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The Guitar Magazine

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BASS-O-MATIC

STEVE LUKATHER

TOTO RECALL

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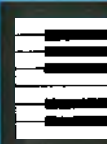
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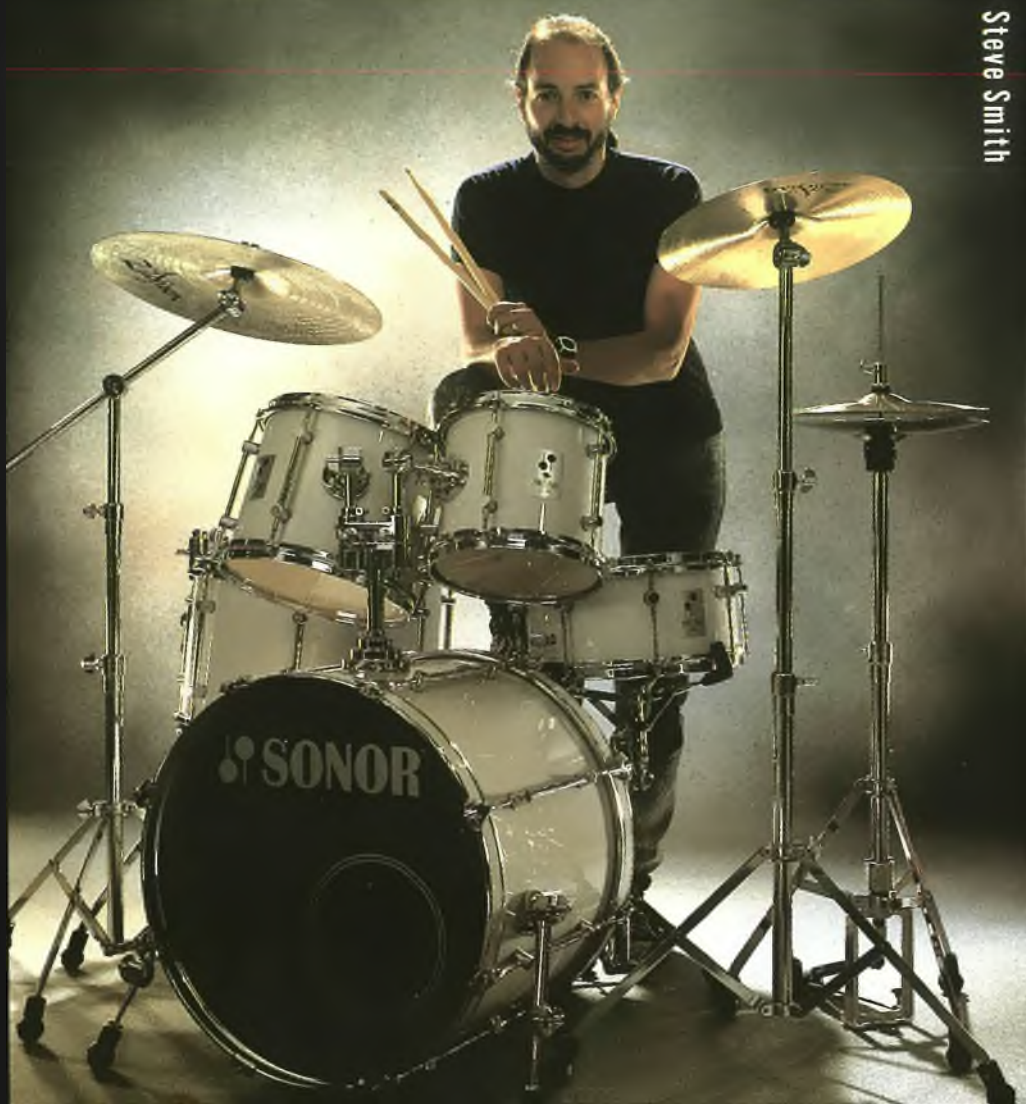


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● A GOOD CLUBBING

Soul II Soul spokesperson/frontman, Jazzie B, is back on the club scene. Official. Now that Brixton Fridge's Soul II Soul Club has been finally laid to rest, the Funki Dred has decided to move operations just a few hundred yards down the road to Brixton's premier live venue, The Academy. Alongside dance DJ/Producer 2 Dam Funky, he plans to re-establish the raw excitement of early nights out at such legendary groove venues as the Africa Centre - long before the big multi-nationals moved in to crash the party and grab the cash.

At Brixton Academy from Friday 1 February, 1991 there will be a regular night out for those dancers who believe in, and are addicted to, the World's purest dance floor bass and mellow vibes.

"The Club will bring together everything we've been working for," say the founding members. "We're going back in order to go forward. But don't just listen to rumours, you're going to have to go down there to feel what we're going to be doing."

Both 2 Dam and Jazzie are old friends. Having worked at making London's dance scene what it is, they feel ready to take it back to where they reckon it truly belongs.

"This jam is all about going back to the roots on street level, and the team we're putting together is dedicated to making it happen..."

The club '2 Dam Dred' is at Brixton Academy every Friday. **KJ**



● FAST AND BULBOUS!!

The NEW FAST AUTOMATIC DAFFODILS' last 45 spent three months in the independent top ten and they're now ready to set up camp at the top of the indie-album charts with the release of their debut long-player Pigeonhole (Play It Again Sam).

In the past the band have been compared to junk-funksters like A Certain Ratio and cut-up guitar groovers like The Fire Engines and Josef K. The LP sees the New FADS moving away from the frenetic clatter of their

previous work as they ease themselves into far 'groovier' territory.

As guitarist Dolan says; "It's us maturing, becoming more confident...we're a lot less frantic than we were."

It may also have a lot to do with the

recruitment of newest New FAD, Icarus, a bongo-beating-beatnik who's rhythms have given the band the flexibility they'd been lacking, or as drummer Perry jokes, "the percussion has given us enough space to come in late!".

The New FADS is that they create their dance-orientated groove with real instruments, using samples sparingly in the studio, and live not at all...as yet.

"We're thinking of using sampling triggered from the desk", ventures vocalist Andy, "there's a whole load of things you can do, so it seems stupid to restrict ourselves". The New Fast Automatic Daffodils keeping music live(ish) into the 90's.....

KL

influences

THE SONGS THAT MADE THEM DO IT



● THIS MONTH: SIMON-RED BOX

1) T-REX, GET IT ON:

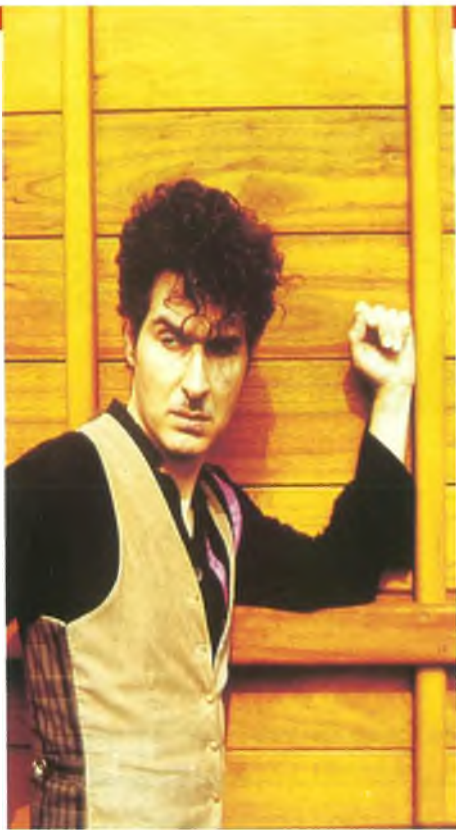
"Marc was my first idol, plus it was the first song I ever learned to play."

2) BUFFY SAINT-MARIE, SOLDIER BLUE:

"I still visualise hearing it. Her voice is so beautiful and eerie. It changed my life."

3) THE CLASH, LONDON CALLING:

"It's just stonking!"



● ALL THE WAY FROM MEMPHIS...

Film-maker, writer, actor and primal rock'n' roller Tav Falco has successfully lead the Panther Burns through their first decade. For the uninitiated, Panther Burns are the self styled 'ditch-diggers' of American music, their repertoire consisting of rural blues and obscure Memphis rock-a-billy. Tav describes the Panther Burns output as, "found music, like found objects".

The band were formed at the end of the seventies after Alex Chilton witnessed Tav Falco playing a solo spot at a Memphis show, a performance that ended with Falco taking a chainsaw to his guitar. What else could Alex say except 'let's do a band'!?

The band, with and without Alex Chilton, now have five albums to their credit alongside a myriad of EPs and 45's and this winter sees the release of The Panther Burns: Tonight video that takes us through the first decade. "Yeah, it's got the chainsaw footage on it," laughs Tav. "It's ten years of the Panther Burns in 90 minutes! Including a performance on cable TV in Memphis where we were nearly thrown off the air by an irate talk-show host who thought we were the worst sound she'd heard on TV in her entire life!!!"

So will the band be around to release Volume II come the year 2000? "Ha, ha... it's possible," says Tav "but there's no guarantees in this business."

Tav Falco's Panther Burns are New Rose recording artists. The Panther Burns: Tonight will be released through Psychotronic Video, London.

KL



BUZZ



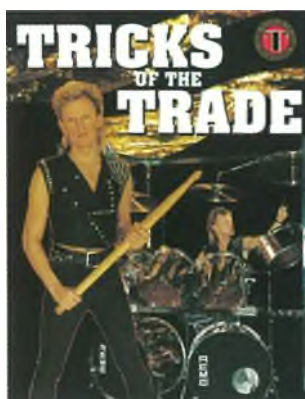
Edited by Philip Bradley

● GRIPPING STUFF

Grip Master may well be the top selling finger exerciser/strengthenener for guitarists in America, but on a larger scale, it's the drummer who might benefit the most. The hand-held, three-piece plastic bar consists of four sprung, contoured blocks on top corresponding to the guitarists fingers. A few minutes on this everyday and you'll be playing speedy hammers like Van Halen in no time. Of course, drummers don't go in for such specific finger control but turning the Grip Master over so the blocks are on the bottom makes for a sturdy wrist strengthener of the Schwarzenegger variety - perfect for improving your stamina. Available at all good music shops priced £9.99.



BH



● SIGN OF THE CHIMES

Tricks Of The Trade are what Terry Chimes (ex-Clash, Billy Idol, Black Sabbath, Hanoi Rocks) reveals in this comprehensive guide to the world of drums. Accurate, if somewhat yawnsome advice on choosing cymbals, preparing for an audition and silencing a kit for miming in a video are counter-balanced by more meaty cuts of the great man's undoubted band and soloing abilities. Other features include the best way to mike up a kit, what noise gates do to the sound of a drum, what a harmoniser does to a snare drum and how to play along to a click track. Most rock drummers with a little experience will find this video is worth its weight in gold.

Available on Tricks of the Trade Videos from most good music shops.

SF



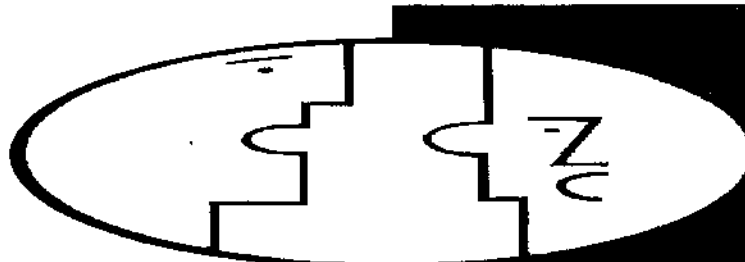
● CHOP! CHOP!

Richie Kotzen began playing guitar at the age of seven. He's now considerably older and wiser and to prove it he's released Rock Chops, an hour long video seminar covering almost all the hi-tech rock techniques on the market. Shapes and sequences for melodic legato playing, inventive ways to combine string skipping, right hand tapping, sweeping techniques, etc are all ably covered by this talented and still young Monster of Rock. Available through REH videos from most good music stores.



SF





EDITED BY PHILIP BRADLEY

● ON THE CASE

I have long held the opinion that we drummers don't need fibre cases all the time. There are definitely times when they're an inconvenience. When you're shoving them in the back of the car and the jagged edges you've been meaning to mend for ages, or the rivets, rip through your seats. So, whilst they are an absolute boon in a van where the sharp edges can't do any harm and there's always a chance of heavy stuff crushing your drums, in an ordinary car who needs them?

Pearl seem to share my philosophy and have come up with a series of drum bags for the Nineties which are made in Britain and designed better than any we've seen here before. They're padded and made in sizes to take all normal diameters and depths, from a strong water-proof nylon material in the usual tube shape, with strongly bound seams and two zips

running almost all the way round the perimeter.



This feature makes it simpler to put the drums inside - which can be an important consideration when you want to pack away and get to the bart

You simply open them up, place the drum, head

down inside, pull the other circular piece over the opposite head and zip the whole thing up. There's a flap where both zips end which is fitted with velcro, and a couple of longish webbing straps.

Opening the cases is even easier, you simply grab the velcro flap and pull it round the drum, therefore simultaneously opening both zips. Even though the circular faces of the bags are padded, the sides aren't; they're simply double-thickness. So I'd recommend enough of that bubble-wrap to go round the sides of your drums before you put them into bags.

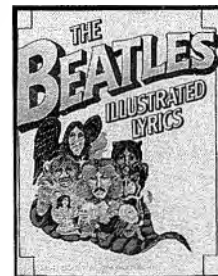
Soft cases don't give you any problems with storage at the gig either. All you have to do is stuff them inside one case (say the 16"), then squash it inside your bass drum to dampen it! Ingenious or what?

For a set of five expect to pay £124.

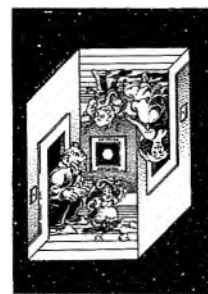
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● *The Beatles Illustrated Lyrics* is a spectacular mass of colourful artwork and champion lyrics from Liverpool's best act since THE LA'S. Editor/Illustrator Alan Aldridge has not only compiled the lyrics to 180 songs but also collected drawings, photos and paintings from some of the foremost artists of the Sixties which, incidently, was when the book first appeared. But if all this talk of time gone by doesn't quite get you on a roll don't despair, there's still plenty



to get excited about, in particular a young DAVID BAILEY's (who!?) superb interpretation of *Yesterday*. Certainly not just for members of THE KAFTAN OWNERS CLUB. Priced £14.99 and available from most good bookstores.



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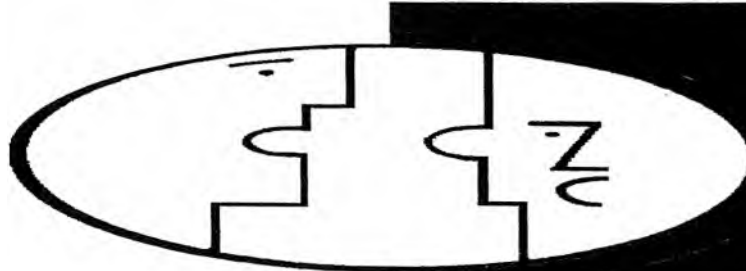
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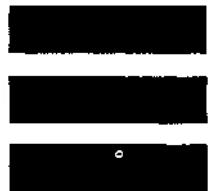
John Hornby Skewes & Co. Ltd. Salem House, Garforth, Leeds LS25 1PX. England



EDITED BY PHILIP BRADLEY

● GREEN GUIDES

PETER GREEN's short career as a '60s Blues musician is painstakingly recreated in tablature form by Douglas J Noble's labour of love, *Instant Peter Green*. Classics like *Albatross*, *Green Manalishi*, *Black Magic Woman* and *Man Of The World* are given such a good going over that even the man himself - long since a recluse - has given a firm thumbs up to the project. A price couldn't be established before going to press but it should reach all decent book shops in time for the New Year. For Les Paul and Blues fans alike...



● FEEL REAL?

Life's a bitch, ain't it? All set to showcase for around half a dozen or so majors and the PA packs in. That's what happened to Liverpool's THE REAL PEOPLE.

Undaunted, the showcase was moved a few miles north to a dingy warehouse south of Bootle which doubled as a rehearsal room for a handful of scouse bands. The room was very small, very cramped, compact and bijou, as they say in estate management. The last company rep was helped in with the aid of an old shoe horn and everyone settled down with a ciggy and Pils.



It was a magical night. There was absolutely no doubt in anyone's mind that this band would be signed 'ere the month is out. Their crisp rhythms and superb melodic songsmithery, although comparable to THE BEATLES et al, has a life of its own far removed from any hint of plagiarism.

It's the single which, through new arrangements and polished production, tends to lie a little about its age and origins. The bastardisation is completed with dance beats and lots of la la la's. The vocals are unmistakably their own. The harmonies too. *Window Pane* is a great debut single. But is it honest? Catch the tour and be amazed. These are The Real People. An experience. The Real People are signed to CBS Records.

JS (another East Of Everton production)

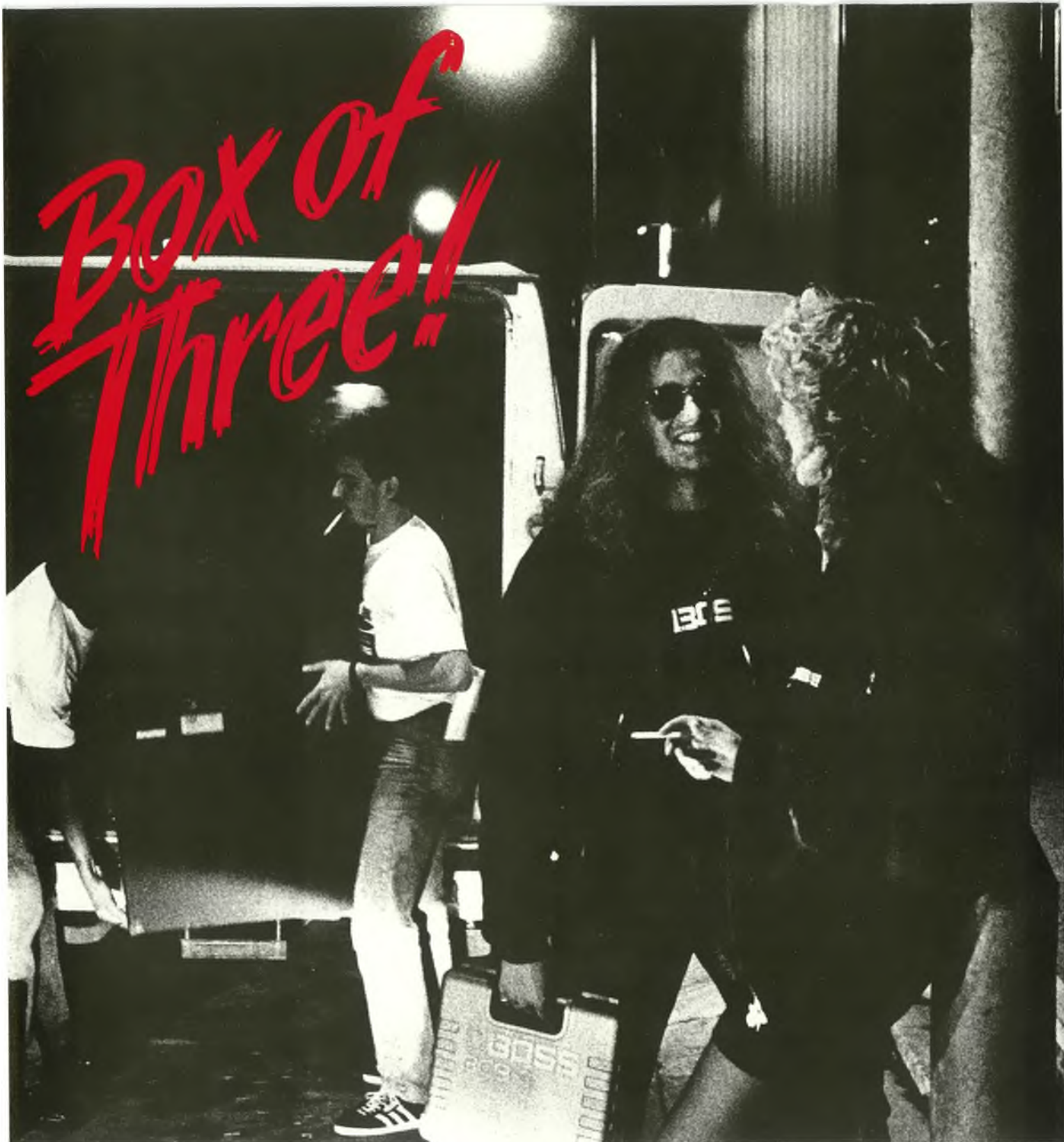
● SILENT RUNNING

A strange anomaly has arisen with DAT tapes recorded with SCMS (Serial Copy Management System), the system installed on 'domestic' DAT recorders that prevents more than one digital copy being made from a protected source (e.g. a CD). The problem concerns the Sony TCD-D10 PRO, which is unable to play back such tapes recorded at 44, 1kHz; quite simply, no sound comes out. The problem lies in one of the TCD's ROMs which, of course, was programmed before SCMS was decided. Sony have identified the error and all future models will be cleared of it. Existing owners experiencing problems can return their units for a ROM replacement.

