everybody's head around. Burton discounts his involvement with the movement, or calls it coincidental at best, rightfully seeing himself as a mainstream player. Nevertheless, he was instrumental in the change.

"Yeah, I got caught up in a big change that was going on," he recalls with a laugh, "and I sort of got mislabeled for several years. From the beginning, I have essentially been a straight-ahead kind of player, even though I played different styles and had gone through different phases. My plan was to feature jazz improvisation in a small group setting, with the main emphasis on interplay among the players.

"I was 23 when I started my own band (in 1967), and I had been playing for audiences in Stan Getz's band that were twice my age and I had a strong need to somehow get away from the jazz traditions, so I started my band and made two fundamental moves. First, I decided to stop dressing the way jazz groups had always dressed.

"It's funny, but every jazz group from Miles Davis to Coltrane, you name it, they all wore suits and ties on every gig — it seems amazing that no one does it now — and no matter how far out they were musically, they still dressed conservatively. I was inspired by seeing pop musicians dressing very colorfully and creatively, and I thought, 'why not?' So we changed our style of dress and I also felt a need to change the music as well. I wanted to break with the tradition of playing the same jazz standards. I had seen Stan work Brazilian music into his thing very effectively and I thought there





GOOD VIBRATIONS



were other ideas along this line. I had previously done it with country music, there's a lot of similarity between the soloing and the tunes, and I saw a lot of it in the rock groups that were suddenly being taken seriously — nice tunes, interesting rhythms, backgrounds, structures — so the group started bringing that into our playing and immediately got labeled 'jazz-rock,' which became 'fusion,' and I wasn't sure if that wasn't accurate the first year or two."

Actually, the implicit naturalness of Burton's move is easily understood with a brief look at his background.

Raised in the rural environs of Princeton, Indiana, Burton got started on the vibes at six. He taught himself, working with sheet music and classical pieces, and he was definitely influenced by the country music that surrounded him, both on the radio and through local performers. "It's a curious thing that country music was frowned upon as being low class by the people where I lived," he says.

Jazz didn't enter the picture until Burton was 16. He'd enjoyed rock & roll, and had made several attempts to teach anyone interested (there weren't many local young players) to play the drums or guitar, but there was the usual shortage of bass players as well, so he gave up and accepted the fact that he would have to play alone, never thinking those solitary hours would give him a distinctive style years later.

"I didn't realize that everyone wasn't playing four-mallets instead of just two until I went East to school in 1960. I played four mallets because I felt a need to fill in the harmonies all the time, it just seemed a natural thing to do, and when I went East, I found out that there was no-one else playing this way, so I just kept going my way and wasn't influenced by other players. I cursed that technique all the years I lived out there because I never had anyone to play with and very few records were available, yet it turned out to my advantage."

Learning to drive, Gary was able to run down to nearby Evansville and, while playing sessions there, he encountered Boots Randolph, a country-jazz tenor player who had a few pop hits in the late Fifties. Boots told him about a gifted guitarist in Nashville, only four hours away, named Hank Garland, who wanted to make a jazz record using a vibes man, so Gary and Boots made it down to Nashville one weekend.

"I went down and we had a little jam session and that led to my coming down pretty frequently, playing in clubs and such, and then we made *Jazz From A New Direction* for Columbia, which has since become a classic. Twenty years later, people still ask about it."

The trips to Tennessee also led to Burton making the acquaintance of guitarist Chet Atkins, head of A&R for RCA there, and Atkins suggested that Gary record for the label even though the vibist was attending Berklee School of Music in Boston. So Gary made it back to Nashville at least once a year to record and in 1966 made the first

country-jazz disc, *Tennessee Firebirds*, which combined Burton's talents with those of the Osborne Brothers, steel guitarist Buddy Emmons, harmonic player Charlie McCoy and others. After it was released, nothing much happened — country people didn't like it and neither did the jazz audience, but five years later, everyone wanted to know where to get a copy and by then it was virtually out of print.

"I took some country pieces and re-harmonized them and re-arranged them so we could all solo a bit, kind of mixing the two styles together. We had a great time and the musicians hit it off wonderfully, but it was so off the wall for 1966 that it didn't go anywhere. Actually, the date was pretty logical because country music has a lot of improvising in it. The songs are a little simpler in structure, but there is a lot of respect for good technique and being able to solo fluently."

After finishing at Berklee, Gary toured with George Shearing for a year, then in 1964 he joined Stan Getz for three years. The merging of Getz and Burton had its comical side.

"Stan hired me *not* wanting me to be in the band, but out of necessity. His guitar player had just quit and Lou Levy, a superb LA-based pianist, told Stan about me, telling him I'd played with Shearing, that I could chord and why not try me. So Stan called me up in New York and I went down and sat in with him and it didn't sound very good. I was at a loss since I had never been the *only* chording instrument before and I wasn't familiar with his material, so it didn't go very well and we both agreed, so I didn't think anything more about it. Two weeks later, I got a call from Stan and he's going to Canada for three weeks, and 'would I try it again, we'll do the best we can, etc.' I wasn't working so I went, and I was friends with other guys in the band, so why not? Well, the first two or three nights were awful. We couldn't find any common ground. I wasn't used to comping a lot and Joao Gilberto was trying to sing with this, and nobody spoke Portuguese to discuss the tunes with him, so it was a nightmare. Stan would end up getting drunk."