JB

● Contributors to this month's BUZZ were: Jim Betteridge, Bob Henrit, John Slater

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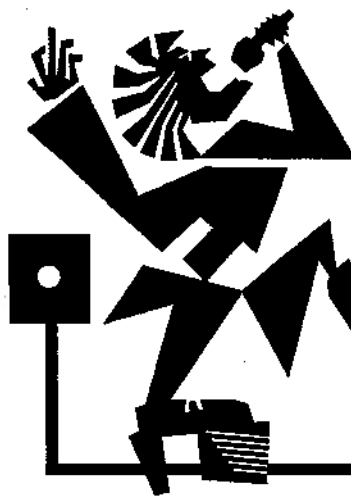
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A & R

DEPT

THIS MONTH TAPES REVIEWED BY:

== SEAN O'DONNELL ==

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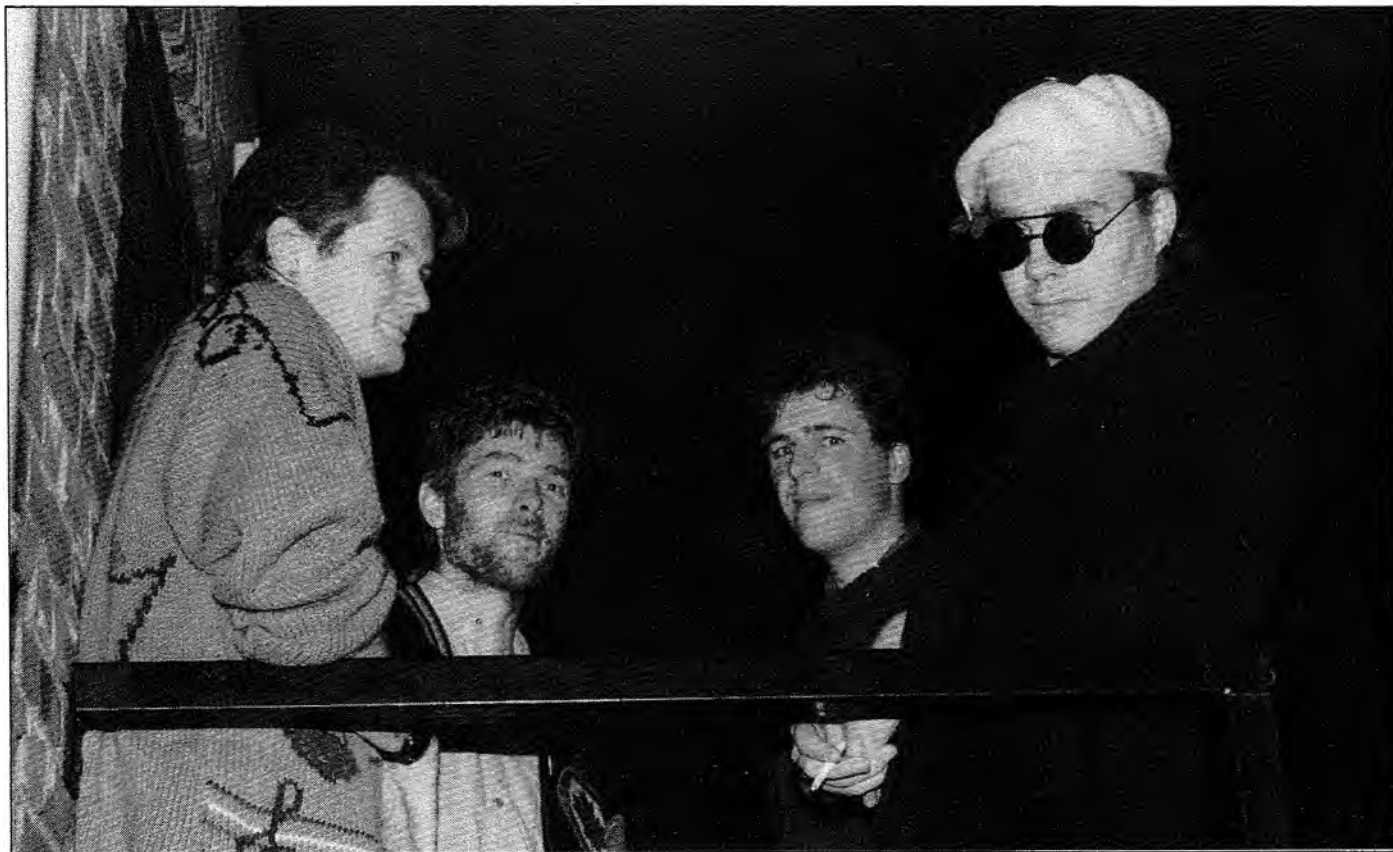
International Musician

PO BOX 381

Mill Harbour

London E14 9TW.

By the way, the five bands that by the end of the year have amassed the best reviews will have the chance to spend a day in the studio and have their tracks released on an IM&RW compilation CD!!



TOM SMALL'S BOX

What's the secret of TOM SMALL'S BOX? Well, actually a rather nifty four-piece from Norwich who write and play energetic, melodic songs with the accent firmly on that guitar-driven sound. The best track ANTIQCH FARM displays the singer's voice to full effect and is only let down by a dull instrumental section.

In fact, this is the only area where the band lose the plot as they rely on fairly safe, traditional arrangements and would benefit by taking a few more risks when writing their songs. Totally unfashionable of course but there's an ever-hungry market for this kind of band. If they keep working at improving the quality of their writing, they may get the breaks. Best tape of the batch!

7

THE INDUSTRY

Not a lot of information with this tape. THE INDUSTRY (terrible name) definitely fit into the Pop/Rock area, that dreaded No-Man's Land where the band try to cover all the bases and end up appealing to nobody in particular.

However, Sons of Africa shows that they have a good singer and can come up with interesting arrangements. The Industry come across as good players, but desperately need an injection of originality into their songwriting to distinguish themselves in an over-populated genre of music.

5

THE DUVZ

This three-piece are from Ayr, which is my neck of the woods, therefore I can explain that their name refers to those white birds of peace and this is indeed a fine thing.

I Should Have Realised shows the band's very power-Pop, early BEATLES inspirations. It starts off with a great spiky guitar intro, chugs along in a pleasant enough way and ends on a lovely piano outro.

Sweetest One has a fab chanting hey-hey chorus and comes complete with a huge thumping drum sound in the tradition of bands like a CHEAP TRICK and THE KNACK. Unfortunately, *A Little Help* is by far the weakest track with several awkward changes and gives the impression that the studio clock was running out.

As there is very little information with the package, it's hard to tell whether this is a bunch of young cheeky chappies just starting out or a band that's been around longer than they would care to admit. If the former is the case, with some work on the vocals they could attract the right kind of attention as they're mining a sadly-neglected musical vein. **6**



CLIFFORD HOWE

CLIFFORD HOWE is from Wales and his cassette contains three songs recorded on a Fostex X26. Each of the songs contains some excellent guitar playing and he makes the most of the limited equipment.

However, Clifford's vocals really let him down as he's not the greatest of singer's. Lyrics such as "Did you ever see that smile in a young baby's eyes" inform you that what we have here is the dreaded introverted singer/songwriter whose songs rarely venture beyond the bedroom demo stage. This is a shame as there are some really imaginative guitar lines here, but without the vocals or material to match – not a chance. **4**

PLENTY

Each of the tracks from this Cheshire band has a wistful, melancholy edge. These boys are aiming for a BLUE NILE ambient feel but lack the dreamy yearning of those fine angst-merchants. The second track *Broken Nights* has an atmospheric keyboard intro but leads into a plodding verse.

It is good to hear a band that's trying to write imaginative material that doesn't stick grimly to formulaic arrangements but really guys, lighten up! At one point the singer intones, "I want to place my tongue between your dead lips", now call me a prude, but singing the praises of necrophilia won't exactly win friends and the influence people! **6**

LA SALLE

Carnival opens with a promising intro but quickly degenerates into standard anthemic stadium fodder. The guitar and rhythm section provide a solid enough backing but the singer betrays his pomp-rock influences and his vocals can't cope with the big, rousing choruses.

It's certainly no disgrace to write songs that get the lighters going in arenas. However, the big arena bands usually slog away on smaller circuits for years and once successful, pay meticulous attention to the way their songs are structured. All the songs here sound like someone's trying to pass go without even once going round the board. **4**

FUTURE CRIME

The bio here claims that 'they showcase a Fusion of highly danceable Funk/Rock...', a quote that sets the alarm bell ringing if ever I've heard one. *Parent of the Year* deals with the world's over-population – with a lyric this banal the writer would head the list of any cull.

This is the one tape where I've found it difficult to point out good features about the music but to be fair, the singer does have a reasonable voice with which he provides some interesting twists and turns. Overall, their sound is characterised by rather dated guitar/percussion interplay. Future crime are a duo from South Wirral and their songs are a result of what often happens when experienced, technically proficient musos get together - bland, insipid mush. **2**

FRONTIER



FRONTIER are a four-piece AOR/Blues influenced band and provide probably the most polished tape of this bunch. Guitarist KEITH THOMPSON shows real flair and displays subtle touches here and there which distinguish him from most power-Rockers.

Unfortunately, the material on tape gives the impression that frontier are firmly rooted in Pub-rock land, where the music is muscular and the birds are boozy. *Follow Me* in particular, is one of those songs which hits you over the head with big power chords but doesn't say much of anything else. **5**

CONTACTS

Clifford Howe – (0559) 371374
The Industry (Graham) – 081-444 1958
Future Crime – (051) 339 5201
Plenty – 18 Ackers Lane, Stockton Heath, Cheshire WA4 2BZ
Tom's Small Box – (0603) 36530
The Duvz – (0292) 268736
Frontier – (0242) 581136
La Salle – 081-205 8844

● HOW THEY SCORED

10 – Sign this band now, 9 – Potential Megastars, 8 – Hot stuff, 7 – Possible up and coming talent, 6 – Good – Keep trying, 5 – Okay, but needs some work – back to the studio, 4 – Heard it all before – but thanks for the spare tape, 3 – Nauseating drive! – don't give up the day job, 2 – Utter donkey poop – please give up, 1 – Inexcusably Pathetic (passing tape on to TIMMY MALLET).



CITRUS

FRUIT

Having passed Thirty-something a long time ago, Tangerine Dream are now well into their Forties – Mark Jenkins visits the senior citizens of rock...

POINTING OUT THAT TANGERINE DREAM are now into their mid-'40s may seem unnecessarily cruel to veteran founder member EDGAR FROESE – until you realise that this is simply the number of albums the pioneering high-tech band has released. With their latest, *Melrose*, the band completes a trilogy begun with *Optical Race* and *Lily On The Beach*, all released by the American-based Private Music label ironically run by ex-band member PETER BAUMANN.

The coincidences don't stop there. Some time after the departure of long-time member CHRIS FRANKE, his full time replacement on keyboards and guitar has

now been revealed as JEROME FROESE – son of Edgar. If anyone else knows of an internationally famous band which has been going for long enough to co-opt the offspring of founder members into the band, please send details on a postcard. As fans will know, Edgar's wife Monique contributes her photographic talents to the band's album sleeves and tour programmes too.

The band has also recently been augmented in other ways. In addition to classically-trained keyboardist PAUL HASLINGER, who has now been with the Tangs for some five years, their new album and recent UK tour featured two wind players – LINDA SPA on sax and PAUL GRIESBACH on sax and flute. It's no longer the case that the band consists of three rather faceless Germans playing synthesizers, synthesizers and synthesizers – there's space and movement in the new stage show, a concentration on shorter, Poppier tracks and a

spectacular light show based on the new American-designed Morpheus system, which seems even more powerful and flexible than the familiar varilights.

On the Miracle Mile

Although the band haven't played in the UK since 1986, they have toured extensively in the States – supported in some cases by fellow Private Music artist ANDY SUMMERS – played in East Berlin in February 1990, and have continued to churn out film soundtracks at a rate of knots. One forthcoming film, preceded by some months by its soundtrack release on Private due to delays in the film's distribution, is *Miracle Mile*, a nuclear holocaust thriller which lurches rather uneasily from wacky comedy to extreme angst. Released on January 18th 1991, it's highly recommended as a movie, but perhaps not one to see on a first date unless you want the rest of the evening to be somewhat subdued.

The band's music for *Miracle Mile* includes some of the fast, sequencer-based workouts which made their name on albums such as *Phaedra*, *Rubycon* and *Ricochet*, as well as a more orchestral style of composition which began to develop on soundtracks for *Miami Vice* producer MICHAEL MANN's *The Keep* and on RIDLEY SCOTT's *Legend* (which featured JERRY GOLDSMITH's music in UK cinemas but *Tangerine Dream*'s in the US and on a recent UK TV showing). The band explained that this style may point the way for their future musical development.

"On films we've scored recently like *The Man Inside*, there's more composition and less sequencing," explains Paul Haslinger. "But we've been turning down soundtrack commissions for the next few months because we're going back to the studio to completely re-organise our system of composing. There'll be changes in the hardware – perhaps using direct to hard disk recording systems like the Steinberg Topaz instead of digital or analogue multitracks – and more importantly, a change in our approach to writing."

Whatever changes the Tangs make to their approach, it's clear that they'll remain at the forefront of technical development. From the early days when they had their own tape loops made for Mellotrons, and commissioned custom-built equipment from companies such as Projekt

"If we've found a line we like, that's the way it has to be."

TANGERINE DREAM



Elektronik and the fledgling PPG, the band has always innovative, and more recently their feedback to Steinberg has influenced the development of the Pro 24 sequencing software and of the new industry standard Cubase.

Haslinger, who takes most of the responsibility for technical innovations in the band while Edgar Froese handles business matters, is also interested in the Digital Dynamics hard disk system which can be controlled from an Apple Macintosh and which offers up to 64 tracks of direct-to-disk recording. "We also have very good relations with Korg and Akai, so we're looking forward to seeing Akai's DD1000 optical disk recorder. The main problem on all these systems is one of control – most of the problems we are facing are still interface problems. The Mac is still very attractive for control purposes, but the IBM PC is better in terms of computing power."

Serious software

For the UK tour the band stuck to Atari Mega STs, with which they're very familiar. The size of their keyboard and module setup has been halved over the last two years, but it's still pretty impressive, including Akai S1000 samplers with 8 meg memories, R-M11 Proteus and Roland U220 modules, the Korg M1 and Wavestation, and Korg T1's used as master keyboards. Software currently in use in the band's two studios in Berlin and Southern Austria include Cubase on the ST, Cakewalk and Sequencer Plus on the Mac and Performer on the IBM – Haslinger says the band use whatever software they're in the mood for and come up with ideas individually before collaborating to a greater or lesser extent to finish a piece.

But with the introduction of wind players, the dominance of keyboards in the band has been at last partly challenged. How do the synth and sax players relate to each other on stage?

"It's a very common band arrangement. Some of the tracks are things they've played on the albums and some of them they have learned for the tour."

So are the sax players encouraged to improvise?

"We see ourselves not so much as performers who live for the sake of performing but as composers presenting their music, so the arrangements for the sax players are very strict. If we've found a line we like, that's the way it has to be played – the timing will be slightly different from night to night, but not the actual melody lines."

That's certainly a massive change from the days when the band used to improvise epic pieces in semi-darkness after little more than a few words of preparation offstage. Shorter tracks are now the norm, but this change hasn't been consciously made with a view to increased accessibility and airplay.

As Edgar Froese explains: "We were in a state of shock after we returned from the States in 1988. The experience was very frustrating – everybody wanted to jump on the New Age or Contemporary Instrumental music bandwagon and that got boring. The biggest problem was people doing concerts of that sort of music but simply playing to a backing tape; there are people in LA – no names mentioned – who produce five or six of these 'New Age' albums in a night. It's shit, it's nothing to do with music, but a lot of people now think that's what we sound like. Obviously we have had some benefit in a commercial way from Tangerine Dream albums now being sold as New Age music, but it's a trap as well; if you're too deeply involved with a formula and that formula dies, you die as well."

The fact that the band are trying to avoid formula music is emphasised by the variety of their film soundtracks – from slow and symphonic on *Forbidden*, to up-tempo and bouncy for the golf documentary *Dead Solid Perfect* (both due out on Silva Screen in the UK in February 1991). But Edgar's now happy to take some time away from film work; "the problem with films is that they may have spent \$20-30 million on a production, but the music is always done last. Whoever's last has to take a lot of responsibility for what went before, so you end up having to deal with problems which may have been generated by other people. It's OK if the director trusts you, but when they hang around in the studio and start whistling..."

The band try not to be influenced by the bigger-and-better trend shown in synthesizer concerts over the past few years, but admire bands which display great instrumental technique – one of Edgar's favourites being ELLIS, BEGGS & HOWARD – or subtle simplicity such as in DEPECHE MODE's stage shows. Despite this ready acceptance of more commercial styles of music, there are no plans currently to experiment with adding vocals to the band's lineup.

"I think the human voice is greater than anything we can duplicate with technology, but I don't particularly like lyrics without music," explains Edgar. "We've tried and have failed to find the right approach to using voices. We've failed through not looking in the right direction, and have given up again and again."

In fact the Tangerine Dream albums which do have some vocal content haven't been by any means their most popular.

"The problem is that a lot of the fans love what you've done in the past, but if you drop outside that by one inch, they don't like it. They never think about your personal freedom, they don't care. So if there's a hundred or five million people out there who we know will buy the records and finance us, that's OK – but we don't feel that we must change anything about our music just to please them."

Mark Jenkins



DISCOGRAPHY

ON PRIVATE MUSIC VIA BMG:

Melrose
Lily On The Beach
Optical Race
Miracle Mile (Original Soundtrack)

SELECTED ALBUMS ON VIRGIN:

Ricochet (live)
Encore (live)
Thief (Original Soundtrack)

SELECTED ALBUMS ON JIVE RECORDS:

Underwater Sunlight
Live Miles (live)

RECOMMENDED COMPILATION ALBUM:

Dream Sequence (Virgin Records double)

For further info and a full list of releases, write to:
 TANGERINE DREAM INTERNATIONAL FAN CLUB c/o PO Box 387,
 London N22 6SF.



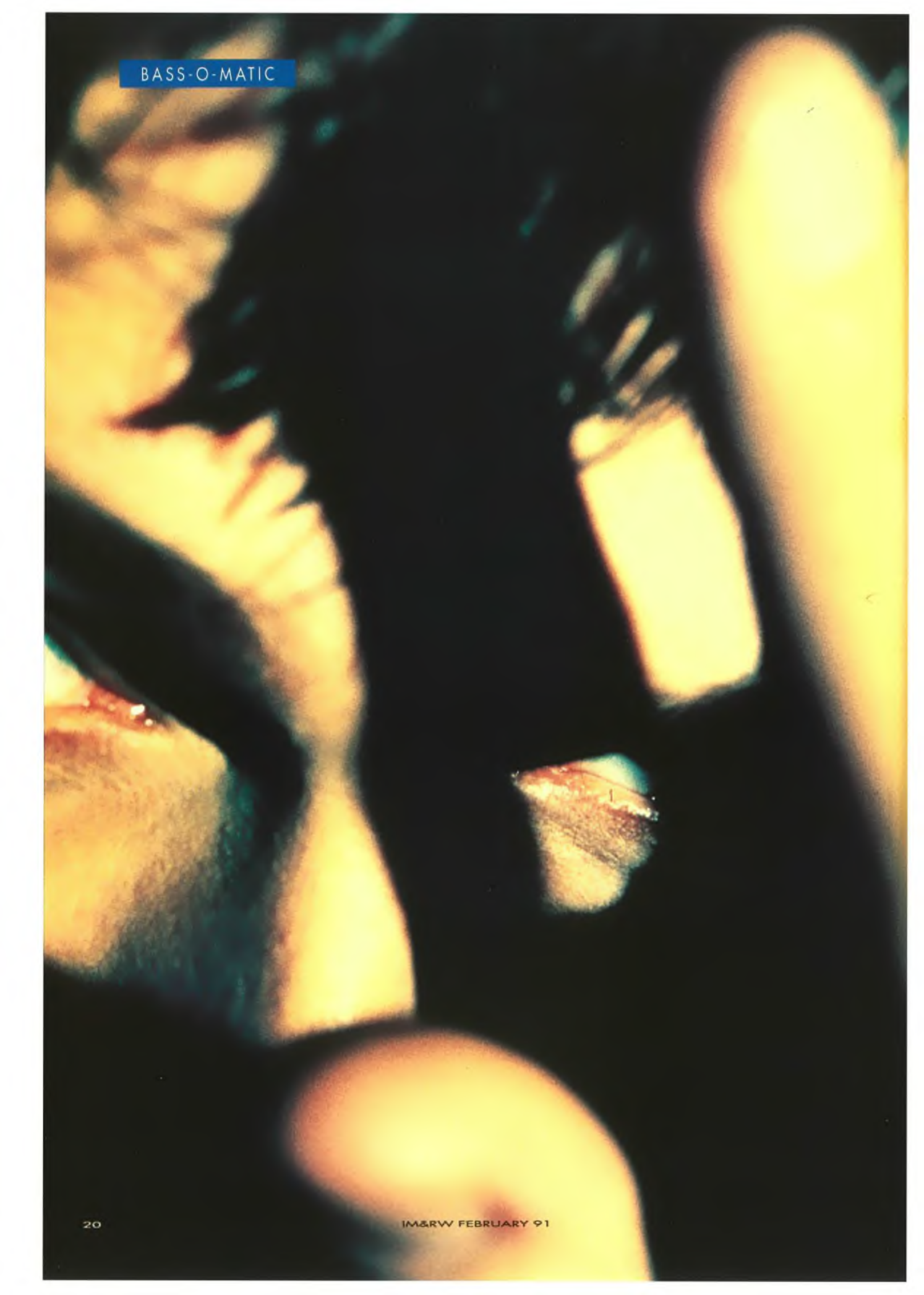
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BASS-O-MATIC

Inter-galactic re-mixer William Orbit speaks the Gospel according to BASS-O-MATIC. Tom Doyle is our man in search of...