Well, miracles *do* happen. Somehow in the next few days, a cohesion occurred. Getz and Burton found ways to communicate with each other, developing a new direction, and Gary stayed with the band for three years, often working with Steve Swallow on bass and Roy Haynes on drums, easily one of the best combos at the time.

"I probably would have stayed longer except that I was getting the itch to do something on my own. It really was the perfect setting — Stan was at the peak of his commercial popularity, we were working every concert hall, and I was getting more exposure than I would have gotten from most groups. He always featured everybody in the band a lot, giving us solo pieces, announcing our names ten times a set. He's always done that, talk up his musicians. He's very proud of his bands."

For the change, a radical one, Gary

turned to guitarist Larry Coryell, who had just left The Free Spirits, to be his plectrist, also working with two members of Bill Evans' rhythm team, bassist Eddie Gomez and drummer Joe Hunt. Burton had wanted Swallow and Haynes, but they both had families to support (Burton was single at the time) and Burton had never been a leader. But in six months the vibist was a success, working all over, and both Swallow and Haynes came into the band.

Getting Roy Haynes was a major breakthrough, seeing that he was and is still one of jazz's finest drummers, having backed up Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Sarah Vaughan and many others.

"Yes, I felt tremendously honored that he worked with me, because we're talking about working for somebody half his age, and there's always some concern about the racial thing, and here he's the one black player in a band with three other white players who are all kids. I offered him the job expecting him to refuse and, to my surprise, he said he'd try it for a while and stayed on for two years. He certainly was a major influence on our concepts of how we wanted the group to sound and what kind of music we were going to play."

Burton has always chosen his music carefully. He's never jumped on the bandwagon of recording cover versions of hit tunes, or even adapting non-hit pop tunes to a jazz context. Rather, he's used a small group of composers that he's preferred, focussing his bands around their material. Among his favorites are Swallow, Keith Jarrett, pianist Carla Bley, and English writer Michael Gibbs.

And when he made his transition, Burton didn't go in for loud amplification, soon to become the vogue. Even though guitarist Coryell did like to let loose on occasion, his wildness was not a dominant feature of the band, as can be heard from the RCA albums of the period (when you can find them). But the sizzling intensity and intricately arranged and produced pieces, as characterized by John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra, were never what Burton had in mind.

"I knew that I hadn't been going in that direction even for a moment. There wasn't a place for a vibraphone anyway, due to the nature of the instrument, and the fact that my intention all along was just to have more choices than jazz standards. We also experimented with classical pieces and many different kinds of music besides mixtures of rock influences, but those were the ones getting the attention at the time. For two or three years we were called a jazz-rock or fusion band and it wasn't until the early Seventies that people saw we really weren't at all."

After Larry Coryell, Burton went through a rash of guitarists, among them John Scofield, Mick Goodrick and Pat Metheny.

"Pat came into the band while Mick was still there, and that provided an interesting contrast. Mick was experienced, an older cat, and he could play



anything. Pat could barely solo at first. He was used to playing fast tunes, but he didn't understand ballads. But Pat continued to develop into more and more of a talent and by the time he was hitting his peak, he left to start his own band, which is the usual case. I enjoyed him very much, and the time he and Mick were both there was really something."

After RCA, Gary signed with Atlantic, turning out a Grammy-winner with *Alone At Last*, an over-dubbed solo date, and albums with Keith Jarrett and French violinist Stephane Grappelli. During his Atlantic years, he went abroad for a solo concert in Germany which totally altered the course of his recording career: he met Manfred Eicher, founder of European Classical Music (ECM) Records, the vibist's label for the last eight years.

"I was in Europe, doing some solo concerts, and at one festival, an evening of solo work was done featuring myself, Chick Corea, German trombonist Albert Mangelsdorf, violinist Jean-Luc Ponty and John McLaughlin. It was kind of strange to all of us, none of us had done much of this before, but everyone loved it and the producers asked for an encore with all of us playing together. Well, we couldn't do it without a rhythm section, so Chick and I said we would. We had worked together a few years before and figured we could come up with something, so we picked a tune and jammed on it and the crowd went wild. The duet was the hit of the evening. So, Manfred came up afterwards and said 'You've got to make a record, that was fabulous,' but I was on Atlantic and I couldn't think about recording for another company and I'd never heard of this guy or his company, so I put it out of my mind.

"Three months later, I'm back in Germany again doing another duo with Chick, and Manfred keeps writing me, wanting to do this album. So I finally

said 'OK, this little German company will never see the light of day, and it'll be fun.' That was *Crystal Silence*, a very big record.

Burton found a rapport with Eicher he'd never had with an American record executive, but Eicher's company was small and leaving Atlantic represented a big risk. "I was fed up with the bureaucracy. Sure, they'd let me record what I wanted, but nothing was ever done with the albums, so I finally decided to go ahead. I was having so much fun working with Manfred on these projects. I'd never imagined sitting up all night talking about all my wildest recording dreams with the president of the company."

The relationship has been marvelous. Burton, who acknowledges that he's the only close-to-straight-ahead player on the label, has recorded nine LPs for Eicher, including duets with Steve Swallow, Corea and guitarist-pianist Ralph Towner, as well as his own band's dates, the latest being *Times Square*, which features guest appearances by Swallow and drummer Haynes and solo work from Tiger Okoshi, a trumpeter from Japan Gary met while teaching at Berklee.

Now that Burton has a family, the vibist is either on the road with his quartet or dueting with Corea, or at home with wife Cricket and daughter Stephanie. He used to teach at Berklee but no longer, though he will do an occasional clinic.

"I love the duets with Chick. The more we play with each other, the better we get to know each other, so we really dig it. We never thought we'd be doing this as often, but there's a tremendous demand for these concerts, and since they're so easy to do, relatively no instruments to lug around, no big sound deal to worry about, no road crew, we'll just do them as long as people want them.

Zan Stewart

DEALER OF THE MONTH

Tim Gentle Music

Leigh-on-Sea doesn't exactly spring to mind as the sort of place to go for one of the most comprehensive collections of guitars and amps, but Tim Gentle's Music Shop is quite justifiably building up something of a reputation. Having made a career as a guitarist, Tim started the shop some four years ago, in what is now only a tiny corner of the existing premises.

At first one is overawed by the selection of gear — amps stacked in profusion and a daunting array of acoustic and electric guitars hanging from the walls. It is no exaggeration to say that there must be a couple of hundred guitars on display, and we're informed there are a further three stockrooms equally bursting at the seams. By popular demand they are branching out into the drum market — lack of space being the main reason for such plans being instigated later rather than sooner.

Friendly advice is always on hand from Tim and his staff of wife Ruth, Dave, Phil and Brad (he won't thank us for mentioning it, but with a surname like Trower, you can make your own deductions). Their

customers are mainly semi-pro and pro groups — from local band Crucifixion through to the bigger names of Elvis Costello and Robin Trower. The last few nights have seen some extra work being put in to prepare all the equipment for the Feelgoods, who are about to embark on a nationwide tour.

It comes as no surprise to find that the shop holds all the main agencies — a stock list would look more like a veritable who's who in guitar and amp manufacture, Gibson, Fender, Musicman, Ovation, Aria, Kramer, Ibanez and Guild guitars, and H/H, Peavey, Marshall, Carlsbro and even the illustrious Bose amps. They boast the largest selection of left-handed guitars in the country. Their selection of secondhand and vintage guitars is enviable, a few of the goodies currently in stock being a 1961 Gibson 345 Stereo, a 25/50 Gibson antique sunburst and the only blue/green sunburst BC Rich Mockingbird you'll find in the country. As if the choice wasn't enough they can order any model you care to name within about 14 days, even imports. In addition to

the usual manufacturer's warranty they will take back new guitars within three months of purchase to service them free of charge.

Some of the shop's success can be attributed to Tim's attitude — "we'd never sell anything that we wouldn't have ourselves". They offer reliable models in unmarked condition at really good discounts. They make a point of ensuring that back-up service is of the highest standard — the repair side is second to none. With the help of Phil on amps and Dave on guitars, they aim to be able to repair even the most challenging job in a couple of days, even less if it's a screaming emergency, and they can customise too if you want.

Aside from the shop there is a pretty successful mail order service. They get involved with supplying say that elusive pickup to the customer who seems unable to find the one he's looking for in his native outlying Swedish village or whatever. But by far the bulk of the mail order revolves around a monthly mail out which is sent on request. This sheet lists all the guitars,



amps, effects and accessories that are on offer, and a mighty selection of secondhand gear, all of which are in stock and are dispatched next day. The advantage of the mail out is that lots of stuff often doesn't get into the ads which appear in the trade papers, so you would otherwise never hear about them. If anything catches your eye they will send a photo so you have a chance to see the condition of the piece before you decide to buy.

Tim's interest in music is not totally self-centred, he has sponsored a local rock contest. Surprisingly, although the area seems to have acquired something of a reputation for R&B via such successful offspring as the Feelgoods, Eddie and the Hotrods and the Kursaal Flyers, a closer inspection reveals the background to be far more HM than one might expect. Tim is also responsible for bringing promotions by some of the companies in the business to the local scene — so far there have been several demos from Gibson, and one from Rosetti which was going on while we were there.

It's encouraging to find a shop that goes out of its way to please its customers. Tim has enough common sense to realise that he wouldn't be where he is without accepting the odd criticism, though we'd be hard pushed to find even the most trifling fault with the set up.