THE LEAFY SUBURBAN SIDE STREETS OF North London's Crouch End are not the sort of area you'd imagine a wealth of recording studios to be tucked away in. But nevertheless, there are plenty of demo studios and little-known 24-tracks lurking in the region, including DAVE STEWART's establishment The Church and popular remixer and BASS-O-MATIC mainman WILLIAM ORBIT's Guerilla Studio, quite inconspicuously built into a terraced house. Once inside, it looks much like most professional 24-tracks, if a bit more compact. The soundproofing must have been incredibly expensive, but no doubt essential in order to avoid run-ins with the neighbours. William used to live here, but moved out when the place became purely a business interest. Even so, he ends up spending more time here than at his flat.

Star Man

On the outside, Orbit is simply a man who has been fortunate enough to have done a couple of famous remixes and enjoyed a sizeable hit with Bass-O-Matic's *Fascinating Rhythm*, so how on earth can he afford to own his own 24-track set-up so soon?

"Well, I do get paid pretty well. I've actually been getting good fees for remixes for a while, so that helps to keep the studio maintained and pays the staff. The mixing is the biggest earner I've got – more than Bass-O-Matic. Mixing is easier because you just go into the studio for

three intense days – and I rent the studio out as well as getting my fee – so it brings in a lot of wadge; whereas Bass-O-matic is more diluted because it takes more time and effort, but it's definitely more enjoyable."

Guerilla Studios was set up four or five years ago with the money he was earning from the band TORCHSONG. At that time it was based in Little Venice and was a popular hangout for names like DEPECHE MODE and STING. Torchsong weren't selling a lorryload of records, so William had time on his hands in the studio alone. Then MILES COPELAND (who managed THE POLICE and owned Torchsong's record company, IRS) passed a couple of remix projects in William's direction, the first being for ex-HAYSI FANTAYSEE chanteuse, KATE GARNER.

"It was quite a trauma. Her manager hired me to make the record sound like Torchsong, but he didn't allow for the fact that I'd got that sound via very shambolic methods – it was hit and miss with me. I was lucky that I had my own studio so I could afford to experiment. But placed in the hardcore commercial environment of another 24-track and having those pressures on me, I'd have probably blown it."

Just William

The first successful remix he did was with Sting on his track, *If You Love Somebody (Set Them Free)*: "Working with Sting was good because it was the first time I'd ever had any close contact with such an awesome talent. He came down to Guerilla and added a bassline and I played some guitar and stuff and then added a few more things to the track and then he just left me to get on with it. I don't listen to his work much now because it's gone away from what I liked, but he's still incredibly good. Since then I've made a point of working with people who have extra amounts of talent because that's what fires me up. I love to be around people who are just fantastically good at what they do."

At that time, remixers weren't afforded the high profile they often are these days, so the process of William's name getting around the

"I've made a point of working with people who have extra amounts of talent because that's what fires me."

record companies as an accomplished remixer was quite slow. He didn't really achieve any profile as a mixer until he started working with people like MARK MOORE of S'EXPRESS.

So what is his remixing process? Does he just take delivery of the master tape, link it to his sequencer via the existing timecode and then simply strip down the track and add new things as he pleases?

"Yeah, basically. Quite often I get 48-track projects, but there's really very little I use from them. I generally use none of the original drums, unless there's one particularly unusual incidental percussion sound that's nice. The first process is purely technical and that is linking it up to my computer. I used to use an SPX80, but now I use the Steinberg Cubase software with the Atari.

"Then I'll listen to the tape, just letting it flood over me a couple of times and write my ideas for it down very quickly. Those first listenings that are very important because I'll often get an instinctive feel about the track which I try not to stray away from my original thoughts – especially in the later stages when I've been listening to the track quite intensely for two or three days. It oscillates between basically crafting – just EQing and doing technical things – to the state of extreme inspiration where I can't get the ideas down quick enough to the situation where I just sit there not knowing what to do. But because I'm very familiar with my own studio, it maybe only takes me an hour to do something that could quite possibly take me 10 hours in another studio."

Does he ever have problems playing along to some of the more complex musical arrangements he's remixing? The clients never give you a score sheet, presumably.

"No, they never do. They rarely give me a track sheet in fact, so it's sometimes a bit of a puzzle at first, trying to understand what's on each track. It's very rare that a track has me musically stumped now. If you examine it long and hard enough, you can usually break it down into simple constituents.

"Remixing PRINCE's *Batman* track was difficult because it had three different tempos. The original track started off at 100bpm and then whizzed up to 130-odd and then back down to 80 or something, so it was quite tricky. The other problem was there was so much on the multi-tracks and so many tracks were sharing with other tracks, it was just a completely crazy layout on the tracksheet. He had vocals on the same track as drums, he just shoves it on in a hurry.

Crash-Bang-Wallop

"It was the complete opposite of the remixes I've done for ERASURE because their tracks are so well put down. VINCE CLARKE must be very well-ordered because the sync is laid down properly and everything's neat and tidy. With *Batman*, in the end I had three SPX80s running simultaneously, so it looked like mission control Huston having all these computers in the studio to cope with these tempo changes. I could have tried to programme tempo changes in the computer, but the rule is usually that the more complex things you have to programme the more likely it is to crash. You have to be practical. You can pack every corner of your computer with data, have the Akai running at full tilt, all the outputs going, but you render yourself vulnerable to the whole thing crashing."

Having a complex multi-track to work with wasn't the main problem in mind when William recently remixed MADONNA's latest effort, *Justify My Love*; the master tapes had virtually nothing on them.

"It's a very sparse track so I had to add a lot. On the multi-track there was just one track of her singing, one of her just talking and being very steamy and another of her being quite atmospheric. Then there was

LENNY KRAVITZ, who co-produced the track, singing a chorus with her and doing some ad-libs and you couldn't hear him very well on the single version, so on the remix I bumped him up a bit because I liked what he'd done. Apart from that there was a string pad and a drum loop and that was it – a very sparse track. So I added a lot, I played guitar on it, changed the drums, added a bassline, added some bits and pieces..."

Did he worry that Madonna wouldn't like what he'd done to her track? "I didn't worry about what she thought about it at all. I never do. You wouldn't get anywhere if you thought like that."

So you're confident enough tampering around with someone like Prince's work?

"Yeah, because it's his prerogative to reject it. I just do what feels right. Anyone I work for can reject it or accept it, they certainly can't make me change it. I'd be really crazy if I started to alter or compromise the track."

Get Into Orbit

Orbit describes the equipment that he uses in his studio as "a bunch of old friends". He explains that recently he went down to Sarm West to see TREVOR HORN to talk about collaborating on a project with SEAL (the vocalist on ADAMSKI's No. 1 hit, *Killer*) and Horn pointed out that they could use the Synclavier. Orbit likes to stick to his two Akai S1000s. He's stubborn yet simple in his equipment tastes.

"The Trident 80B is a very simple desk because I like to make my life easy. I'm becoming less and less dependent upon technology. Recently there have been times in the studio when quite a few items just never get switched on and I couldn't have done that two years ago. I find that the more relaxed I get about mixing, the less equipment I end up using and the mixes sound better for it. That's not to say I'd advise someone who's mixing to use less equipment because you have to try

everything. It's a process of elimination.

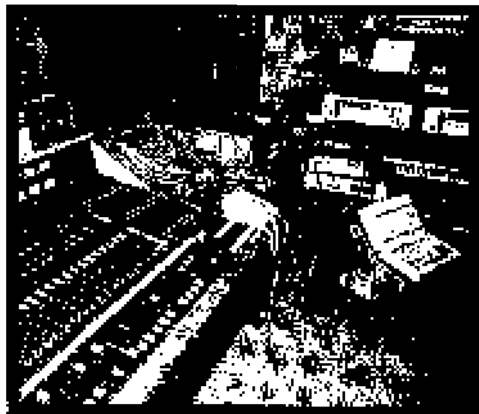
"Most of my gear is basic stuff – I use Junos and Korg keyboards and PCM70 reverbs as opposed to big Lexicon jobs. I find them a bit fiddly because they're complex and I feel that they miss the point sometimes. Obviously the manufacturers wouldn't like to hear this kind of talk. But I think that by using dynamics and fooling the ear, it's sometimes very difficult to hear the difference between a £1500 Lexicon reverb and a cheap Alessis one. Mind you, if you've got cheap gear, sometimes you spend valuable time avoiding them sounding cruddy when you should be paying attention to the track.

"Portastudios and 8-tracks are much harder to work than 24-tracks. Someone who's mastered a 4-track has had to wrestle with the compromises inherent in the machine i.e. the buttons are dual function and so on. 24 tracks are built with a lot of tolerance for mistakes, you can overload them quite easily, so obviously there's a level at which you have to have professional equipment."

In terms of being a musician, William reckons he's a good guitarist even though he never practises, and can play bass guitar and drums, even if he never feels the need to these days. Funnily enough, the instrument that he's least good with, the keyboard, is the instrument he uses most.

"I think that's a benefit because people whose creativity is determined by their limitations usually come up with more interesting stuff than classically-trained musicians who end up sounding great, but not very different. Anyway, I quite like my two-fingered technique haha..."

Tom Doyle



SISTERS OF MERCY

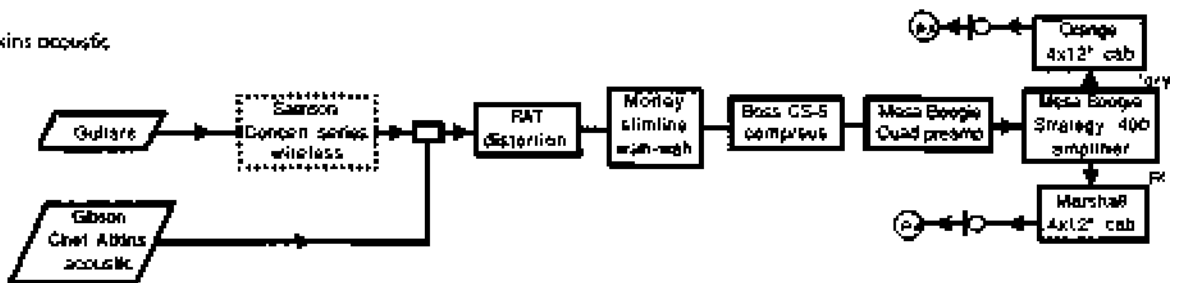
○ LABEL - EAST/WEST
 ○ LPS - FIRST, LAST AND ALWAYS
 ○ RECOMMENDED LISTENING - FLOORSHOW, ALICE, TEMPLE OF LOVE, ANACONDA

ANDREAS BRUHN ● Guitar

Guitars:

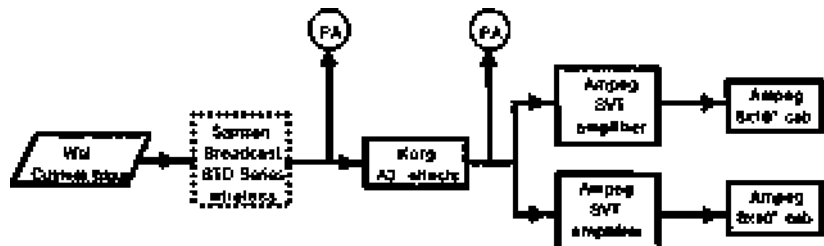
- Kramer Focus 1000
- Lanston Blade
- Gibson Chet Atkins acoustic

● Backing vocals via Shure SM58 mic.



TONY JAMES ● Bass

● Backing vocals via Shure SM58 mic.



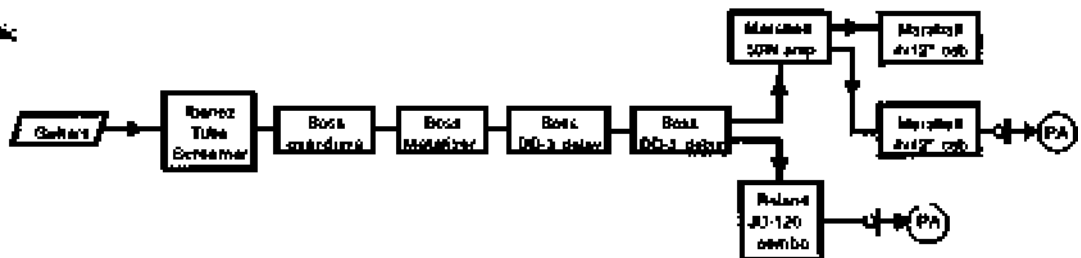
ANDREW ELDRITCH ● Vocals

● Lead vocal via Samson CH-2 mic and Samson Concert ID Series wireless system

TIM BRICHEND ● Guitars

Guitars:

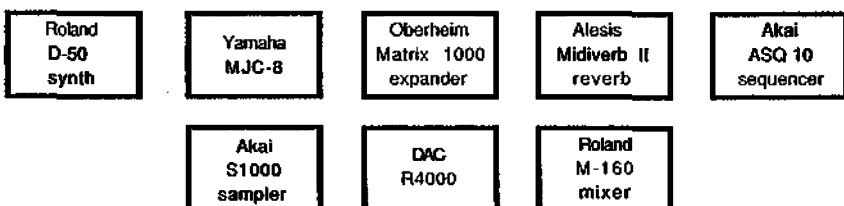
- Squier Telecaster
- Squier Stratocaster
- Gibson Chet Atkins acoustic



DAN DONOVAN ●

● Backing vocals via Shure SM58 mic.

● The D-50 is only used to trigger. Sound sources and triggering/sequencing units are MIDI-linked and routed via the M-160 mixer with sound sources having individual feels to P.A.



© Paul Henderson

NEXT OF

KINS

Chet Atkins was playing guitar when MARK KNOPFLER's dad was still reading the Beano. Now they're running Neck and Neck. Mo Nazam finds out what brought this collaboration about...



ALL I EVER WANTED TO BE WAS A guitar player." For a man whose career has spanned over 40 years and has encompassed everything from A&R man to producer of Top 10 hits, to want to be just a guitar player seems a modest ambition. Having taken turns at almost every important position in the music business, CHET ATKINS is now back doing what he likes best — playing his guitar in some rocking good company which in the past has included the appearance on albums by people such as LARRY CARLTON and appearances on his albums by players like GEORGE BENSON and EARL KLUGH.

His latest collaboration is with British household name MARK KNOPFLER on the new LP *Neck and Neck*. Knopfler is the main man behind the phenomenal success of DIRE STRAITS and a major guitar figure from the last 10 years. Atkins, one of the key figures in the development of the national sound and on their new LP they showcase their mutual appreciation for not only shared loves (*Country music, Jazz and a good ol' Hee Haw*) but also for each other's unique styles.

Hard Times

Chet Atkins' story begins in rural Tennessee, born into, as many country stars are, acute poverty. At the age of nine, inspired by LES PAUL and MERLE TRAVIS, he began playing the guitar, eventually taking small jobs at the multitude of local radio stations that were to be found in the Deep South at that time. His recording career led to a move to Nashville in 1950 and a long-term association with RCA Records, with whom he eventually made over 70 albums, including

many instrumental hits.

Eventually hired by RCA as an A & R executive, he went on to produce hits by major country artists like JIM REEVES and DON GIBSON. Thanks to the wonders of modern telecommunications, I talked to Chet while he sat comfortably in his Nashville home and I began by asking him how his affiliation with Mark Knopfler began.

"It started when I did an album called *Stay Tuned*. It's kind of a contemporary Jazz or easy listening type album and I had made some sides with George Benson and I played with Earl Klugh and he owed me an appearance. DAVID HUNGATE, the producer and myself decided, well why don't we get a different guitarist on each cut.

"I like Mark's playing a lot so I called him in London and he agreed to come over and play on a cut. So the friendship developed from that meeting. We talked about this album, *Neck and Neck*, for about a year and he made some tracks in London and I flew over and stayed for about a week or so and we picked together and sang together. Then he came over here to Nashville and we did the same.

"There was a lot of talking and correspondence between us. But we played together quite a bit. At least when we were in the same studio when we made it, it wasn't where I'd send tapes to him and he'd send tapes to me. We didn't do it like that."

"Chet Atkins is now back doing what he likes best — playing his guitar in some rocking good company."

Finger Picking Good

I.M: How do you feel Mark's influence has rubbed off on you and vice versa?

"Well, he's a finger picker like I am. He play's with the fingers of his right hand and thumb instead of with a pick, which means our styles are kind of similar. He's a great noodler, a great improviser. He can also play with a lot of melody and emotion. So I like that about his playing. There is also a lot of humour in his playing and that enhances what I do."

I.M: How did you actually go about recording the LP. For instance, were solos done in one take or were they spliced?

"We worked on our solos. If I played a solo and I didn't get it right, I'd go back and correct the mistake. But it's hard for me to play the same thing over again. Usually, I have just got to go on to a new track and try new ideas, but I do punch in and they did take part of one solo and part of another."

"We did that for me and Mark also. We used this new technique of making 'perfect' records which is what the world is into tight now, for good or bad. It was recorded analog but we mixed down to digital. When you gain something you lose something."

"We have now the ability to make 'perfect' records, take out all the mistakes and that's good, but you lose the spontaneity sometimes of having the other musicians react to what you're playing."

"I try to play with musicians when I do the track but that sometimes causes problems because they react to what I did and I can't do what I did again if I've got to re-do a part. It's a no-win situation."

I.M: When you solo, are you just blowing or do you think about scales and stuff before hand?

"When I play with Mark he might do something that will inspire an idea in my mind or vice versa, so that's the reason the recording has something."

"It's real nice to play that way. Over my many years I've learned to play a melody about 10 different ways and I've learned an awful lot of licks. I wish to hell I could remember 50% of them. But I can call on and call up things from my memory so I'll play something and I'll go in that direction."

I.M: Can you actually describe your playing technique?

"It's hard for me to describe... My dad taught Classical music and I studied Classical guitar."

"I used to listen to the Blacks, like BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON and LONNIE JOHNSON. Then I had influences from the Country and Western singers and players, also Gospel and Dixieland bands. So



Chet Atkins - 'gut feeling'

I've picked up things in all different directions but I guess I'll always have a Country aroma which I'm not ashamed of."

Jazzy Chet

I.M: When did you first start taking an interest in Jazz?

"Oh, back when I heard LES PAUL and GEORGE BARNES when I was a teenager. You see Les Paul and George Barnes were the great guitar players of this world back then. And DJANGO REINHARDT, but I didn't hear him until I became a professional, but when I did of course, 'he took my world of music and set it all aflame and since I heard him play I've never been the same'. That's from a song I'd written about him that I'm recording on my next album."

"He was way ahead of anybody else and of course that's where Les Paul got a lot of his stuff from. He was all a mystery to me. Gradually

I picked up things. MERL TRAVIS, he really impressed me. Then he went into the Marines for WW2 and when he came back he moved to California so I didn't hear him on the local radio stations any more. So I played how I thought he would play and it turned out to be different of course.

"I stole from everyone I heard and I was way out in the sticks so I didn't know what the hell was going on unless I'd hear someone on the radio.

"But Les and I are good friends. He's a live wire. He grew up trying to play everyone else off stage. He still does that. Like when we play live, he'll go over and turn my amp off. He'll get my pick and throw it in the audience. But he's a pleasure, you can't stop him."

I.M: You can never keep a good man down, eh? How did you become involved in the Nashville scene?

"Well, I was working with the famous CARTER family. We came to town and right away I began doing sessions for HANK WILLIAMS and the EVERLY BROTHERS. So I made my records for a guy named STEVE SHOALES, who signed ELVIS.

"When he couldn't come down once in a while he'd ask me to go into the studio and record people. So I started to produce for him and by and by, when he got big with Elvis, I took over his operation in Nashville and I did it because of him. He stuck with me, so I recorded a lot of records for that company until he died and then I started backing out because I just wanted to play guitar.

"There's a lot of stress in being a record producer. I'm not trained for that. I was good in the studios but I'm no good at being an executive, like signing and dropping people. I finally got out of it and now I record for CBS and I don't produce anyone. I proved that I could by having hits in that area and now I don't need to do that."

Instincts

I.M: When you were producing and signing, what kind of qualities did you look for?