Tim and Ruth Gentle



Photos Clare Ash

LESS THAN

1/2-Price!!
KAWAI XL GUITARS

Plus **FREE** Fitted Plush-Lined Case with every XL sold!



KS11XL



KS12XL

R.R.P. £320

T.G. Price

£150

KS12XL

A top quality solid electric guitar with body of solid mahogany, three piece mahogany neck with 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ " scale, 22 nickel silver frets and best quality machine heads. 3 position pickup selector switch, volume control and tone control for each pickup. Dual sound switch. Addition of a phase-out switch allows extra range of sounds. 'Badass' type bridge black/white patterned edging to front of body, transparent pickguard.

FITTED WITH MIGHTY MITE VINTAGE HUMBUCKING PICKUPS.
KS12XL in black or natural.

KS11XL

This superbly built electric guitar is a must for the guitarist who demands top quality with precision power. Solid mahogany body with curved maple top, three piece mahogany neck-scale 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ " 22 nickel silver frets. Top quality machine heads, 'Badass' type bridge. 3 position selector switch, volume control and tone control for each pick-up, dual sound switch.

FITTED WITH MIGHTY MITE VINTAGE HUMBUCKING PICKUPS.
KS11XL in natural or violin sunburst.

Also Available:

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rrp £200 TG price £99

KAWAI KS11 junior with humbuckers

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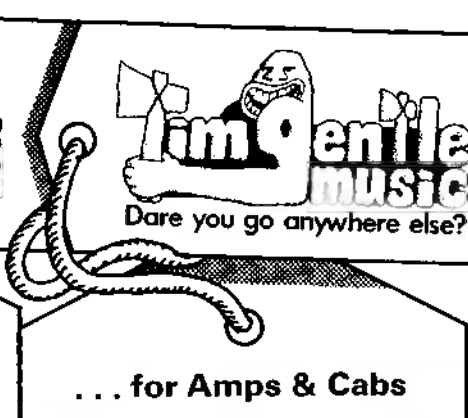
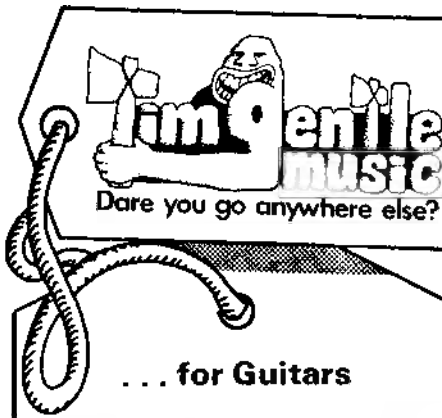
KAWAI Rock & Roll star,
mighty mite pickup

rrp £330 TG price £150

All guitars are in stock, and sent by return. Post and packing £5



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... for Guitars

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Beautiful blue green sunburst
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Guid acoustic and Martin acoustics arriving shortly. Phone for prices and current stock.

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CMI Strat copy	128.00
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Twin necks are available on special order only.

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British Trade Show In Japan

World Import Mart where the show is to be held



There can be very few households in the UK that don't have at least a couple of major items of equipment which originated in Japan. It can also be said with a fair degree of certainty that some, if not all of these items, are probably electrical/electronic such as hi-fi, television and musical equipment. Trying to encourage the Japanese to purchase British Professional Audio Equipment may seem rather like a "Coals to Newcastle" type of operation in view of the market situation but the reality is somewhat different.

Japanese Industry excels at mass production techniques and has been able to raise the quality of such mass produced goods to a very high standard. This can be fairly attributed to their cultural background and its emphasis on attention to detail which has become applied in industrial terms to systems and production engineering with meticulous quality control at all stages of manufacture. Such elaborate mass production techniques only become a reality in economic terms with very large scale production. Professional audio equipment is almost never produced in such vast quantities and so it is a field that has largely been ignored by Japanese manufacturers.

Despite there being very little home produced equipment, the Japanese Recording Industry is sizable and rapidly growing as is

their broadcasting system which is somewhat similar to that of the US with its multiplicity of stations. This is being encouraged by the increasing demands and awareness of the Japanese for Western music and contemporary culture and perhaps most important of all, the first signs of an original Japanese music scene which will have some impact beyond its own shores.

The aforementioned background goes some way to explain why the idea of exhibiting British audio equipment in Japan is not so outrageous at all but really a very practical idea. This brings me to the British Professional Sound & Communications Exhibition which is aiming to do just that. Organised by the Association of Sound & Communications Engineers and sponsored by the British Dept. of Trade, it is scheduled to take place between 14th to the 17th of October 1980 at the British Marketing Centre on the 7th Floor of the World Import Mart, Sunshine City, Ikebukuro which is in the North West area of Tokyo.

Nineteen British manufacturers will be exhibiting as will Cover Publications, who are the publishers of IM&RW making 20 exhibitors in total. The manufacturers cover a wide spectrum of professional equipment in terms of design and price.