"I just looked for people that excited me. I looked for songs that, when I heard them, I'd wished I'd written them because I write too. And I never second guess if I like somebody, I never analyse it. If you second guess your decisions you can get sidetracked. Gut instinct had a lot to do with it."

I.M: Were you working on 2 track or 4 track then?

"We began in mono, then we went to 2-track and then a couple of years later 3-track. Then 4, 8, 16, 24 and then 48. When it went to 3-track, that's when it got worse.

"You put the band on the outside tracks and the singer in the middle and all of a sudden you've got to remix and adjust levels of the singer and when we went to multi-track, no longer could I have 30 to 35 people in the studio, which is what I'd do. We'd record everyone at once and ship them out. We didn't do overdubs."

I.M: Did it require a higher standard of musicianship then?

"Oh sure it did, because people had to perform on the spot and not mess up badly and the records aren't as polished as they are nowadays, but they had a certain spontaneity."

I.M: How about your involvement in guitar design? Some classic Gretsch guitars carry your name.

"Well, back in those years I was playing a D'Angelico which was hand made in New York city. This Gretsch salesman came round and tried to get me to play one of their guitars. I told him I didn't want to, but why don't you let me design one that I want to play. So I did and I designed the 6120, you know, the Red Gretsch.

"They put it out and it did well and we decided to put out a more expensive one in addition which was the Country Gentleman and that went great.

"GEORGE HARRISON played one and EDDIE COCHRAN. Finally they moved the plant and the Japanese Invasion came along and they went out of business so I started working with Gibson and we have the nylon string CE which is doing very well, and we have a steel version of that also. They're very good guitars."

I.M: How was the Country Gentleman different from the D'Angelico?

"Well, I copied some stuff from the D'Angelico but added a few things. Made the F holes and similar size but we put a zero fret in, metal bridge for more sustain and finally filled in the F holes to reduce feedback. But I play the nylon mostly."

I.M: Do you still practice a lot these days?

"I practice enough not to get embarrassed when I do a show. Just enough to stay a little rusty."



Chet and Mark rave on...

COMPETITION!

SEGA MASTERSYSTEM GAMES CONSOLES

W

E'VE ALL SPENT

many happy hours, mindlessly blasting the heck out of little green monsters from space – a few of us have even tried it on a computer games machine, rather than in the car park of the pub at midnight!

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privacy of your own living room. Those awfully nice Sega people have put up for grabs two of the company's best-selling SEGA MASTERSYSTEM consoles, along with a free game of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. This is your chance to take the part of Indy as he battles his way through unsurmountable odds, and beat the living day-lights out of all manner of nasties.

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1/ Who played Indiana Jones' father in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*?

a) Sean Penn **b)** Sean Connery **c)** Billy Connolly

2/ What is Indiana searching for in his action-packed Sega game?

a) The Cross of Dorado **b)** The Holy Grail **c)** The Lost Tombs of Tutenkhamen

3/ Sega-owner MICHAEL JACKSON stars in a soon-to-be released Sega game – what is the game called?

a) Moonwalker **b)** Beat It! **c)** Bubbles the Chimp and the Return of the Teenage Mutant Army Turtles

SEGA MASTERSYSTEM COMP

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2:

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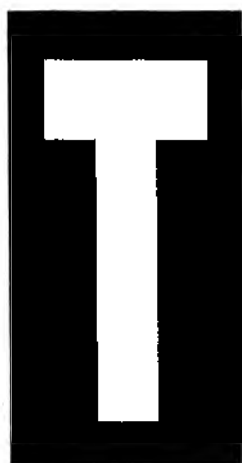
K E E P I N G U P



W I T H T H E

jones'

Life in the studio with JESUS JONES is all about DIY, as Tom Doyle found out...



THE FIRST THING THAT'S INSTANTLY noticeable when you walk in on a JESUS JONES session is that the band aren't actually there, just singer/guitarist MIKE EDWARDS and the engineer. The second thing which becomes apparent is that, despite the band's thrashy sample-frenzied skate-Punk image, Edwards insists upon a no-nonsense clean-living approach to recording. When the IM photographer strolls through the door, puffing on a roll-up, he's sent outside again like a naughty schoolboy. Mike explains that there's a self-imposed no-smoking ban within the band ("We all have to breathe, but we don't all have to

smoke - it's pretty clear-cut really"); the smoking members of the band having grown used to Edwards' insistence. I have to leave my beloved Silk Cut in my pocket for the time being.

Mike's here in Studio Three at Matrix to record two B-sides for forthcoming releases and to edit and remix a 12" of their new single, *International Bright Young Thing* - arguably quite a hefty workload for just one day. They started work around noon, but until 1.30 had some serious problems with the new software for their Akai ASQ10 sequencer successfully reading timecode from Matrix's multi track. Since solving that particular difficulty, they've progressed at a cracking pace throughout the day, Mike finishing his grinding guitar parts 10 minutes after we arrived.

"It's seven o'clock now, is it?" he enquires with a satisfied grin. "We've still got to do the vocals, but I'm planning to be out of here by 10.00 - and we've still to have something to eat before that."

A Full 12 Inches

The band are proud to have remixed most of the 12" versions of their singles themselves, steering clear of the popular practise of employing "name" producers to remix flagging singles in the hope of lending them more credibility. In fact, at one time in Matrix, they hired two of the

three studios on the same day, so that Mike and keyboard-player Ian could work on two different remixes simultaneously. The B-sides are another story. They just simply have to be done quickly, since this is Tuesday and the tracks are to be delivered to EMI by Friday. The label artwork had to be completed the previous week, so Mike even had to think up song titles for tracks he hadn't finished. So does he always write all the material himself, or is there ever room for band collaboration?

"I do it all, I do the arranging and everything. The band get completed demos and I say, 'Here it is, learn it'. I'm getting less strict about exact replication of the stuff that I've done, but I think that's as the people in the band have become more confident with their own roles. Some of the band are extremely good at improvising in a way that I find very attractive. ALAN, the bass player, thinks along the same lines as I do, as does GEN, the drummer. JERRY doesn't and IAN doesn't really, but then he's the newest member of the band. I think that getting the chemistry of a band together takes a long time. It takes a lot of work before the whole band can think as a unit."

Mike programmes all sequenced parts at home, explaining he's never lost his demo attitude of having to do meticulous pre-production work to cut down on studio bills. He comes in, puts all the parts down onto tape and then, "goes home and does something more interesting". Usually he brings most of his home set-up to the studio - Akai S950, S900, Roland D10 and his proudest possession, his recently-acquired Juno 60 with MIDI fitted.

"At home I work on one of those Akai 12-tracks that record onto video tape. I've been very lucky with mine and I'm extremely pleased with it. It tends to be a little bit dodgy with the code level sometimes, certainly with this sequencer."

So why use the ASQ10 instead of the Atari, the industry standard?

"Mainly because we use this sequencer live. I wouldn't take an Atari on the road. If you've seen us performing, you'll know that we tend to be rather energetic. I wouldn't want to take a computer onstage because the monitor might topple over and smash within three gigs."

A Sense Of Doubt

The band's second album, *Doubt*, is to be released in January. I tell him that I thought the album was wittily-titled *Not EQ'd* because that's what was printed on my tape copy of it. He laughs and explains that they

"It takes a lot of work before the whole band can think as a unit."

Washburn put the rock
back in the wall.

WASHBURN



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Snowy White
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KC 90 Chicago Series

Roger Waters & The Bleeding Heart Band "The Wall" Concert July 1990

still have to do an overall EQ for the album before cutting it, but decides that *Not EQ'd* might possibly be a better title anyway. Edwards hopes the album has more depth than their first, *Liquidiser* and will put an end to the common preconception of Jesus Jones as a shallow skate-Punk outfit who use sampling as a gimmick.

Mike likes to work remarkably quickly, the playing on the album having been completed within a seven-day period at Matrix. "The thing we like about Matrix is the furniture looks as if you can sit on it. I dislike sitting in an expensive studio because you look at the clock and see pounds going by, not minutes.

"It took about 10 days to mix. I did that at Blackwing with JON FRYER because he understood it all, mixing technology with guitars. I find it's a big problem with a lot of people – they don't really understand what we're about. There are two contrasting elements in our sound, so we need to work with a producer who understands both Dance and Rock. You make House in one way and you make guitar music in another way and when you come to recording they don't often mix.

Write On

Mike insists that the group's chart status, with hits *Real Real Real* and *Right Here Right Now*, hasn't forced him into taking commerciality into consideration when he's writing. The original demo of *Right Here Right Now*, for instance, was constructed around a drum and bass sample loop from PRINCE's *Sign O' The Times*.

"That was a new way of working for me. I've found that if I like the certain feel of a record, I just sample a section of it, loop it and build everything else around it. Then when you have the song, you pull that central bit out so you're not sampling the original. With *Right Here Right Now*, I left the Prince sample in and took it to our record company, Food – they were pretty nervous and they said, 'Well, try it without it'. So I actually wrote other things to replace the Prince bass and the drums I'd taken out and it sounded a lot better."

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Mike Edwards technological set-up is the absence of the Akai S1000, the most popular sampling tool within a professional outfit. He's quite defensively proud as of his S950 and it's younger brother, the rugged S900: "I'm happy the way my samplers work," he says. "We use the 900 onstage as a workhorse with a few little drum samples in it – we've really no use for an S1000. I'm not convinced by that particular machine. They're supposed to be a better quality but by the time you've got us all bashing around on top, it's very hard to tell. I challenge anyone to hear the difference between a 950 and 1000 by the time you've got

three or four instruments."

For studio mixing, Mike prefers the ever-popular Yamaha NS-10s and likes to master onto DAT – because he finds it easier. Even though he's credited as producer of the new album, he doesn't feel he's fallen prey to technical snobbery. "With the last album we worked with CRAIG LEON as producer and he insisted on mastering everything onto tape."

Fair enough. So do the band often go the pub and leave you to do all the work then, Mike?

"Yeah, a classic tale was I remember ringing up Alan and saying, 'OK, we're ready for you to come in and do the backing vocals', and he said, 'Oh, I was going to go out', so I ended up doing them myself again!"

Something tells you that he wouldn't have it any other way...

Tom Doyle

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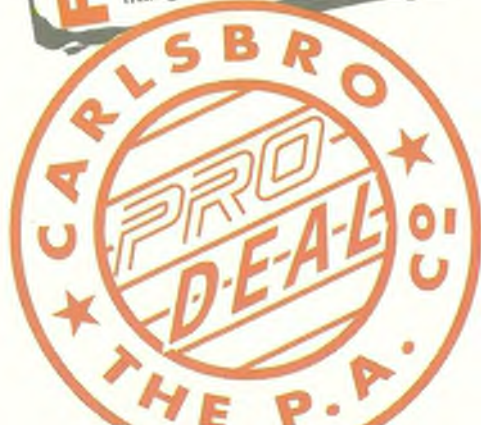


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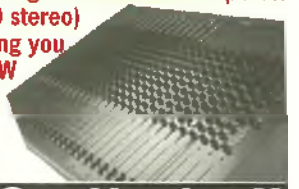
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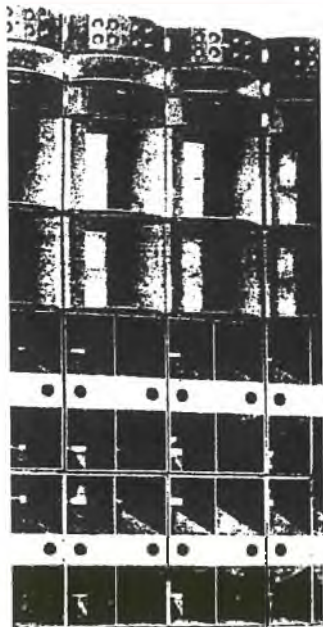
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PA

COLUMN



BAND: LAURIE ANDERSON

VENUE: DOMINION THEATRE,
LONDON

DATE: NOVEMBER 25, 1990

PA: APOGEE



THE TERM 'PERFORMANCE ARTIST' has always been a bit of a vague one. It includes all manner of wild-and-wackyness, ranging from people who create self-consciously arty 'happenings' to those with a God-given gift for doing totally astounding and useless things with their bodies!

LAURIE ANDERSON has always had a dash of the performance artist about her, her song presentation being nearly as significant as the music she makes. There's always a wonderfully original but simple touch to the ideas; sticking a small light-bulb in her mouth and grinning through clenched illuminated teeth, or playing a drum machine pattern by hitting triggering pads concealed underneath her clothes.

The music is appropriately strange. It's been a good few years since the novelty hit *O Superman* and since then she's steadily put out albums of peculiar songs, often spoken narratives over a hypnotic spacious backing, all of them consistently defying the regular Pop/Rock classifications. The most recent LP *Strange Angels* was very quietly released and equally low profile live dates followed – in fact hardly advertised at all! You wondered how they'd fill two nights at London's large Dominion Theatre.

Multiple Mikes

This was the last thing on sound engineer ROBIN DANAR's mind. Despite the fact that it was a one woman show, he had enough to keep him busy at the FOH mixing desk already. In total there were 14 different vocal microphones on stage (all Beyer 'ribbon' M260s – Laurie's favourite – except for a couple of C tech Vega wireless mikes). "Laurie likes to have some very drastic effects on her voice," explained Robin, "and to switch rapidly between them – from mike to mike – as she feels. Plus

she moves around a lot so the mike set-up has to be duplicated elsewhere on stage." A usual combination of effects would be one mike straight (*very slightly reverbed*), one with a stereo 'ping-pong' delay and the third with a drastic harmoniser effect, either lowering her voice a whole octave, or multiplying it five or six times with differently pitched copies for 'automatic close harmony'.

The whole show is completely scripted and Robin follows the performance on his copy which is covered in different colour markings indicating new effect preparations and changes, mike changes and musical cues. "I switch through the harmoniser presets using two Yamaha MFC 1 foot pedal controllers. Also incidental and backing music has to be cued up and played using a couple of Otari MX 5050 stereo reel to reel tape machines. The equalisation for each section has to be adjusted," he continued, "and the two faders on the desk re-set, the varying levels being jotted down on the desk below them."

The Control Console

The desk used on this two month European tour was a Yamaha PM3000C 40:8:2 console with eight VCAs and a programmable mute facility, both of which were a big help for mixing this kind of show. The subgroups were set up in four pairs; vocals and effects, instruments, tapes and reverbs and using the matrix facility above the subgroups a variety of different mixes could easily be put together for whatever the purpose – maybe the balcony needed a special one, or if the show was being recorded a different mix would be sent out to the recording mobile.

Robin Danar is really a studio producer by trade, based in New York, but he gets a steady stream of good quality live offers which are hard to turn down. Previous clients have included the B-52's, SUZANNE VEGA and the BLUE NILE, but his two years with Ms. Anderson must have been some of the most interesting. "The gig is basically a question of getting a good amount of gain on the mikes without feedback and keeping the vocal treatments as clear and clean as possible."



If she goes too near the PA with the 'octave lower' microphone it will pick up the signal, re-process it and produce an incredibly low rumble. To combat this, sometimes the equalisation is set to cut off the very bottom end of the frequency spectrum.

Some of the mikes are placed very close to each other so they can all be reached from behind the keyboards. This means that while one is in use, the others next to it pick up a small amount of the sound, a problem most obvious when the voice should be 'straight' and a stray 'harmonised' one creeps in. Drawmer DS 201 two-channel noise gates clean this up, inserted after the harmonisers.

"Laurie has a very loud singing voice," said Robin, "but in some parts of the set she whispers and the threshold of the gates has to be adjusted especially."

Something else to keep him on his toes.

In The Outboard

Dominating the outboard rack are the large Eventide H3000 Ultraharmoniser units. There are three of them – two for two different mikes and a third for back up. This third one is set to automatically follow the most recent setting put in to either of the other two, ready to be used in case of malfunction. They're unfortunately very noisy units but the three Drawmers took care of this problem.

Three Lexicon PCM 70s are also present in the rack giving the various 'ping-pong' delays and two Yamaha SPX 9011s, one for a tight reverb on the occasional electronic percussion and one for an extremely long reverb on Laurie's electric violin when it produced 'natural' sounds. All the vocals were compressed using DBX 903 compressors. Also in the outboard effects rack were two Klark Teknik DN360 graphic equalisers, one for treating the FOH sound and one for equalising the foldback monitors – the few monitor mixes needed were sent from the FOH desk.

The monitors used were a couple of Apogee wedges, 2xAE3Ms, containing a 10" Apogee speaker and a couple of tiny Galaxy Hot Spots specifically for vocal foldback – apparently the onstage volume level is kept very low. The main PA system was all Apogee made and in total there were 12 '3 x 3' units each housing 2 x 15", 1 x 2" and 1 x 1" speaker while four smaller AE5s contained 1 x 12" and 1 x 1". In addition to these cabs there were eight AE12 sub-bass bins, each hold-

ing 2 x 18" speakers, stacked up down in the 'orchestra pit' but, because of the nature of the low frequencies dealt with, still working effectively. All Apogee cabinets contained their own special processor so no external crossover unit was required. Crest amplifiers powered the system.

Instrumentally Speaking

Laurie Anderson played a couple of Zeta MIDI violins – very futuristic looking instruments which were usually played thick and triggered string-like samples from an off stage Akai 5900. She also played Casio CZ101, Roland D50 and Korg M1 keyboards and it was positioned at the keyboards that, it has to be said, the worst parts of the evening took place.

She may have a strong singing voice but untreated it came across in the clear, well-balanced sound rather folkly and on the long rambling and unstructured material, got to be rather irritating. You usually found yourself longing for another between song monologue, all of which were very entertaining and funny and delivered in the pitch-lowered 'male' voice.

With all the backdrop screen projections there was plenty going on visually. Some of the films were very effective, for instance when Laurie stood in a pool of light playing some dramatic violin and three huge ferocious dogs towered over her barking madly. Others just came across as meaningless and rather pretentious.

While Laurie Anderson can often be refreshingly

innovative and different, this show seemed really too well thought out and 'intellectual'. It really needed some spontaneity or even 'mistakes' just to give it some soul but in a one woman show with loads of backing tapes this must be difficult. So some of the evening was very enjoyable but unfortunately this tended to be not when music was being made.

A shame.

David Anthony



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BIRMINGHAM GETS A bad press, unfairly it seems to me. The image of the city hasn't been helped in recent times by a certain jug-eared personage shooting his mouth off left, right and centre. But if the thought of tackling all those roads, subways and underpasses at first appears daunting be reassured – there's a pot of bargain buys to be found at the end of Brum's concrete rainbow.

The best way to unearth the Bass Place (*not the most centrally located shop Billy's ever visited*) is to head for the Canon Cinema from where it's just around the corner. *Exorcist III* and *Ghost* were showing on the day of my visit but, moving swiftly on (*as Bazza would say*), I'll get back to the job in hand.

Flanked by Mr. Reakes Music Ltd. and sister concern the Drum Depot (*note the similar use of alliteration – a dead giveaway*), the Bass Place caters for just about all a bass player's needs. While Cool Dude strummed, the two assistants busied themselves tarting the place up a bit.

Mounted on the wall were a veritable lot of second-hand basses, ranging in price from £169 for a rather battered-looking Ibanez Blazer to £249 for a sleek, black-bodied Westone Pantera. A Peavey T45 would see off £299 of your wad and there was an Asia Pro II with red on black reptile-skin effect body for £399. Inquiring about the quality of all these items I was assured that they "wouldn't stock them if they didn't sound good" by the semi-Goth sales assistant. But the pick of all the used instruments had to be a Dan Armstrong Plexi-glass. The see-through body is a real standout and must look well weird on stage! "They don't make them any more," semi-Goth told me. "We're taking offers from about

£300. The same guitar would cost you £500 in London." Southerners take note.

Down either wall were stacks of amps, bass amps and pre-amps both young and old. For £3,250 you could take home a Marshall JCM 800 and pick of the bargain bass amps was an HH Bassamp 100 at £149. There were an awful lot of Laney products, bass amp specialists located appropriately

that they can cover a lot more ground with much more depth than music stores hoping to maximise customer numbers by stocking the full range of equipment.

The presence of the Drum Depot (*dealing, funnily enough, exclusively with drums*) and Mr. Reakes which specialised in acoustic guitars, sheet music and percussion accessories will help ensure some sales crossover. Quite

simply, however, Birmingham's Bass Place has got the lot – the whole range of amps, bass amps and pre-amps, second-hand basses with a broad price range and new instruments to make your mouth water.

Billy Punter – be part of it...



enough in the West Midlands. In fact almost the whole range was on offer, making me more than a little suspicious of collusion here. But you can at least be certain of getting the amp you require whatever the size.

Completing the line-up of gear was a central floor-mounted display of shiny new basses with a classy Fender costing you £225. Leads, accessories and the like clustered for safety around the sales counter and rounded off the selection very nicely.

The advantage of specialist shops such as the Bass Place is

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CANDY ARE DANDY

Young hipsters Ric and Danny produce groovy 'House' sounds that the kids just love...