Soundcraft

Electronics: Mixing consoles and multitrack tape machine. Will unveil 800 Series console as well as a Series 1S console.

Court Acoustics:

Speaker systems and ancillary sound equipment. They will feature a 2000 four-way system and other items including a PM10 production mixer and the GE60 stereo 30 band graphic.

Solid State

Logic: Mixing consoles with computer interfacing. No specific information supplied but it will be based around a SL-4000E Series console with associated computer equipment.

Keith Monks

Audio: Wide range of audio equipment and accessories. The complete professional range of products including a new monitor loudspeaker.

Monitor Audio:

Loudspeaker systems. Range of speakers with emphasis on two new models, the MA2 domestic reference and the MA9S.

Trident Audio: Mixing consoles. The principle exhibit will be a Series 80 console.

Audio & Design: Wide range of signal processing equipment. Will be demonstrating

their complete range including the Mini Scamp system.

Recording Studio

Design: Range of mixing consoles and power amplifiers. Mixing consoles for PA and recording with ancillary equipment.

Design Electronics: A unique foldback system for studio use. It features individual foldback mixing capability based on a loop induction system.

Klark-Teknik: Range of sound processing equipment. Will be showing full range including graphic equalisers, Digital and analogue delay lines and the new DN60 1/3 octave spectrum analyser.

Canary: Range of mixing consoles. Will be showing the new Mark 2 Series to the public for the first time.

Tannoy: Range of loudspeaker systems. Will be showing the complete range of their professional models.

Swisstone

Electronics: A pair of loudspeaker systems. The Rogers BBC Licenced LS5/8 and LS3/5A.

Advanced Music

Systems: Range of analogue and stereo or mono digital delay lines including the new DM-DDS disc mastering digital preview unit.

Vitavox: Wide range of drive units and complete loudspeaker systems. A featured item will be the Oracle which is a small horn loaded system.

Delta IV: Wall wedge speakers; column speakers. Speakers for all aspects of sound reproduction — background, disco, stage.

HH: Mainly Mos Fet power amps and HH Acoustic Super Series loudspeakers.



Views of Tokyo courtesy Japan Information Centre



Zoot Horn: Link Series Mixers — 16/8 (for PA); 16/6 (for on-stage monitoring for live concerts for groups). Also the PMR3 Series Mixer — 16/4/2 intended mainly for broadcasting, PA systems and Recording. The other important thing they are taking is the G500 Instrument Amp with its 9-band graphic eq.

Acoustic Transducer

Co: They will be taking a range of ATC Drive Units; Showing and demonstrating the Studio Monitoring Systems. ATC will be giving a symposium on "Direct Radiating Soft Dome Mid Range Drive Units".

Several of these companies are well established in Japan already, while some are making their first

entry into the market. Possibly the most experienced Japanese exhibitor is Keith Monks of Keith Monks Audio who has also been made a leader of the delegation. His company are very active in both the pro and hi-fi markets in Japan with a variety of products. They are also exhibiting at the Audio Fair which is being held at the same time as are Tannoy. Their mike stands are already in use in the studios of Pioneer, Sansui and National Panasonic.

The Japanese are very fond of technology and several of the exhibitors are expressing interest in the possible dialogues which might arise from discussions with Japanese engineers and users. To further this end, the Exhibition will also include four seminars on the subjects of Horn Loading,

Recording Console Technology, Studio Monitoring Systems and Signal Processing. A separate demonstration room will also be available for exhibitors to give full demonstrations of their equipment.

Speaker manufacturers account for the biggest group of exhibitors and British speakers are very highly thought of. Choice of speakers is very much a matter of taste and personal preference for sound. The Japanese 'Ear' is generally reckoned to prefer a different tonal balance from a loudspeaker to a European 'Ear' which is again different to a US 'Ear'. This point is further emphasised by there not having been a Japanese loudspeaker to have gained as yet wide critical acceptance in Europe. These points aside, two of the exhibiting manufacturers are very well established, those being Tannoy and Swisstone, the latter exporting 25% of its production to Japan. The other speaker manufacturers have all noted considerable interest in their products and are hopeful of gaining similar acceptance in their respective fields.

Other exhibitors who are well established include Trident, with three consoles already installed, Klark-Teknik for whom it's their largest export market and Audio & Design. They all expressed strong views on the way that the Japanese do business, stressing the difference between them and the Western methods that they are accustomed to. One point made was that they make an extremely close examination of any product they buy, far more deeply than the average Western customer but once they made up their mind they were totally committed. It is also not uncommon for manufacturers to be sent detailed reports on the equipment in use, any problems encountered and even detailed plans for the redesign of certain parts of the equipment.



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Specifically designed for the electric guitar or bass player who wants to expand his solo performances by incorporating electronic octave effects into a studio or live environment. The SE-4 includes a 3 mode octave selector and separate side controls for balance, tone and level output.



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Professional quality and our most affordable phasing device. The SE-1 reproduction of low and mid-range frequencies allows for a new sound dimension in studio or live performance levels. The SE-1 includes repeatable side controls for intensity level and speed variation.

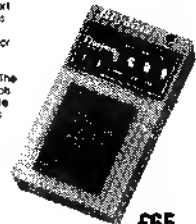


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SE-5 FLANGER

w/AC adaptor

The most advanced state-of-the-art circuitry available. The SE-5 sweeps through the entire frequency response of amplified guitar, bass or keyboard instruments. Enhances reproduction of low, mid and high ranges for a total 'flanging' effect. The SE-5 features individual side controls for manual command of width, rate and a regeneration of frequencies.



£65

SE-6 SIX BAND GRAPHIC EQUALIZER

The missing link in sound reproduction for amplified instruments or microphones. The SE-6 covers a frequency range which boosts or cuts six different octave bands enabling the musician to contour the sound to specific recording environments or personal taste.



£45

SE-7 ANALOG ECHO/REVERB

w/AC adaptor

The SE-7 Analog Delay combines superior sound with a separate reverb effect letting the musician create distinctive sounds at all performance levels. The circuitry of tomorrow in a small compact design, the SE-7 includes a separate switch for echo and reverb effect plus side controls for delay time, number of repeats and balance for effect level.



£75

SE-8 DISTORTION

This traditional effects unit recreates the natural distortion and sustain quality originally produced by tube-type amplifiers when they were over-driven. SE-8 includes individual side controls for drive, tone and level output.



£35

SE-9 BI-PHASE

w/AC adaptor

The ultimate phasing device destined to become a leader in design. The SE-9 features a lead phase shifter circuit and a variable phase shifter circuit that allows the user to integrate two phasing effects simultaneously in one unit. The SE-9 also includes separate side control for width, rate and resonance.



£55

Introducing the MULTIVOX Pulse Regulator and Power Supply.

A state-of-the-art control panel for use with up to five pedals at once.

SE-XP PULSE REGULATOR/POWER SUPPLY

Multivox designed the convenient unit to supply 9 volts of pulse-regulated DC power for up to five Big Jam effects pedals simultaneously. The Multivox unit supplies constant voltage regardless of demand. The SE-XP Pulse Regulator plugs into standard wall outlet and has five jack inputs for up to five Big Jam pedals.



SE-11 JAZZ FLANGER

w/AC adaptor

A radical and totally unique sound effect device created for today's 'new wave' music. A professional flanging circuit plus a separate overdrive distortion circuit allows the user to incorporate a flanging effect with a heavy distortion overdrive signal. The SE-11 includes separate side controls for manual width, rate, regen, drive and level.



£65

SE-UP AC ADAPTOR

AC adaptor:

Multivox Big Jam effects pedals operate on 9 volt battery power, or on AC line current with the Multivox SE-UP AC adaptor. Compact unit plugs into wall outlet and converts standard 120V/100V (50-60 Hz) AC current to 9 volts DC. Also available as a Multivox AC adaptor that converts 220V/240V (50-60 Hz) AC current to 9 volts DC.



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Other features include 2 piano tones, 2 harpsichord tones, variable automatic or footswitchable sustain, variable (L/M/H) output and headphone jack socket.



R.R.P £399
OUR PRICE:
£295

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PRO-MARS: Programmable Lead Synthesizer
SH 2: 2 VCO + Sub-osc. Synthesizer
SH 09: 1 VCO + Sub-osc. Synthesizer
CSQ 600: NEW 4 Channel Digital Sequencer
CSQ 100: Original 168-Note Digital Sequencer

MODULAR 100M SYSTEM:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 190: 3 Rack | 121: 2 x VCF |
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Electro-Voice in Eur

Electro-Voice loudspeakers are designed and manufactured in Buchanan in the state of Michigan in the USA — a large part of whose territory is occupied by Lakes Superior, Huron and of course Michigan. The range of products included in the Electro-Voice catalogue is extensive, and besides the professional cone loudspeakers, compression drivers, horn flares, and complete loudspeaker systems now well known in the European music industry, the company also manufacture a whole range of professional microphones for broadcasting, studio and live sound applications and a whole list of column and re-entrant type horn loudspeakers and compression drive units intended for industrial and commercial public address installations.

Recently, Gulston Industries, the parent company of Electro-Voice in the States bought out Tapco, whose range of mixing consoles, graphic equalisers, reverberation units and power amplifiers have now been incorporated under the Electro-Voice banner and are now marketed as EV-Tapco.

Although the company have been manufacturing loudspeakers since before the Second World War, and despite the existence of a small office in Switzerland, there was little activity on the European front until Larry Fransden, currently overall sales manager for Electro-Voice for the whole of Europe, was sent to Switzerland with a brief to suss out exactly what was going on and develop the market in Europe for EV products, that things began to happen.

He started by moving the office from a holiday resort in the south of Switzerland to its present location in Nidau in the more industrial and commercially orientated north-west of the country and very soon teamed up with Peter Steiner who is still with the company as works manager at Nidau.