FROM THE OUTSIDE, SQUARDANCE STUDIO in Derby looks as though it awaits the demolition crew. Peeling paint and bricked up windows do nothing to suggest that back in July 1989 it was rated as one of the top five recording studios in the U.K., due mainly to its association with CANDY FLIP and their smash hit *Strawberry Fields Forever*.

But in its own right the studio has been responsible for producing some of the hottest underground club records and re-mixes of the last year. Candy Flip have returned to Squardance for the recording of their debut album, where I took the opportunity to speak to Danny and

Ric of the band.

Ric and Danny's musical partnership began whilst they were studying at the Spirit School of Sound Recording in Manchester.

"It was good while we were there because there was a real good buzz around the place," enthuses Ric. "People like GRAHAM MASSEY (308 STATE) and A GUY CALLED GERALD were there and THE STONE ROSES used to rehearse there."

Revellers

Both Ric and Danny revel in technology they represent the new generation of young musicians who exploit the power of computer based music. Being technically trained, they write, engineer, mix and produce all their material. Ric used to work at Squardance as in-house engineer so knows everything inside out. Technology is at the heart of their creativity.

Ric: "The basic set up is an Atari computer running C-Lab Creator or Notator through Unitor, which is used to run all the SMPTE side of things. We also use the 'ear' (aka human touch) - it's like a Kahler Human Clock and basically you can feed audio signals into it and it will control the tempo and offsets from that information. That is really useful when you're doing re-mixes with a human drum track on it, because it follows it and follows it well."

Akai S1000 samplers feature heavily in the band's work, especially

when it comes to vocals. Ric: "Both these S1000s are up to 8 Meg, with a 40 Meg Hard Disk drive. With a possible two minutes and 40 seconds in each I use one for choruses and one for verses. Vocals are sampled straight into the S1000, (a) because it's easier and (b) I like the way that S1000s make vocals sound - it gives them an edge. It's really strange, I don't know what it does, but it's a lot nicer to EQ them after they've been sampled, rather than EQ-ing off tape."

Despite this different approach, Ric still employs some old tricks of the trade especially for the vocals on *Strawberry Fields Forever*.

"The vocals were quite heavily treated. There was a standard Lexicon, a flange from an old Roland Chorus unit and a bit of phase from an old Korg unit. Then I did the old trick of turning the multi-track over, after dumping the vocals to tape."

Danny continues, "Most vocal takes are done in the control room using a Neuman U87, through a Drawmer compressor and Aural Exciter. If it's a chorus I want to build up, then I'll record maybe six to eight tracks, pre-mix them and then sample them into the S1000."

Automation

The Trident desk at Squardance is fitted with Steinberg Mimex Automation, which used in addition with the C-Lab software allows for complex levels of programming.

Ric: "I am able to automate within Creator by using all the different MIDI controllers like Pan, Volume changes and Programme changes for all

the effects units. Everything is stored in the program and is very useful for doing re-mixes. You load it up and you know that it's exactly how you want it to be. I really like changing reverb settings within a song, even if it's just a slight change at the chorus or whatever."

Danny: "We've just had the Juno 6 MIDI retrofitted and by using MIDI controller #4, we can now control the keyboard's filtering and resonance. We record it into the computer, quantise and loop it, so that the LFO does the same thing every time."

They are as at home with the latest computer software as they are with older Roland equipment; essential gear for today's dance orientated bands and synonymous with the birth of House music. C-Lab's Creator and Notator software are the workhorses of the band's songwriting.

"I've used Cubase before," admits Ric, "but I just like the way that

"If Roland hadn't been around, then House music may not have started in this country."

DANNY

Creator works – it's very fast and I also keep discovering new things on it each week that I want to play around with."

Ric: "The main keyboard is the Korg M1. We have two and know them inside out, but they are getting a little bit boring now. We also have older Roland stuff like a Jupiter 6, Juno 106, 303 Bassline, MC202 and SH101 which we either run through a Korg sync box or sample into an Akai S1000.

"One Juno 6 is converted to MIDI, but we also have a CV to MIDI and MIDI to CV converter from Groove Electronics, which is a bit of a pain – I'd rather just get the sound and then sample it."

"If Roland hadn't been around then House may not have started in this country," announces Danny. "Roland have got a lot to answer for."

"Then there's the odd smattering of Yamaha stuff like the SY77," continues Ric, "which is good and we use it quite a bit. I also like Emu's – they added a nice texture to the samples. I don't care what people say – all samplers sound different, they've all got their own sound."

Strawberry Fields Forever was Candy Flip's stepping stone and succeeded in elevating them to instant Pop stardom. Had they anticipated it? "We were very surprised", remembers Ric.

"It freaks you out a little bit. Being away the week it happened, we came back to find that it was number 21 in the national charts. After that it just went mad for a while and hasn't really stopped."

Candy Flip's techniques at re-interpreting the classic BEATLES track for the dance floor, spurned a host of similar attempts which has evolved into quite a trend.

"We could have very easily done another cover version as a follow up but that's not what were about. Our previous singles were more underground and did well in Europe. We've kept the dance groove but have become more song orientated," says Ric.

Danny: "We're starting to write more of our own lyrics now. There is also another guy, Kelvin (*the third member*), who is a really good lyricist. We're not up to the standard that we want to be yet."

Running Live

An Aces 2" tape machine stands alone in a corner of the control room looking very underused.

"We hardly ever use 2" tape," asserts Ric. "We run everything live because then you have the choice to change things round at the last minute. There's no way that we could record a track stick it on multi-

track, then mix it because there are always things we want to keep doing to it and also I like the quality of running everything live."

"We don't use 1/4" tape anymore," interjects Danny, "although I used to love 1/4" editing. Now we use Digidesign's Soundtools – Ric knows the system inside out, so that if we don't like the structure of a song we can chop it around."

Talk turns to monitors when Ric informs me that the studio has custom built Questeds.

"Roger Quested actually comes down with his team of men in white coats, who start shooting pink noise around and setting the place up."

With regard to nearfield monitoring, Ric is another engineer who prefers not to use NS10s.

"I find them too nasally. They're not a true image and you tend to put too much bass on with them. I'm using a pair of KEF C15s, which sounds the same in any environment, but I've also bought a pair of Tannoy E11s."

Ric is particularly partial to bass frequencies and favours the use of a DBX 120 XDS Boom Box.

"I really like bass, which is fine for underground Dance stuff, but when you're mixing for radio, you have to be more careful. The Boom Box is like a sub-bass synthesizer, which gives you frequencies down to 20Hz the ones you can feel more than hear."

Re-mixes

On the strength of their production abilities, Ric and Danny have also been in demand for re-mixing other artists' recordings.

Ric: "We've done a couple of re-mixes for VOICE OF THE BEEHIVE and also THE CARPENTERS' *Calling Occupants of Interplanetary Kraft*, which A&M records think is a little too weird so they're going to test it out."

"Then there has also been a re-mix of SOFT CELL's *Tainted Love* and JAMTRONICS' *Another Day In Paradise*."

Apart from BOY GEORGE re-mixing the band's last single, Ric

and Danny have not felt inclined to have anyone else rework their material. Ric: "We like the control, right from the idea to the finished product, it's the way we work."

"We've put a lot of hard graft into this album," notes Danny, "but when it comes to mixing, we'd like to go somewhere else maybe – Sarm West or Great Linford Manor. Somewhere we can sit back and let someone else do the button pushing."

Nigel Humberstone



Candy Flip trendy and hip...



PLAYING IN A BOX

PG Music's Band-in-a-Box software could unwrinkle your furrowed brow...

File	Edit	Style1	Style2	Hidi	Drums	Song
THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER YOU						
Jazz Swing 4/4 Key Eb Tempo 150 (5-36)*4						
1	Gm7	Ab9#11	Gm7	G7	Fm7	Bb13
2	Ebmaj7				Dm7b5	G7b9
3	Gm7				Bbmaj7	Eb9
4	Abmaj7				Ebmaj7	Gm7
5	F7				Fm7	Bb13
6	Ebmaj7				Dm7b5	G7b9
7	Gm7				Bbm7	Eb9
8	Abmaj7				Ebmaj7	F9
9	Gm7	Ab9#11	Gm7	G7	Fm7	Bb13
10						Eb9
11						Gm7
12						Bb13
13						G7b9
14						Eb9
15						F9
16						Eb9
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55						F9
56						Eb9
57						Bb13
58						G7b9
59						Eb9
60						F9
61						Eb9
62						Bb13
63						G7b9
64						Eb9

ST Band-in-a-Box lead sheet display

WHEN YOU CANT write software yourself, but know what you want a program to do, it's frustrating waiting for the programmers to come up with the right facilities.

If you grit your teeth for long enough, eventually someone has the same idea as you; the excellent Band-in-a-Box from PG Music must be the result of thousands of gritted teeth all over the world.

Distributed in the UK by Zone Distribution, Band-in-a-Box does for computers what the 'easy-play' options do for home keyboards; it provides a bass, chord and drum accompaniment for you to play a melody over. Of course, since this system is software-based it's infinitely more flexible than any plinky-plonk domestic keyboard.

Compatibility

The software is compatible with the Atari ST (V2 with any size memory, V3 and onwards Imeg minimum); IBM-PC compatibles, 640 K minimum, using MPU-410 compatible MIDI interface and 5.25 inch disk; and Apple Mac, minimum 512K and MIDI interface.

The software can be backed up or transferred to hard disk. Judging by the ST version, the program is graphically unsophisticated, using GEM and some hideous text fonts. Still, it works and it's amazingly cheap at only £45, so no complaints there.

Although Band-in-a-Box files can be saved in MIDI standard file format (Type 1) and transferred to other software packages, it must be stressed that this is not 'just another

sequencer'. The idea is that by entering a series of chords and playing instructions you can generate accompaniment parts using (ideally) a multi-timbral synth module with drum section. Whether you want to perform live, produce quick versions of standard songs or experiment with your own compositions, Band-in-a-Box is irresistible.

On The Menu

The main display has a series of menus at the top, headings showing the title, style, key and tempo of the song and various comment boxes. The main area is taken up with the 'lead sheet' of bar boxes, each of which can be assigned its own chords; there are 64 boxes on Version 2 of the software, 255 on Version 3 which requires the larger memory.

The first thing you need to do is to tailor the program to work

with your synths. The Drum Machine Definition Screen lets you assign the required note numbers to 32 named instruments and save the definition to disk so it will load as a default. The program includes default settings for the Roland TR505 drum machine, MT32 and equivalent synth modules, Korg M1 and Yamaha RX drum machines.

The next task is to assign a MIDI channel for the bass and chord parts. This is done using a dialogue box giving options from 0 (instrument off) to 16. Again, these settings can be saved.

For a quick tutorial on the capabilities of the program you can then load a song file from the program disk. The lead-sheet area fills with chords (you can print it out using ALT/HELP) and when you select PLAY from the pull-down menu there's a short pause as the program

generates the music, then it will start to play. A cursor moves along the lead sheet showing the current position and a keyboard display with moving dots shows the notes being played. You can stop playing by pressing the space bar.

Accompaniment

Selecting a new Style from the menu changes the type of accompaniment; at the moment there are 24 styles, including Jazz Swing, Pop/Light/Medium/Heavy Rock, Country Ballad, Funk, Reggae and so on. Most are very good, with authentic-sounding rhythms and riffs.

You can select songs in a particular style from a disk using the Load By Style function, which lists only those songs with the appropriate file extender (1-9 and A-E) for the selected style. The manual gives notes on the playing technique used in each style; of course, at the moment the selection of styles is a little limited, but see later for details of forthcoming additions.

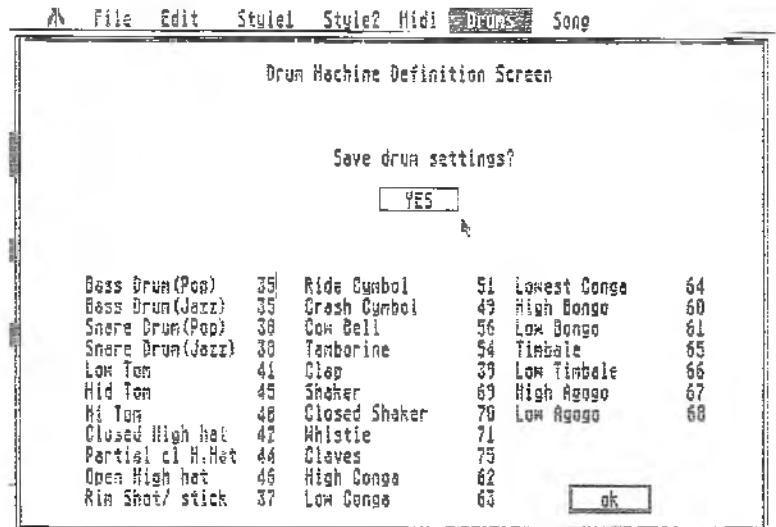
Entering your own songs is as easy as typing in a list of the chords you want. Use Blank to empty the lead sheet, then type

in each chord in turn (the cursor moves two beats at a time, but you can have a chord on every beat by separating two consecutive chords with commas, e.g. F7, Em7). If you want a chord to have an alternative bass note, use a slash, e.g. C7/E.

Chord forms allowable include majors, minors, sixths, sevenths, ninths, augmented, diminished, dominant sevenths, sustained fourths and so on. You can change the tempo, key and transposition of a song using dialogue boxes.

Alternatives

Each style also has two alternative forms; by entering A or B on the sheet, you can switch from one to the other and insert a drum fill. A dialogue box is then used to set variables such as the bar number for the beginning and end of the chorus and the tag and the number of times the chorus repeats.



Drum machine definition screen

The basic song structure is set as Intro (optional), First Chorus (always played once), Middle Chorus (0 to 10 repeats), Last Chorus (always played once), Tag Ending (optional). This won't be exactly what you want, but of course if you are dumping the files into another sequencer, you can edit as you desire.

As an optional extra you can buy Band-in-a-Box for £69 complete with two 'MIDI Fake Books' of pre-prepared song files (£20 each separately, or £35 together). Each disk (one mainly Pop, the other mainly Jazz)

much enhanced version available. This will feature multiple styles per song, tempo changes and patch changes, all of which can be saved as part of a disk file; variable time signatures, allowing you to create strange combinations like Bossa Nova in 3/4 time; MIDI THRU on the ST (which is already included on the PC and MAC versions); and a lyric facility (though no lyrics are supplied with the fake books for copyright reasons). Registered users will get this update for £10.

A more extensive update available at the end of the year will include user-definable styles and possibly automatic improvisation and more instrument parts.

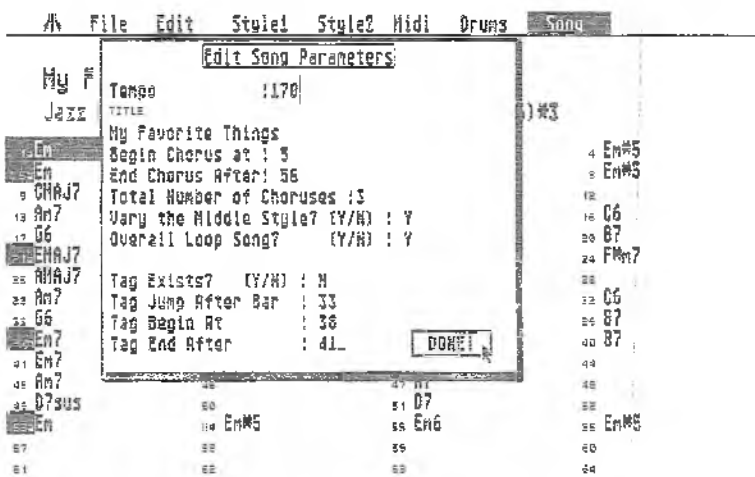
Band-in-a-Box has so many possible applications that at this price any computer musician would be mad to ignore it.

Summary

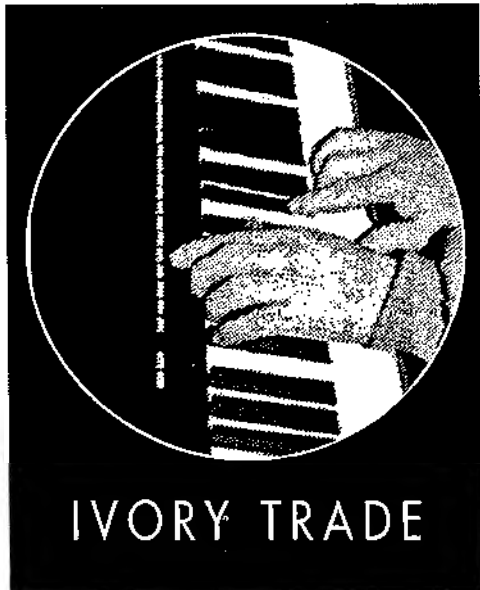
This version of Band-in-a-Box has obvious shortcomings, but by the time you read this there will be a

Chris Jenkins

ZONE DISTRIBUTION, 5 Abbeville Road, London SW4, Tel: 081-766 6564.



Song parameter display



IVORY TRADE

AUGMENTED 5THS...OK?



Antipodean keyboard man Gregg McKenzie gets augmented – a painful operation

IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS I've taken Ivory Trade down the chromatic scale associating chords related to the intervals along the way. This month we've reached the unusual 'augmented fifth' with a sound of its own and uniquely different from the maj 7th, dom 7th and 6th intervals covered previously in IM&RW.

Augmented means 'raised' and though the term can be used generally when referring to individual notes it's solely the fifth step in a basic chord triad that can be raised without the new notes position falling under another name. Sharpening a major third for instance would drag that note up to a fourth, not an 'augmented third', so because you're unlikely to be playing an augmented anything-else, this chord with only its fifth raised is plainly known as 'augmented'.

Doms And Subs

Augmented chords are vaguely comparable to dominant 7ths in that they both create anticipation – though the augmented is far more prickly and might just make your 'possum fur stand on end! An augmented chord can be enhanced by playing on a few more notes but the basic aug has enough character to turn Blues into Jazz if augmented chords substitute the dom 7ths. The swooning love songs and light Rock'n'Roll of the '50s also made

profound use of these chords!

A maj is made into A aug if its E is raised to an F, but the F is also a good candidate for a chord change. An F doesn't naturally suggest itself from an A major scale, steps 5-6 (E - F#) bypass F natural completely but some minor scales to imply the E.

An example that breaks the confines and glaringly mixes minor inspired aug 5th's with major chords in the chorus is KIM APPLEBY's Don't Worry. The original is unfortunately in Bb, not the best key to demon-

strate anything with so if you do attempt to play along with the recording you will remember to transpose what I've written up a semi-tone from A to Bb won't you.

Fig. 1a. uses bold text for the lyric on which Ms. Appleby pulls out an aug 5th. Perhaps like me you weren't sure about those few notes when you first heard them but have no trouble listening to them now. The F chord that follows in bar 3 helps the aug 5th sound more at home even though

in this case it's further decorated with a 9th (or G) to lend support to the melody. Fig. 1b. shows in more detail the first A triad with the aug 5th exposed at the top.

The change from A to F is an aug 5th but could just as well be viewed as 'two tones down' from the root – common to a thousand songs. To confirm how adding an interval to a chord is different from using an interval as a root change, another example or two is necessary. *Don't Worry* is not alone going 'two tones down', BLACK

Fig. 1a: Don't Worry

Fig. 1b: chorus augmented fifth

Fig.2: animals climb up to aug 5th

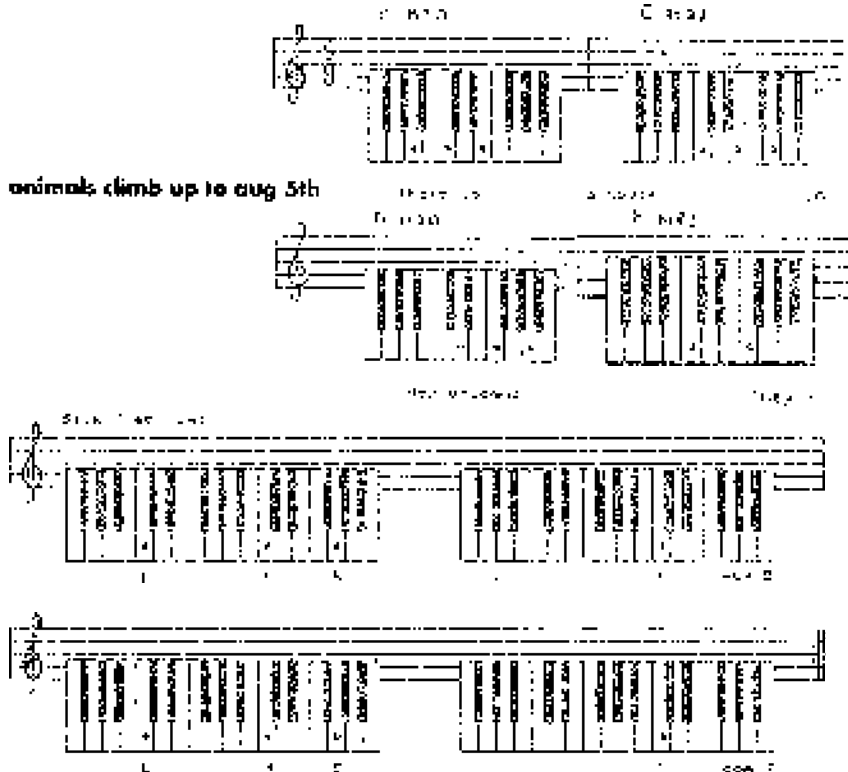


Fig.3: Twin Peaks

BOX *Ride On Time* (Ivory Trade #1) is completely based on a cycle between these two chords. The real difference with *Ride On Time* is that it's in the minor key and because the *Don't Worry* example is major the aug 5th note becomes exaggerated and sounds foreign to the background.