As the market started to open up in Europe, it became necessary to establish a European assembly plant due to the

high costs of airfreighting large and heavy completed systems in from the States and so a small manufacturing and assembly facility was added to the offices at Nidau — which has recently been further extended by the addition of another larger assembly plant nearby at Biel Mett.

Today, there is a staff of about 30 at Nidau and Biel Mett engaged in sales promotion and administration, stock control and ordering, accounts and assembly of completed loudspeaker systems for the whole of Europe, and a Burroughs B80 computer system has been installed to carry practically all accounting and stock control functions.

The products actually assembled at Nidau include the whole of the Eliminator range, the Sentyry IV, the S12/2, the S15/3 (which we reviewed about 12 months ago in our 'Speakercheck' feature), the FM12-2 and FM12-3 wedge monitors, a whole range of stage loudspeaker systems, the LRS-4 line source column and various models of the EV Interface hi-fi loudspeakers.

Completed systems are tested, and component drivers evaluated in a small anechoic chamber at the Nidau works and by an electronically gated measuring system at Biel Mett. In both instances, the test equipment installation is Bruel & Kjaer — which is just about as good as you can get.

EV have franchised distributors in all the major countries of Europe including Greece, Turkey, Spain, Italy, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France, Belgium, Finland and Austria, and have their own sales offices and warehousing facilities in Switzerland, Germany and the UK, the latter two being directly responsible to the Swiss headquarters at Nidau.

All orders from either franchised distributors or national sales offices are handled at Nidau, who then order in bulk from America. Goods are then shipped in bulk to a central warehouse in Basel in Switzerland where they are re-



Peter Steiner - Works Manager - in his office at Nidau

Assembly of Eliminator 10s. The drive units visible are the ST350/A H.F. Horn and the new vented midrange unit



ope

The Electro-Voice coffee table - made from an E-V 30w 30" Bass Driver with 1930s style Thorens Transcription record deck in background



E-V engineer Hansjorg Stamel at one of the BHL testing installations



Assembly of radial horn units for Century IV



distributed to the required destination in whatever country. Larry Fransden assures me that he has done considerable research into the costs of shipping in various ways and is satisfied that due to the competitive rates which apply to container loads shipped by road/sea/road to a single destination, this present arrangement is by far the most cost effective way of handling the situation. Also of course, it gives the Nidau office total control.

Ray Standen, the UK sales manager is not convinced however, and he is looking forward to the day when his business with EV product in

the UK is such that he can justify bringing in his own container direct from America and save a considerable amount of time in the process. The time delay incurred by the arrangement does of course necessitate accurate long term forward planning of requirements and the holding of considerable stocks of certain items in the various countries.

After all, the customer is not the least bit interested in why he has to wait for his equipment — he will simply buy someone else's instead, which is on the shelf! It must be a constant headache to get the right balance between stock levels and budget allocations and this

was a constant topic of conversation among the various franchised dealers and national managers I met at the company's annual sales conference at Montreux this year.

For the last four years, Electro-Voice Europe have provided the sound system for the Montreux Jazz Festival and the company take the opportunity of inviting their senior sales people to Montreux, partly as a few days of relaxation and partly for the sales conference, while the Jazz Festival is running. In last month's issue of IM&RW we did a feature on the Montreux sound system and the festival itself so I will not dwell on this aspect here.

So it would seem that Electro-Voice are intent on having themselves a good slice of the European pro-sound market and have organised themselves in order to see to it that this goal is achieved. The quality of the product as seen through our 'Speakercheck' results, and the drive and determination of Larry Fransden and his staff, should combine to make it work, and the Montreux exercise is one example of the lengths the company are prepared to go to to bring the product into the limelight and show just what can be done with a properly engineered sound system.

It seems to me however, that while in Germany and Scandinavia, where there would seem to be more ready cash available to the punter, than in the UK, the prices of EV product is high — although not by direct comparison with other products in the same quality bracket. After all, it is not every musician who can afford £100 plus for a 12 or 15 inch drive unit to put into his Marshall 4x 12 or Fender Twin Reverb, and so maybe, the UK market will be less rapid in being developed. However, Ray Standen, the UK sales manager is determined to keep his figures up in line with his European counterparts, so we shall see if he can achieve his aims as well.