Another old song that leans on the aug 5th but gets there the long way is *The House of the Rising Sun* by THE ANIMALS. In Fig.2, it climbs up from the root A minor chord through four chords finally reaching an F maj interpretable as either an aug 5th up, or as two tones down.

The rolling 6/8 feel propels this number along spookily and the chords vary a little to complete the verse. This first line just by itself makes a good memorable climb to reference other minor-keyed songs against.

Dealing with minors, it's likely your song will fall into one of two distinct minor modes, the Animals example in Fig.2. is a

'harmonic' minor because it uses an F natural rather than an F#, (observe a D min elsewhere in the chord progression made up of D - F - A). The other minor type is a 'dorian' minor and in this key has an F sharp instead of F natural. If a D maj or other chord with an F# in it appeared anywhere else in the song this 'dorian' minor would be the smart one to choose.

The aug 5th takes on several different guises; it can be a quizzical turnaround chord as in Blues or eerie low hum of soundtrack themes where an aug 5th evokes tension if used with sparse 'thirdless' chords. A good way to hear any interval is alongside the root alone and without the disguising notes that surround it.

A Bit Peaky

To demonstrate, play a C with a G above and briefly move the G up to an Ab - the resulting augmented tone is heard after, or 'against' the very plain 1-5 root

5th combination. Follow this idea on a little as in Fig.3. adding a bass note with the left hand and you'll find yourself playing the haunting theme from DAVID LYNCH'S *Twin Peaks*. You'll sound even more like the real thing if you have a wishy-washy string sound to play it with! The aug is more tense played like this. Clutter it up with any more notes and you're definitely not saying the same thing but don't worry, no one is going to ask you if you know who killed Laura Palmer!

When improvising or searching for a melody against a major it's guaranteed to sound obtrusive and challenging.

Minor keys present certain options, the puzzle is centred around the optional 6th and 7th steps. Minors invariably have a minor third three semi-tones up from the root and excluding some of the weirder scale types, the other steps in the scale will have the same notes as a major except for the 6th and 7th.

A choice must be made as mixing and matching the Harmonic and Dorian minor scales can sound very tetchy indeed! In the key of A min that would translate as 'which F and G shall I use, the sharps, the natural or a mix?' and the answer you'll find in the notes of the surrounding chords. It's most often Dorian or Harmonic minors that are applicable so before you need to know anything of strange minor scales, you should have a grasp of these two.

Some Favour Minors

Majors and minors mix quite freely - Rock and Pop in particular favour some odd matches so keep an ear out for the optional aug 5th or plain 6th and try to hit the right note for the chords coming up as well as the chord you're on. A whole Ivory Trade feature will be dedicated to discussing minor scales in the future, for now it's the aug 5th that takes precedence.

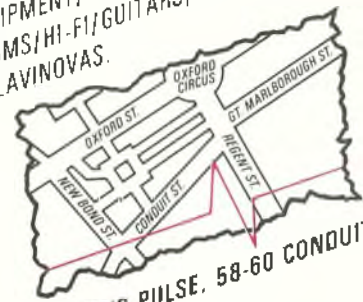
The underlying logic of the augmented is clear if a major third interval is put on top of another major third, E for instance above C and G# a maj 3rd above that E, altogether making a plain C augmented. Continuing to stack maj 3rds up, it would only take one more maj 3rd layed on top to get back to the start of the cycle at an octave above! In others words, stacking major thirds divides the octave evenly into three.

Next month we'll be one semi-tone lower at the 'perfect' fifth and even though it sounds the least conspicuous of all the intervals, it's still a totally essential step in a musical scale.

Gregg McKenzie



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AMIGA

SCENE

The Commodore Amiga has recently begun to make a few waves in the music world. Paul Overra takes a look at both the machine and its music/MIDI software

THE COMMODORE AMIGA HAS BEEN around for some time now and even the smallest model, the A500, is a surprisingly powerful machine. When the original Amiga, the A1000, was first announced the technical spec literally stunned those in the programming community who saw it. Programming the Amiga, as every competent professional programmer found, turned out to be quite a challenge. Software houses took a lot of time learning how to cope and a large amount of early software used to crash all too frequently. That in itself was no fault of the Amiga but such a situation obviously did the Amiga no favours in the eyes of professional users.

So what makes the Amiga difficult to program? To start with it's a sophisticated beast which contains a number of specialist custom chips. There's the 'blitter', which can move screen-display data around at speeds of up to a million pixels a second and a 'co-processor' which also handles many screen display functions, leaving the Amiga's main 68000 processor free for other work. These chips allow the Amiga to provide a lightning speed graphics environment fast enough to support animation and allow a WIMP (*w*indow/*i*con/*m*ouse/*m*enu) user interface.

The Amiga can talk, can use sampled sound and it has a serial port which can handle MIDI speed data transfer. It can also 'multi-task', i.e. it can run many programs at the same time. Don't get me wrong this in itself is not particularly new. Multi-tasking computers have been around for a long time. The Amiga's real claim to fame is that it has provided these facilities at a price which is affordable. Quite simply the Amiga, when viewed from a computing-power/price viewpoint, wipes the floor with the current crop of options. With so many things going for it, why has the Amiga had such a rough time of it in the MIDI/music arena? Let's go back a few years.

Historically Speaking

The fact that the Atari ST had a 'head start' time-wise clearly helped to put the ST in the enviable position it now holds but there are other reasons for the ST music success. Programming the ST was relatively easy, the existence of a standardized interface (GEM) made life that much easier for many programmers and the machine was well priced. Users were attracted to the ST Software which, in the main, was reliable and as ST sales soared even more software houses saw product opportunities. With substantial user-base the ST then became an obvious early candidate for the MIDI/music software houses. Steinberg, Dr.T

and many others made early commitments and their interest obviously gave smaller software companies much reassurance. The situation snowballed and we all know the result - the ST became, in the UK at least, the leading MIDI/music machine.

Apple's Macintosh, although superbly engineered, never really became a challenge to the ST because of its price. Mac software includes some brilliant MIDI/music offerings for those who can afford them. The PC and PC-clones are also making slow (*but steady*) progress in the music arena but here again the music software houses are showing little inclination to leap onto the PC bandwagon. The Commodore Amiga could have made inroads into any of these established music markets fairly easily. I won't pull any punches here, the fact that it didn't was due primarily to a lack of the appropriate software. Early Amiga music software bordered on the hopeless and only one early Amiga package was worth looking at. What was it? Credit where credit is due, it was Dr. T's KCS sequencer. DAVID SILVER, who was responsible for the ST - Amiga conversion, did a good job!

So that's enough of the past. What about the future? One thing is certain, things in the MIDI/music world are changing. As MIDI/music programs are growing in sophistication we're seeing the need for larger amounts of memory and for systems which allow multi-tasking. In this situation the ST is starting to struggle and the Commodore Amiga, which from a technical viewpoint can run rings around the ST, is ideally placed to become a significant force in the MIDI/music arena. Providing of course that the right software comes along!

Now there's clearly a long way to go before we see Cubase-type sequencers and C-Labs type notation software. The signs however, are there that things are beginning to move on the software front. The software reliability problems, which were little to do with the Amiga itself, are rapidly disappearing and significant commitments are now being made by companies like Dr. T, Steinberg, Passport Designs, etc. I've been involved with Amiga software since the very early days and it's my opinion that it is now just a matter of time!

Some Extra Details....

Although the Amiga's serial port can handle MIDI speed you still need to use a piece of hardware called a MIDI Interface. For the Amiga this is a dead simple device which provides the opto-isolation and the right type of (DIN) connectors. The good news is that, in the main, they come cheap (*you'll see a couple of example interfaces in our hardware section*). Many packages will run on an unexpanded A500 Amiga upwards (*i.e. a 512K machine*). A few of the heavyweight sequencer offerings need 1 megabyte for serious use but that's no problem because 1 meg upgrades on the Amiga come cheap anyway.

To avoid misleading you we ought to mention the state of the

Amiga's sampling software. Current Amiga software includes plenty of offerings which form a low cost introduction to sampling but don't expect Akai-type performance because you'll be disappointed. On the other hand there are some good points. The IFF standard for instance, which the Amiga supports, makes the interchange of sound samples between any number of Amiga programs a piece of cake. Most users who are taking an interest in Amiga sampling are adopting a 'good value for experimental purposes' philosophy.

Current MIDI/Music Offerings

As you'll know, with retailers and software companies cutting their profit margins both hardware and software prices can vary dramatically. Use our prices as a rough guide, but remember that in the current economic situation you the purchaser will definitely have the upper hand – so shop around before parting with that valuable green stuff!

Paul Overra

GENERAL SEQUENCING/COMPOSITION SOFTWARE

- ADRUM:** Bullfrog Productions – £40
A drum machine program which can use sampled sounds.
- BARS & PIPES:** Blue Ribbon Bakery – £190
An unusual Amiga sequencer/compositional tool.
- COPYIST APPRENTICE:** Dr. T's Music Software – £85
Scoring program which is popular on the ST.
- COPYIST DTP:** Dr. T's Music Software – £325
Like the ST version this is a heavyweight with Laser/postscript support.
- DELUXE MUSIC CONSTRUCTION SET:** Electronic Arts – £70
More for home entertainment than serious use.
- DR DRUMS:** Dr. T's Music Software – £25
KCS and MRS format drum patterns.
- DR KEYS:** Dr. T's Music Software – £25
KCS and MRS solos and chord progressions.
- KCS V 3.0:** Dr. T's Music Software – £225
The latest version of a long standing favourite. It is robust – if only all early Amiga software had been written to such standards.
- KCS LEVEL II V 3.0:** Dr. T's Music Software – £299
A version of the KCS sequencer that includes extra facilities.
- KEYS:** Dr. T's Music Software – £80
Step time notation/composing tool similar to the ST version.
- M:** Intelligence Music – £120
Random theme generator.
- MASTERTRACKS JUNIOR:** Passport Designs – £99
Cut down version of the fully fledged MasterTracks Pro.
- MASTERTRACKS PRO:** Passport Designs – £285
64-track sequencer.
- MRS:** Dr. T's Music Software – £60
8-track MIDI recording studio.
- MUSIC MOUSE:** Dr. T's Music Software – £59
Generates random music from mouse movement.
- MUSIC X:** MicroIllusions – £149
Amiga specific sequencer whose price has fallen significantly of late.
- MUSIC X:** Junior MicroIllusions – £79
Cut down versions of the Music X sequencer.
- PHANTOM:** Dr. T's Music Software – £249
Similar to the ST version – SMPTE/FSK for KCS, Hitman and Realtime.
- PRO 24:** Amiga Steinberg – £285
Another heavyweight sequencer that we've recently reviewed. Will do much to enhance the Amigas' reputation as a music machine.
- TIGER CUB:** Dr. T's Music Software – £99
A 12-track sequencer with graphic editor. Includes notation facilities.
- TRAX:** Passport Designs – £85
A new 64-track entry level sequencer that offers graphic editing.

LIBRARIANS/PATCH EDITORS

- CZ-RIDER:** Dr. T's Music Software – £99
Editor/Librarian specifically for Casio's CZ synthesizer range.
- 4-OP DELUXE:** Dr. T's Music Software – £99
Editor/Librarian for the four operator FM synthesizers.
- VZ-RIDER:** Dr. T's Music Software – £99
Editor/Librarian specifically for Casio's VZ synthesizer range.
- DX-HEAVEN:** Dr. T's Music Software – £99
Editor/Librarian for six operator FM synthesizers.
- Dr. T's editor/librarian Amiga range is now quite extensive. Packages similar to those shown above are now available for all major synths (including Kawai, Korg, Yamaha, Casio and Roland).
- X-OR:** Dr. T's Music Software – £199
Universal SYSEX editor/librarian which is well liked on the ST.

SAMPLES AND SAMPLE EDITING SOFTWARE

- A.M.A.S.:** Microdeal – £99
This hardware/software sampling package includes a MIDI interface.
- AUDIO ENGINEER PLUS:** Ramscan Software – £199
Hardware/software sampling package.
- MASTER SOUND:** Microdeal – £40
Budget priced package includes hardware and software.
- PERFECT SOUND:** Sunrise Industries – £60
Budget package includes hardware and software.
- PRO SOUND ENGINEER GOLD:** Power Computing – £39
Another budget hardware/software sampling system.
- SOUND TRAP 3:** Omega Projects – £30
Another budget hardware/software sampling system.
- STEREO SAMPLER MK II:** Trilogic – £40 upwards
Another budget hardware/software sampling system.
- TECHNO SOUND:** New Dimensions – £29
Cheap hardware/software sound sampling package.

MISCELLANEOUS HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

- DATL MIDI INTERFACE:** Datel – £30
Example of the many interfaces now available for the Amiga.
- MIDI-TOOLKIT:** Data-Pak Software – £9.99
Real-time MIDI Analysis software – great for fault finding.
- MINI-MIDI:** Omega Projects – £19.95
Physically small MIDI interface. Comes complete with software.
- MIDI 2 INTERFACE:** Trilogic – £35
Includes additional, separately switchable, out/thru connections.

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- FUTURE MUSIC CHELSEA,** 202 New Kings Road, London SW6
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- HB MARKETING,** Unit 3 Foyle 14, Newlands Dr., Colnbrook SL3 ODX
Telephone: (0753) 686000
- MCMXCIX,** Tudor Estate, 708A Abbey Road, London NW10 7UW
Telephone: 081-963 0663
- MIDI MUSIC,** 25 Middleleaze Drive, Middleleaze, Swindon SN5 9GL
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THOUGH VERY simple in its concept and presentation, the Proformance is quite possibly what thousands of reasonably established keyboard players all over the world have been waiting for; a compact, easy-to-use, relatively low cost source of convincing acoustic piano sounds.

The Need

Most sample-based synths will have an acoustic piano sound or two within their repertoire, but

matter. Having made my argument for the dedicated MIDI piano module it's interesting to note that there are very few of them on the market. Roland, for instance, discontinued their popular (though expensive) P330 around two years ago, as did Korg their rather less expensive P3 piano module, which was largely aimed at the home market anyway.

Yamaha's pro side has no dedicated piano module either, although their home keyboards division still has the EMT-10, a very popular 'piano plus' module costing just £249.99, though certainly

can simply use your mixer's pan controls to narrow or combine the two sides.

There are two versions of the Proformance, the standard unit and the Plus, written 'Proformance+'. For the sake of clarity we'll refer to it as the Plus. The difference? Well, £50 for a start, but in terms of performance, the standard instrument offers 15 acoustic piano sounds while the Plus additionally offers acoustic and electric basses, two electric pianos, tone-wheel organ and vibes.

These are configured in 17 different ways, on their own and in

can't replace the real acoustic concert grand. I had daily access to a pair of regularly serviced Steinways for several years and can say categorically that to play one is a completely different level of experience to any digital replica. That said, the Proformance comes closer in practical, affordable terms (an 8 megabyte S1000 is hard to beat) than any other module or synth I've tried; and if you can use a nicely weighted keyboard and a little Concert Hall reverb, your spirits and inspiration can certainly take flight. There is some noise and digital buzz apparent as



Rod Hull is missing from this photo of the E-mu Proformance Plus

memory restraints generally limit the quality to the point where they are fine towards the back of a mix but sound thin and brittle or soft and bell-like when heard in sharper relief. There's often a bit too much noise for comfort too and traditionally played piano parts need lots of polyphony to really sound full and natural and that's not always on call when using a synth multi-timbrally. All in all then, the decent MIDI piano source has been a bit of thorn in the side for many of us.

Thus, if a lot of what you do has a serious ivory-tinkling content, a dedicated module that does nothing more than reliably handle that side of things is quite possibly a luxury you're prepared to cough up for. Just how much you're prepared to expectorate is another

not offering the same level of quality as the Proformance. Is it possible then that the majors are still capable of leaving a relatively easily plugged hole in the market?

E-mu, of course, are very well established as purveyors of fine sample-based instruments. What sets the Proformance apart from previous models of a seemingly similar ilk is that its samples are not only 16-bit but are also true stereo. That is to say they were recorded with a stereo pair of microphones (at least) on to a stereo pair of tracks to give a truer spatial reproduction of the original instrument. If you actually want a small, single pointed piano in your mix that doesn't take up too much space in the stereo picture, the right output used alone provides a full mono signal; alternatively you

various two-ways splits (not multi-timbral), giving 32 presets in all. The preset selection knob on the front panel (common to both units) has only 15 manual positions and so 17 of the Proformance Plus presets can only be accessed via MIDI program change requests most MIDI keyboards/sequencers will be able to issue those. To provide a wider manual range the first 15 presets on the Plus include versions of most of its other voices, as opposed to the 15 piano voices offered on the standard unit.

It's Grand, But It's Not A Grand

As far as the average digital piano sound goes, those proffered by the Proformance are grand. I must qualify that by saying that it

notes tail off, but compared to the norm, and especially considering the price, the performance is extremely good.

On the standard unit there are four basic acoustic piano sounds: Dark, Classic, Mellow and Rock, giving four different tonal colours from soft and warm to hard and cutting. Eight more presets are taken up by two more versions of each of these, one with more touch response, the other with a longer decay. The three remaining memories contain highly detuned Honky Tonky piano, a chorused mellow acoustic and a slightly detuned, bright Rock piano. The overall tone of all the presets is good and the dynamic and timbral aspects of the touch response settings feel right for their intended applications. Clearly, with certain types of

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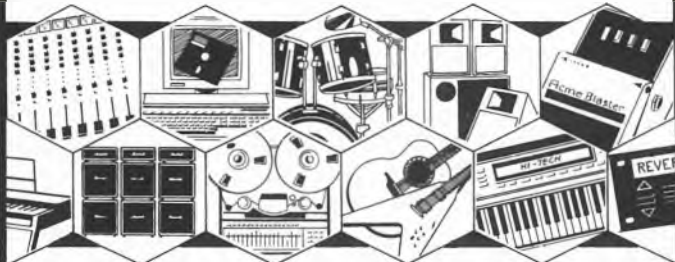


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playing you want the dynamic range compressed to maintain a constancy, while other situations will require a very broader touch sensitivity.

The acoustic piano voices on the Plus are virtually identical except that in place of the four variations with longer decay, there are four variations with less touch response. I'm not quite sure why this is and as I only had the Plus to review I can't make any comparison. If you're thinking of buying however, I do think it would be worth a careful comparison as a little long decay at the top end could be quite desirable for some applications.

The extra voices available on the Plus are also good, although they're not stereo samples and aren't unusual as compared to other sample-based keyboards. Five of them are splits with acoustic or electric bass and piano, electric piano, vibes or organ. The split point can be user defined at the touch of a key, but there's no facility for storing it and it reverts to its default value (G2) when you turn the power off. If you're a club performer and want the Proformer as your main sound source, the Plus obviously offers a lot more scope. For the MIDI composer/recorder, the fact that it isn't multitimbral (i.e. you can't address the two voices of a split on separate MIDI channels) slightly limits its applications. For the extra £50 though, it may be worth having the Plus so that the unit isn't completely redundant for those tracks with no acoustic piano in them.

Big Sound, Small Box

As you'll see from the photo, the Proformance is a half-rack unit and one or two of them can be mounted in a 19" rack with the aid of an optional rack tray. The front panel is simplicity itself. There's a single LED that glows to show power on and flashes to indicate reception of MIDI data. Then there are five rotary knobs:

Volume, Fine Tune (*centre detuned*), Transpose, MIDI Channel and Preset.

The Transpose knob is stepped. At 12 o'clock its tuning (A=440Hz), which is given as C=C. The first two steps moving anticlockwise take you down one and then two octaves, whilst in the clockwise direction you move up and then two octaves. In between you get the 12 semitone stages of the octave; a clockwise direction gives you upward increments, an anticlockwise downward increments, thus you can transpose to any key within an octave range in either direction. A simple and effective arrangement.

The MIDI knob is again stepped and allows selection of any of the 16 channels for receiving data, or it can be switched to Omini. Finally the Preset knob has 16 steps selecting the 15 basic presets or, with the sixteenth position, a setting marked 'MIDI'. This position means that the Proformance will respond to external program change commands over MIDI, 1-15 or 1-32, for the standard and Plus models, respectively.

The rear panel is also simple and contains MIDI IN, OUT and THRU ports; the OUT being solely for making use of the overflow facility whereby two units can be linked together to provide double the polyphony (16-note per unit). Seven MIDI controllers are actively entertained by each of the Proformance models; Pitch wheel, mod wheel, volume, sustain, soft and split point (Plus only).

Apart from the socket for the separate power supply unit, the only other sockets are the two unbalanced 1/4" jack outputs. With the right hand output disconnected, the left one doubles as a stereo headphone output. This is something of a tradition for some American manufacturers and no doubt line level output isn't capable of driving a standard 600 ohm pair of headphones at any

reasonable volume. On the other hand, if your instruments are permanently connected through a mixer, it's really all sausage anyway.

Conclusion

If acoustic piano often features quite prominently in your music; if it's always a bit of an issue as to whether your synth's replication of the real thing is going to be up to it and also whether or not there'll be sufficient polyphony left in the system to make those big sustain chords work, the Proformance could well be the answer. It's operationally simple, sounds very good and is cheap enough to be affordable to a broad band of serious players.

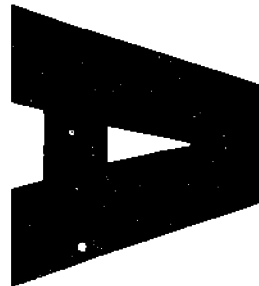
Whether or not you want to spend another £50 for a handful of other fairly useful voices found on the Proformance Plus is something of a secondary issue and a personal choice. The basic unit definitely works very well.

Jim Betteridge

AT A GLANCE

- 15 variations on stereo acoustic piano samples (standard unit)
- 15 stereo pianos plus electric and acoustic basses, electric pianos, organs, vibes
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- 16-note polyphonic
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- MIDI IN, OUT and THRU

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STUDIO VISION ● RRP: £799

**"Other
manufacturers
are racing to
provide similar
facilities."**

VISION IS ONE of the 'hottest' MIDI sequencing packages currently available for the Mac – and it just got 'hotter'! Opcode have just released StudioVision, which combines the powerful Midi sequencing capabilities of Vision with the CD-quality hard-disk recording capabilities of Digi-design's Sound Tools system. The whole is definitely greater than the sum of the parts! Other manufacturers are racing to provide similar facilities, such as

Audio	
Retain	⌘L
Separate	⌘P
Strip Silence...	
Mix...	
Import Audio...	⌘G
Unlink	

Audio Instruments	opt1
Record Monitor	⌘F
File Management...	
Hardware Setup...	

✓Display Waveform	
Edit Soundfile...	opt2
✓Mix Audio on Capture	
Normalize on Mix	

Audio Menu

Mark of the Unicorn's recently announced Digital Performer – but Studio-Vision has arrived already, making Opcode 'first kid on the block' with this extremely powerful new 'toy'!

So What Can It Do?

The program is accompanied by a four-page leaflet explaining the various applications, so I will quote directly from this:

COMPOSERS: "Add 'perfect takes' of live instrument solo tracks to your MIDI scores. Record five takes of a guitar or sax solo then cut and paste between them to create the final solo. Quantize rhythm guitar parts. Separate each stroke with the Strip Silence command to create individual rhythm events. Then try non-destructive quantize

and track shift commands to get the feel just right. Copy and paste whole harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic sections of MIDI and digital audio tracks. If you like a four-bar phrase in which you've recorded six tracks of MIDI drums, bass, keyboards, strings, horns and digital audio tracks of vocals, copy the complete harmonic and rhythmic phrase. Try using Repeat Paste and insert the phrase four times in a row, or repeat it 10 times at the end of a song for a fade-out. Record and play back the best crash cymbals direct from disk, leaving more memory in your sampler for other instruments. Bounce down unlimited takes of audio with associated automated mixing of volume and pan into a stereo soundfile for playback. Or bounce down several takes of mono guitar to one mono file, leaving a second mono file free for vocals."

SONGWRITERS: "Just as the MIDI sequencer allowed the composer to experiment freely with arrangements, the songwriter can now 'fool around' with vocals. Reorder the vocal verses in a song by dragging them to a new start point and instantly hear the result. No more hit and miss flying in of vocals onto your track from a sampler – record them into Studio Vision and place them at the bar and beat that you want and even quantize where they start. Words can be easily stuttered by using the Separate command in the Audio menu, then Option-dragging the word to overlap itself!" So now you can rap and scratch to your heart's delight!

POST-PRODUCTION: "Use the digital audio for voiceover and the Midi for music. Import sound effects digitally at the highest quality via Sound Tools."

FILM SCORING: "Add one or two real instruments, such as solo cello, flute, or french horn on digital audio tracks along with your classical MIDI orchestrations."

MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION: "Create MIDI music scores with digitized sound effects and

voiceover in a single program. Save the mixed MIDI music as a MIDI File and premix and capture the digital audio to one audio file for playback. Play back the MIDI using Opcode's MIDIPlay from HyperCard, SuperCard, or MacroMind Director and play the digital audio at the same time using Digidesign's Sound Access XCMD."

Well, what more can I say – all of these applications are potentially extremely useful, depending on the type of recording work you do. The best thing for me is that now, at last, I can record my guitar parts and vocals alongside my MIDI sequences and cut and paste them while arranging my songs!

So How Does It Do It?

Well, when you boot up StudioVision, you are presented with almost exactly the same screen as you would get with the normal Vision sequencer program. The familiar control strip runs along the top of the screen, just underneath the menu bar. One obvious addition here is the Audio menu (*more on this later*).

I already had a sequence ready in a Vision sequence file, so I opened this so that I could get started on the audio stuff straight away. This sequence was a version of MICHAEL JACKSON's *Bad*, arranged for the Roland M132.

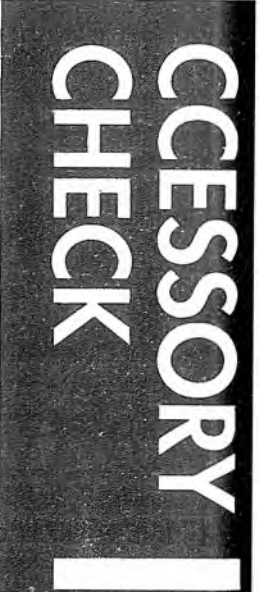
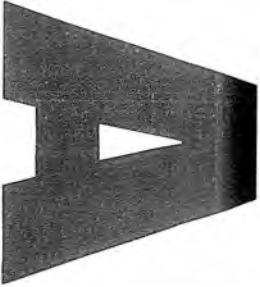
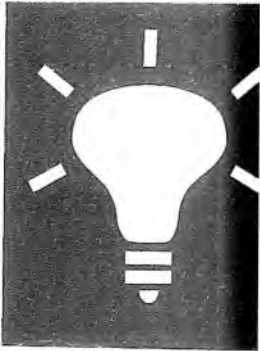
There were 18 tracks already in the sequence, so I set up a track for the Rhythm guitar part which I wanted to add. Then it was time to investigate the Audio menu. I quickly found a selection for Record Monitor, and out came a small window with a pair of bargraph-type meters with clip indicators. I double-clicked on the left-channel Record File field and up came a dialog box where I named my new audio file as Rhythm Guitar. I checked the Record box for this channel and took a cable from the back of my Fender Vibrolux guitar amplifier into the left input of the Sound Tools AD

IN unit hooked up to my Mac. I plugged in a Telecaster, and hit a few chords to check the input level, which needed to be set on the control on the front of the AD-IN. I could see the level on the Record Monitor's left bargraph and I set it so that the loudest chords just missed hitting the clip level.

Once everything was ready, I enabled the Rhythm Guitar track in Vision's sequence window to record and hit Record on the transport bar. There I was – recording my guitar parts straight onto my hard disk via Studio Vision! In my enthusiasm, I made a few small timing errors, so this was the ideal opportunity to try one of the first applications suggested for the program. I opened the Graphic Window for the Rhythm Guitar track and underneath the normal MIDI graphic editing grid I saw a waveform display containing my guitar recording. I used the cursor tool to drag across the audio waveform to select it and the background of the selected region of the waveform turned black.

At this point I turned to the Audio menu and chose Strip Silence. Up came a dialog box which asked me to specify a Silence Threshold and a Signal Period and whether to restrict the cuts to occur on Zero Crossings of the waveform (*to help reduce clicks*). Signal Period is the length of time 'silence' has to last in order for Studio Vision to recognize it as such. The Silence threshold can be set from 0 to 100 in steps of one unit and the range in dB represented by these 100 units is actually 90 dB. I chose a threshold of about 5 dB above silence, and a period of 100 milliseconds, with the option for zero crossings. The waveform display now showed a number of separate waveforms corresponding in some cases to single picked notes and in other cases to several notes, chords, or continuous rhythms, with white space in between on the display.

The first thing to do was to try



to quantize the audio to tighten up the guitar rhythms. I opened the List Window for the Rhythm Guitar track and saw a display very similar to a MIDI event list. This showed a list of the (now) separated audio events, all named Rhythm guitar, with the bar, beat and clock locations of each event at the left of the window. None of these events started at clock locations which would correspond exactly to quantised audio event start positions, of course. Listed at the right of this window were the audio event 'end times' given in beats and clocks and volume values for each event which defaulted to 127.

Quantizing

I selected the whole track of Rhythm guitar events and used the normal MIDI Quantize commands to quantize all the events to start on 16th note subdivisions. Vision has 480 clocks for every quarter note, so all the audio events now started on clock values which were multiples of 120 for a 16th note, 240 for an 1/8th note, and 360 for a dotted 1/8th note.

Now I needed to distinguish the separate 'licks' and rhythms on the guitar track, so I selected the first Rhythm Guitar event and chose Set Instrument from the Do menu. Out came another dialog box which let me select a new 'Audio Instrument' from a pop-up list of 16 titles - Audio 1 to Audio 16. I selected Audio-4 and then opened up the Audio Instruments

Time	Instrument	Volume
4: 4:240	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
6: 3:120	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
7: 1: 0	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
7: 1:360	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
8: 3: 0	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
8: 3:240	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
8: 4: 0	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
10: 3:120	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
12: 3:240	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 1:240	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 1:360	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 2:120	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 2:240	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 2:360	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 3:120	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 3:240	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 3:360	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
14: 4: 0	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
16: 4:240	Rhythm Gtr	127↓
18: 3:120	Rhythm Gtr	127↓

List window: quantised audio events

window from the Audio Menu. Here I was able to re-name the 'Audio Instrument' called Audio-4 to Lick 1, which seemed a good descriptive name for the first guitar 'lick'. I went through this process with several of the other audio events, renaming more of the licks I wanted to identify.

Once this was done, it was an easy matter to change the locations of any of these - either in the List editor by typing in new clock locations for the start points, or by selecting and dragging in the Graphic Window.

Track	Meter	Track	Seq Len	Start
1	M	MT32 Request	2	Node-1
2	M	MT32 Dump	5	Node-3
3		Gtr/Clav	116	Node-2
4		Bass H Hi	117	Node-5
5	M	Bass H Lo	117	Node-5
6		Bass Counter	80	Node-3
7	M	Bass K	117	Node-3
8		Rhy Organ	80	Node-4
9		Solo Organ	76	Node-4
10		Solo Synth	82	Node-5
11		Brass	107	Node-6
12		Brass	107	Node-6
13		Pad	116	Node-7
14	M	Perc Subst	116	Node-10
15		Bass Drum	117	Node-10
16		Clap	116	Node-10
17		Hi Hat	116	Node-10
18		Shaker	116	Node-10
19		Rhyth. Gtr	117	Audio-1

Sequence window: Bad

Graphic Window

The Graphic Window was particularly intuitive to use. Once I had the first couple of audio events set to different audio instruments, these were placed vertically underneath the Audio-1 track and I discovered that I could just drag any other licks onto these new instruments from the Audio-1 track.

This called for a re-think in my instrument naming scheme, with 'Licks Track 1' and 'Licks Track 2' springing to mind as more suitable names.

Listening back to my guitar track, I realized that some of the licks were too loud. It was a 'breeze' to reset the volume of these audio events in the List edit window, once I had identified which were which. Now that I had my guitar track quantized and had identified the best 'licks' to use, it was very easy to copy and paste these, use them and delete the rest.

To extend the sequence, I was able to use the standard Edit menu commands to operate on any selection of both MIDI and Audio tracks to create new musical sections for the piece.

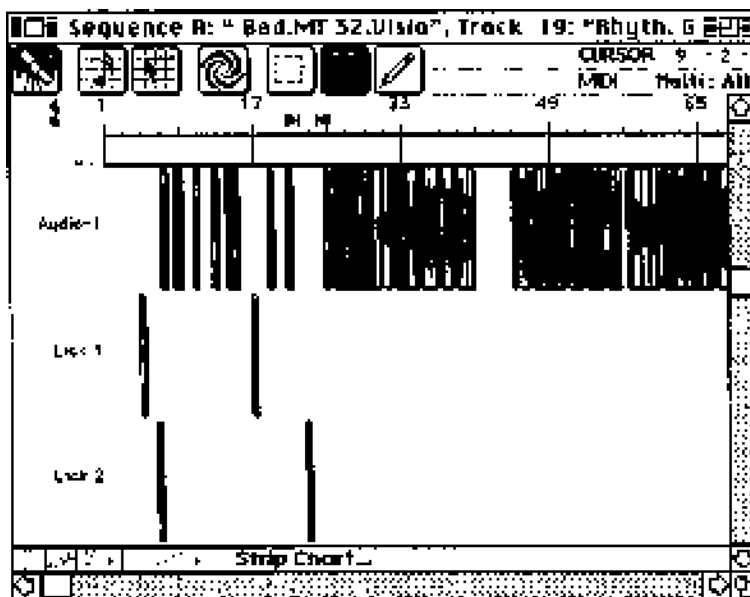
All of this was very intuitive to use, although I was already used to working with Vision and Sound Tools, so I knew a fair bit about how to get everything working before I started. The manual is quite good and I was able to work the trickier things out quickly after a look at the appropriate sections. If you have never used either Vision or Sound Tools before, it would obviously take you a bit longer to get

'up and running', especially with this amount of 'power under the hood'!

What Else Is There?

There are many useful audio editing features, too many to list here, but probably the most important are the Mix and Merge features, which effectively mean that you can record several audio tracks and use these commands to create just two mono, or one stereo file for playback. Volume fades and pans for the audio tracks can be set up using Studio Vision's on-screen faders to help you mix everything the way you want it in a very intuitive way.

The program keeps your original audio recordings on disk until you specifically delete them, or use destructive editing commands, so it is often possible to go back to previous versions if you mess up. You do have to make some decisions about the tempo of your MIDI sequences before you record your audio, because if you change the tempo after you record audio, the sequences will last longer or finish earlier than your audio! I could go on to talk at length about the MIDI sequencing features, but these are probably best left to a review of the sequencer part of



Graphic window showing extra audio events in instruments

Studio Vision, which is called for in a subsequent issue of IM!

So What Do You Think?

Where do you want me to start? How about 'Amazing', or 'Highly Innovative', or perhaps something even more emotive like 'F**king Brilliant!' Congratulations to the programmers and many thanks to the collaborative spirit that obviously exists between Opcode and Digidesign which has made this possible!

Would I Buy It?

All I can say to this 'Is the

Pope a Catholic'-type of question is 'Yes, bears definitely do s**t in the woods!'. What do you think? Who wouldn't want to add these sort of features to their MIDI setup! I have been waiting a long time for this and I just can't wait to use it on my next recording session! Everyone who can afford should get this program right away, especially if they already own Sound Tools.

The system obviously is not cheap if you have to buy a Macintosh, Sound Tools, a suitable hard disk and the Studio Vision software, as well as a MIDI/SMPTE interface for the Mac. You wouldn't get much change out of

about £7500 for this lot and that's not for the largest or most powerful system you could buy!

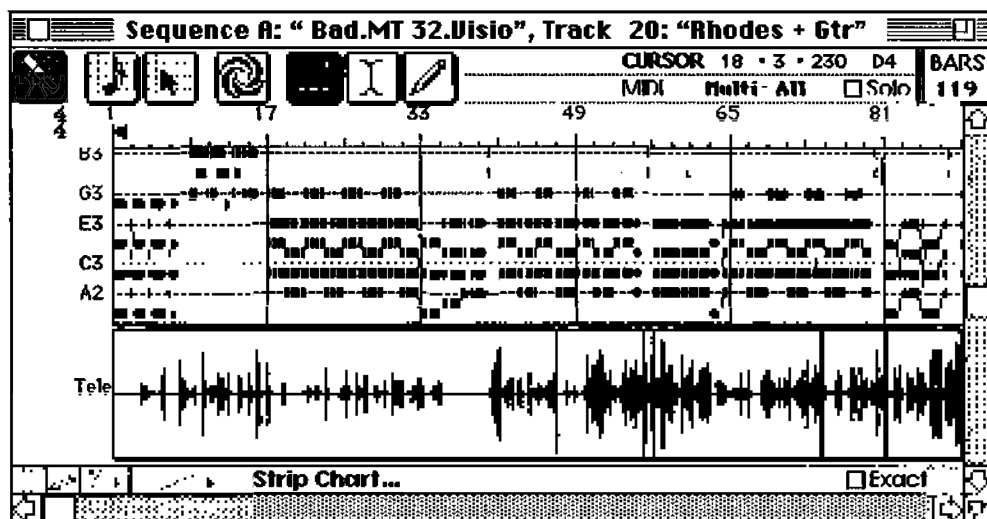
Still, just think what you are getting - a 'state of the art' MIDI sequencing and hard disk recording/editing setup, running on one of the best computers money can buy. If you are recording your music professionally, I don't believe you should settle for less. After all, if this is to be the 'heart' of your system, you need the most reliable package possible - especially if you are mastering audio tracks onto your hard disk.

If you're not quite in this league yet, look out for similar systems being developed for the Atari computer, particularly the ADAC hard disk recording/editing system which can be used from C-Lab Notator via a desk accessory. And an Atari-based system, using ADAC instead of Sound Tools, with C-Lab Notator, a SCSI hard disk and a MIDI/SMPTE interface, would cost about half as much as the Mac system I quoted above.

Conclusion

So, as we move forward into the new decade, Studio Vision brings a new maturity to MIDI recording via the Macintosh personal computer, adding the new dimension of audio recording and editing. I just can't wait for the audio multi-track systems which must be just round the next corner!

Mike Collins



Graphic window showing both MIDI events and audio waveform

AT A GLANCE

Software

Sequencing/hard disk recording and editing

Stereo

Priority

Further info: MCMXCIX
Tel: 021-258 3454

DIXON 'PICCOLO' SNARE DRUM ●

RRP: £69

A

S I'VE WRIT-
ten before,
the piccolo
snare drum

has had remarkable effect on the drum world. You'd be hard pushed to find a progressive pro who didn't have one. The only snag is that up until now they've been expensive for the man in the street.

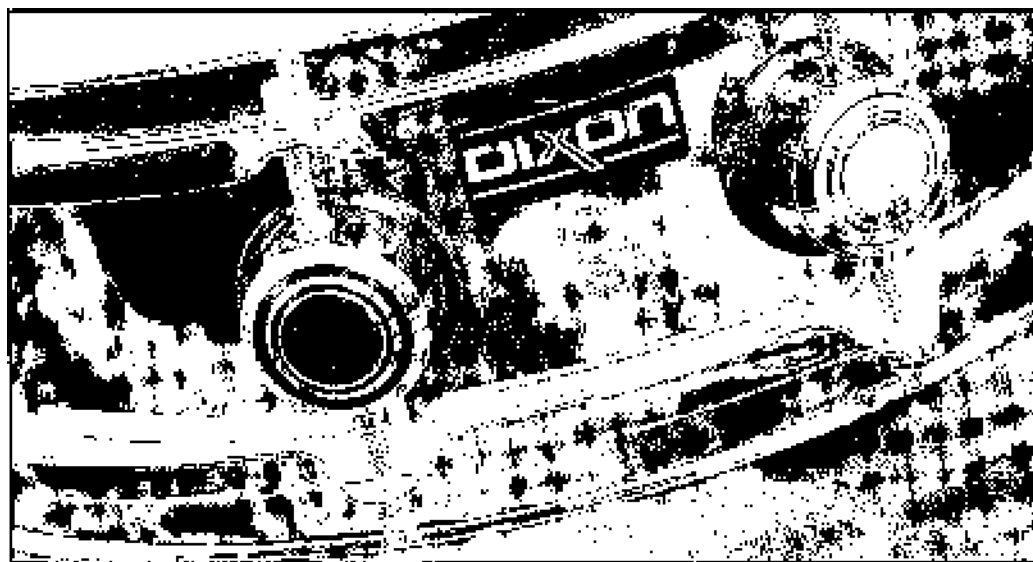
attempt to make the shell speak better by insulating it from the majority of the fittings.

I was surprised to find that even the two diametrically opposed airholes were mounted on rubber, although for some reason the pressed steel strainer and butt-end weren't.

The cam-operated strainer is a pretty good piece of equip-

ment. It sounded crunchy, solid and breathy and with the addition of a ring damper it began to sound even better (*and would be ideal for triggering*).

Of course more expensive heads would make it better (*as for my money would a few less snare strands*) but, for the price of an Indian meal for four, with a lot of pints of Kingfisher, you



The 'piccolo' snare from Dixon (of Dock Green?)

But now there's Dixon! They make the Pukka 13" diameter wood, or metal-shelled version which I've reviewed before, as well as the modern (*although not so authentic*) version of it which is made by just about everybody and which uses a 14" deep shell which was very much the size favoured by dance band drummers in the Fifties and early Sixties.