Ken Dibble

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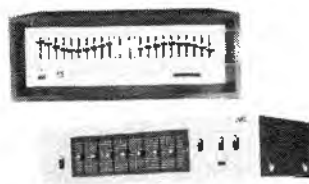
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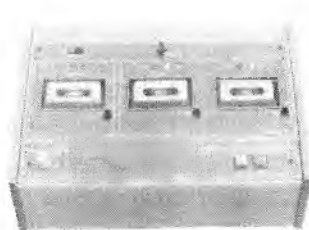
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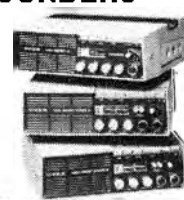
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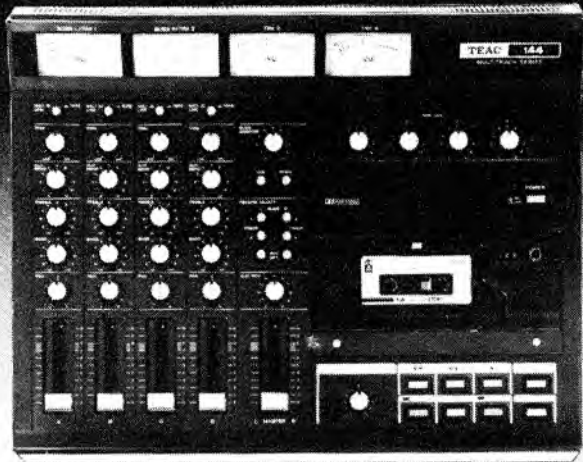
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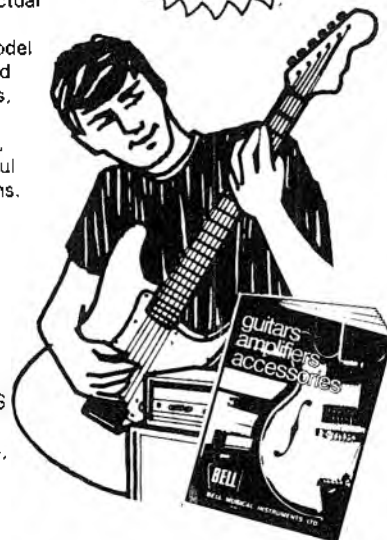
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D	Dolby	Q	Quad
tf	Transfer facilities	OTC	Overtime charge
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St	Number of Studios	S	Stereo
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tba	to be advised	VS	Video Studio
Ka	Keyboards available	AC	Accommodation
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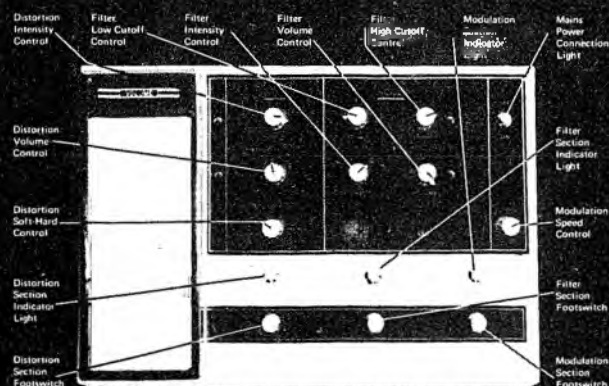
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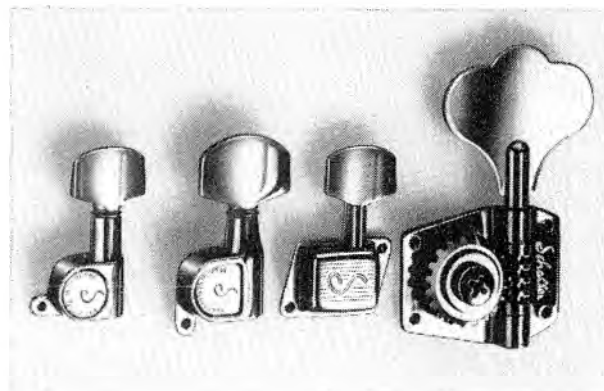
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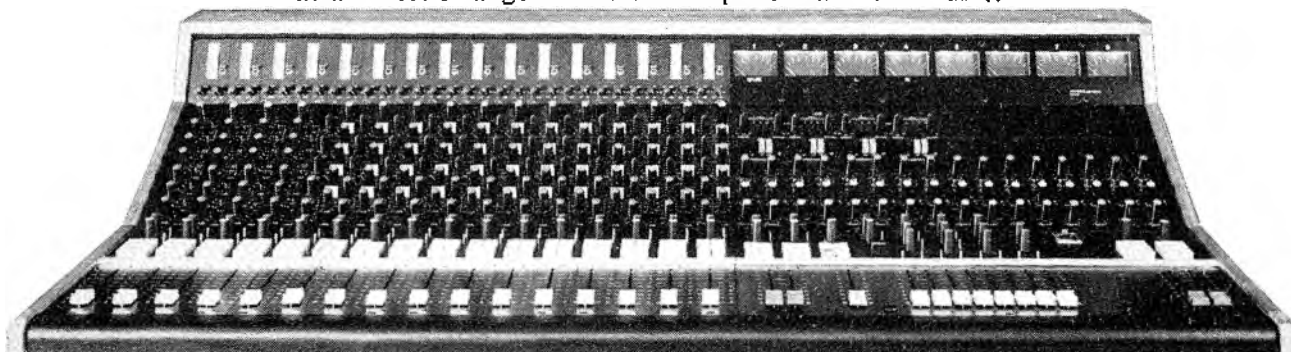
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