Unsophisticated

Dixons have a no-nonsense metal shell which is bent and brazed in an unsophisticated way and fitted with roll-over flanges and shallow snare beds. It has 10 of those Hayman type circular double ended nutboxes, mounted on rubber in an

ment modelled on an old-fashioned pattern which of necessity must be small enough to fit between the thickish triple-flange hoops.

To bring it up to date, it has screw operated jaws to join it via plastic strips to the 20 strand metal snares. There's nothing else on or in the drum except for a bunch of square headed tension screws and a couple of typically Taiwanese heads.

Conclusion

Soundwise the drum suffered a little because I unfairly started playing it immediately after a Noble & Cooley I was also testing at FCN. This was tough competition but our lowly Dixon didn't acquit itself too

could happily join the piccolo generation.

Bob Henrit

AT A GLANCE

- Metal shells
- 10 nutboxes
- Rubber-mounted nutboxes
- Triple-flange hoops
- Taiwanese heads
- Bargain price

Further info: FCN
tel: 0737 300421



CHECK |

5

● ACCESSORIES...

PART II, CONTINUING ON THE TRAIL... WE BRING TO YOU MR ROBERT HENRIT



WITH THE EMERGENCE OF NEW STYLES OF music from Latin American countries in the Thirties, larger tunable toms found their way into the drum set replacing the very small, toy-like Chinese with fixed pitch they'd used before. Dance band drummers needed bigger toms to play exciting and colourful rhythms like rhumbas, sambas, and so on and these needed to be suspended close enough to the drummer for comfortable playing.

BANGING WITH BILL

The first really functional holder was actually invented by an Englishman named BILL MATHER who moved to New York between the wars, and, rumour has it was GENE KRUPA's drum tech! It was called the 'Consolette' and consisted of a curved tube bolted to the bass drum shell with a flat, movable bar wrapped around it with either a 'spade' fitting at its top, to join it to a receiver plate fixed to the tom tom shell, or an 'L-shaped' arm. (Prior to this, holders simply clamped the tom to the bass drum's hoop and held it in position with a series of ratchets.)

It's unlikely you've got one of these Consolettes on anything built within the last decade; however if you've an aged Gretsch, Slingerland, Leedy, or Ludwig the chances are you have. If so the nuts and bolts are probably worn, but easily replaceable with automotive coach-bolts. However, if it's really had its day, you might consider buying a completely new unit from Ludwig who fortunately still make them. That's if you want to keep it authentic. Otherwise, since the old Consolette was never built with today's aggressive playing in mind, you could change the whole thing for something more sturdy.

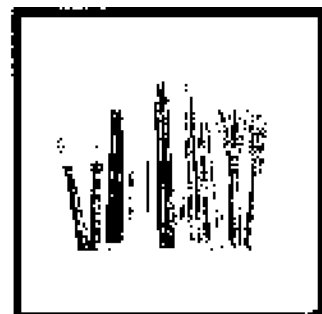
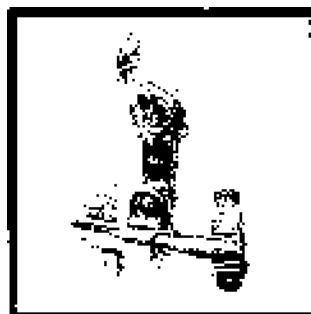
To my knowledge, nothing stronger will fit without drilling holes in the bass drum but, alternatively you could always mount your toms on floor stands. Enough reasonably priced attachments are available these days to allow you to mount toms to cymbal stands on each side of the bass, or perhaps just a double holder on your hi hat side if you play your ride cymbal low. Otherwise, Jazz guys have been playing successfully for years with their rack toms safely cradled in regular basket-type snare stands. (If you're buying one specifically for the job, be sure to get one which goes high enough.)

THE MODERN WAY

It must be said that there's not actually too much to go wrong with modern ratchet-locked tubular tom arms unless you're unfortunate enough to have a casting break on

you. I have stripped threads on the screw which maintains the angle, but unless you're really broke it shouldn't prove to be too difficult or costly to get a completely new arm. The jaws which locate these tubes tend to be reasonably trouble-free too, even so nylon inserts can be replaced if necessary, as can those locking screws which I find have an annoying tendency to get bent.

If you've had enough of your present tom holder (and have a quite a few quid to spare) you could always invest in the RIMS system which would probably allow you to throw away the suspension hardware you had and start again without drilling holes in the toms AND get a better sound. RIMS consists of rail attached to the tension screws via shock-resisting rubber grommets to which you attach the receiver block of your

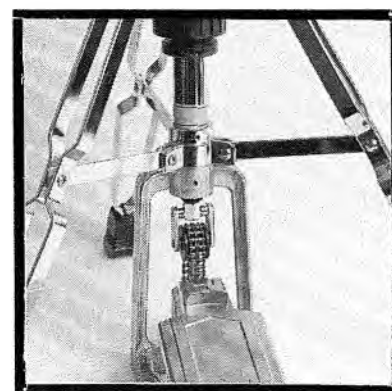
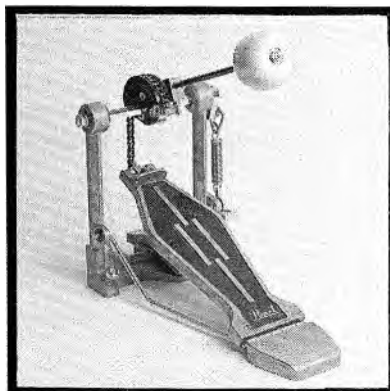
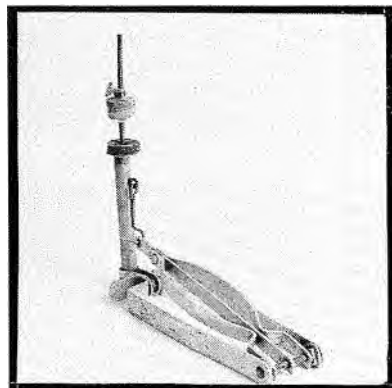
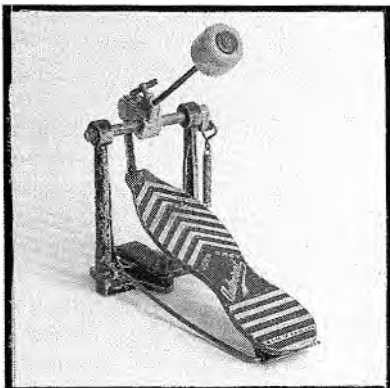


The original Consolette tom clamp (left), and you can guess the rest!

choice. It's ideally suited for mounting to a drum rack of which there are one or two cheap versions around at the moment.

We're fortunate in this day and age that those interchangeable tom holder and leg blocks contain an 'O-bolt' locking system which can be easily replaced if it strips. Older versions (like those on some of the present budget models) simply have a 'T-screw' tapped directly into them which means if the thread strips you either have to drill it out and re-tap, or replace it. I always feel that consistent floor tom height is crucial and invariably fit pipe-clamps to the legs which act as memory locks and butt against the blocks.

My trusty old recording kit is marked with small coloured stickers so that in a pinch just about anybody can set it up; even me! The tom holder arms and clamps are colour coded so all the ones with a red sticker go together as do those with green, orange and so on. I use two floor toms and since the holders aren't set at the same height on each drum, I've put



An Autocrat pedal of ancient lineage, plus the latest Pearl

A 1920s low-boy, and its descendant, the hi hat pedal

coloured stickers on the legs and the blocks: orange for the 16, green for the 18. It's simple but blindingly effective. There's even a way of ensuring the booms on cymbal stands set up consistently with the same coloured stickers. Simply fix one to each of the movable parts of the boom's holder in a row (*having first set the stand up correctly*) so every time you set it up, all you need to do is recreate that straight line.

I have what I consider to be a good method for setting up my cymbal stands. I adjust the first two sections of each to an equal height, which just fits into my stands case. This makes the bases interchangeable, so I don't need to work out which one goes where, then I simply insert the top sections which have a small pipe clamp fixed at the relevant points. I also have a clamp on the down tube of my snare stand to mark its height just in case I have to take it apart to put it away, or use a shallower drum. I use

the same thing for my hi hat and the legs on my floor tom.

Incidentally, you don't have to use pipe clamps to mark height positions you can use gaffer tape wrapped around the tube until it's built up enough to stop it going into the clamp.

It must be wrapped neatly so there's a right-angled edge formed about 1/4" thick.

Finally, a tip. It's well worth checking all the important 'T-screws' on your kit before you start a gig. Obviously you'll have just tightened those on the cymbal stands when you set them up but chances are you won't have tightened those on the tilters, or tom holder ratchets, or the one which holds the bass drum beater in place which always comes undone at the most inopportune moments. I've got a special Ludwig key for tightening all my wing-nuts called a 'Stay-Set' which is a lot kinder to them than pliers.

While I'm on the subject of 'idiot checks' before the gig the other things to examine are your sticks. Acorn with chunks out of them not only sound bad (*since they kill a cymbal's crispness*), they also have an annoying tendency to put dents and even holes in your heads.

If you've got to play the gig with splintered sticks you'd be better off reversing them and playing with the butt end (*providing the edges were nicely rounded*).

Bob Henrit

NB: If you have any questions as a result of any of Bob's Rattle & Drum articles, please write in to: Rattle & Drum Feedback, International Musician & Recording World, P.O.Box 381, Mill Harbour, London, E14 9TW.

**● NEXT MONTH:
DRUM CASES -
THE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE
TRUTH!**

TASCAM 488 8-TRACK PORTASTUDIO ●

RRP: £999

"This compact unit offers a complete eight-track recording system."

The 488 is a new, low budget, 8-track portastudio from TEAC's Tascam division. Like their original 238 deck-only model and the more recent 688 top-of-the-range extravaganza, the 488 uses dbx noise reduction and manages to squash its eight tracks on to a standard hi-fi cassette running at 3-3/4ips. It's also physically compact, measuring 490mm x 125mm x 392mm and is cur-

operationally. But considering the price this can hardly be held against it.

The Mixer

The mixer section has eight line inputs (nominally -10dB), all unbalanced 1/4" jacks. The first two alone have input trim knobs which allow a wider range of input levels from microphone to line; they also have a $50\text{k}\Omega$ input impedance, as compared to the $20\text{k}\Omega$ of the line inputs (pre-

channel to both simultaneously, but otherwise a nifty use of space and knobs. There are also two stereo effects returns (stereo jack sockets) each of which has a level control and basic routing to allow effects to be recorded to the multitrack or at mixdown.

Speaking of routing, below the pan knobs at the bottom of the channels are the channel routing buttons. There are only two of these, the first is marked 1/L-2/R, the second 3-4. The first thing to note here is that there

because there's no separate main stereo output and beyond that there's no separate monitor outputs. Which brings us to...

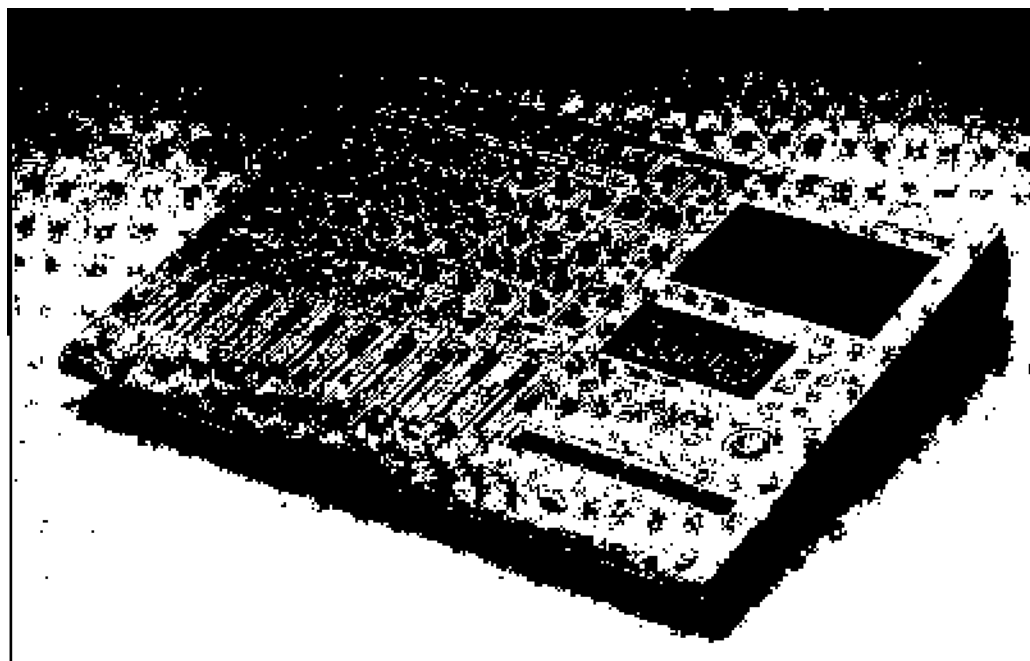
Monitoring

The idea is that all monitoring is done via the headphone output, which can also actually be used to drive a power amp and speakers - if it's a hi-fi type amp, headphones can then be plugged into that.

Five buttons control what you listen to and any, or all, of them can be depressed simultaneously to mix sources. There's one for each of the groups, plus another marked Cue. The first four are fairly obvious if you route any input to any of the group busses, you can listen to it by pushing the relevant buss monitor button. If you push only one group button, it monitors in mono and puts the signal in the centre of the stereo image. If you push a pair (one and two or three and four), odd goes to the left, even to the right.

This could be a little irritating if recording two sources simultaneously on to separate tracks. In practice, however, for the average lone home user, it should generally work out fine.

The fifth button, marked Cue, relates to a separate knob at the top of each channel, marked Tape. This is basically the tape monitor section where channel one relates to track one, channel two to track two and so on. This knob also has a different function if moved in one direction as opposed to the other; turned clockwise it sends the tape playback to the Cue buss, where it can be monitored in mono simply by pushing the Cue button mentioned. This is entirely independent of the channel controls. Using a combination of the Cue and Group buttons, it is possible to monitor a mix of routed channel inputs and tape playback. One limitation here is that there is no way of controlling the monitoring level of an incoming sig-



Tascam 488

rently the least expensive complete 8-track system on the market.

It should be stated at the start that the 488 was not designed to compete with the 688 which, at twice the price, is far and away a superior bit of kit. It's intended as a kind of eight-input, eight-track PortaTwo; a basic portastudio and using it as such is a very simple process.

As a kind of added bonus, TEAC have provided a few ways and means of squeezing out of it another eight inputs for virtual tracks. Here, as we'll see, things can get a little more complicated

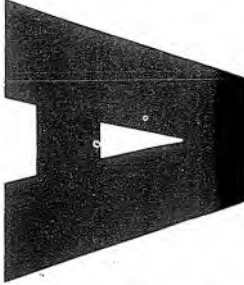
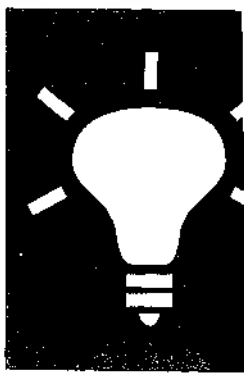
sensibly with high impedance microphones in mind) and thus are more suitable for electric guitars/basses. The other six inputs have no trims and require basic level control at source.

The EQ is simply treble and bass offering $\pm 12\text{dB}$ at 100Hz and 10kHz . This is limited in terms of creative control, but fair enough at the price.

There are two post-fade effects sends per channel, both with master level controls. They cleverly share a single channel level knob; turn it anticlockwise for send one, clockwise for send two. Dodgy if you want to send a

are only four busses for eight tracks, meaning that buss one feeds tracks one and five, buss two feeds two and six and so on. This will only be a problem if you want to do live recordings using more than four tracks simultaneously; not what the 488 was designed for and not a very likely event for the average home recordist.

The second thing to note is that busses one and two also double up as the main left and right stereo busses for mixdown purposes. It isn't possible to monitor tape playback through the main channels whilst overdubbing,



**ACCESSORY
CHECK**

nal separately to its record level.

Thus, if you're intent on maintaining as high a record level as possible, what you're listening to whilst over dubbing can be far from a musical mix.

So far, so easy. Now let's take a look at the how the extra eight inputs facility works.

Inputs

If you turn a channel's Tape monitor knob anticlockwise in the direction marked Mix, it feeds the tape playback signal back into its main channel, sending it through the effects sends, pan, routing and channel fader. This does not, however, disable the normal line inputs. So the idea is that, during mixdown, you can use the eight mixer channels to mix the eight tape tracks and eight virtual tracks (or any other line inputs for that matter) to group outputs one and two (these double as left and right mix outputs). The relative levels between tape and virtual tracks being controlled by the Tape control. The drawback here is that both sets of signal, tape and virtual, are forced to share the same pan, EQ and effects settings, which probably precludes anything too extravagant for either. Also, if you wanted to fade out the synth that's plugged into channel one, but leave tape track one up, you'd be buggered because, remember, the Tape control is post-fade. Another possibility not mentioned in the manual is to use the headphone output as your mix output, rather than groups one and two. In this way the virtual track inputs could go through the channels as before whilst the tape returns could either be sent also through the channels as described (turning the Tape knob in the Mix direction) or stay in mono and be mixed independently (turning it in the Cue direction). A relatively flexible arrangement.

Other unusual twists and turns in the signal path include

the facility to switch line inputs five, six, seven and eight to go directly to the Cue buss, so you can monitor virtual tracks without recording them. Similarly, inputs one, two, three and four can be switched to go directly to their corresponding group faders/busses. This, the manual tells us, is for the use with an external four-output mixer, or anything else that doesn't need the channel controls. Not a major issue.

Zappy Transport

A large LCD window provides 10 bargraph meters, one per track plus two to show the monitoring level going to the headphone output. It also gives other transport information such as tape position, which is non-realtime (ie its arbitrary units rather than hours, minutes and seconds). That's fair enough at the price, but they might have backlit it. The transport, in the TEAC tradition, is rapid and positive in action and also quite sophisticated: apart from an RTZ and an auto-play facility (it drops into record having wound to its location), there are two locate memories which can be cycled between for practising that tricky passage. For practising that tricky drop-in, there's a Rehearsal mode where a track is muted rather than actually dropping in to record to simulate the effect of the real thing - without the risk.

The audio quality is better than I remember the 238 being, and is quite adequate for demoing. Crosstalk is quite noticeable, however, if you're working with very exposed tracks (voice-overs or delicate soloed instruments), both within the mixer itself and from track to track on tape. However, bouncing is generally not a problem and can be accomplished even on consecutive tracks.

Noise reduction

I've always been a bit dubious concerning low cost dbx noise

reduction because it reacts badly to transients (hi hats, snares, etc.), although it does work well with most other material. Nowadays though most people investing in this type of gear will be syncing up to a drum machine, which will never come near-multitrack tape, so the problem probably won't apply. The 488 provides for this well with Sync In and Sync Out sockets, giving a direct path to, and from, track eight and defeating its noise reduction whilst keeping it away from the rest of the mixer circuitry.

Conclusion

The 488 was intended as a basic 8-track portastudio and as such it works very well. It doesn't come anywhere near the comprehensive sophistication of the 638, but then it is only half the price. For the home recording musician with a bit of MIDI gear on the side, this compact unit offers a complete 8-track recording system at substantially less than anything else available. On that basis it's recommended.

Jim Betteridge

AT A GLANCE

- 8 main mixer channels
- 2 channels with mic trims
- Treble and bass
- 2 aux sends (one knob)
- 2 routable stereo FX returns
- 4-buss routing
- Tape monitoring section
- Total 16-inputs at mixdown
- Standard C format cassette
- 3-3/4ips tape speed
- ±12% varispeed
- dbx noise reduction
- RTZ, 2 locate memories
- Repeat, Auto-play, Rehearsal mode.

For more information contact Tascam UK
Tel 01753 225 235

SIMMONS

SDS.2000 ●

RRP: £1,035

"We're talking about a set from the people who started it all."

OK, IT'S A FAIR cop. You're absolutely right this is not the first Drumcheck I've done on Simmons' SDS.2000. The last one was in June 1989, but since that was published Simmons faded from the picture and it's not until very recently that they've sorted themselves out with a new factory and an independent wholesaler. So it was deemed to be a good idea to revisit the only Simmons drum set product still in production.

SDS.2000 couldn't possibly have existed without SDX, which, as I'd guess most of you know, was until recently Simmons' exceedingly up-market flagship. It was a drum kit and workstation which boasted a great many wonderful features but which is not at present in production. However, the untold fortunes ploughed into SDX resulted directly in the present generation of Simmons products. Trixer, Huggers, ADT and SDS.2000 all benefitted greatly from the R&D which gave rise to the late, great SDX.

But we're not talking about SDX, it's SDS.2000 we're evaluating, which is an actual electronic drum kit comprising a brain and five of Simmons unique pads.

The Brain

SDS.2000's brain is housed in a free-standing metal box which can also be fitted with brackets to enable it to be rackmounted. The box itself is 2-U deep with a gang of seven vertical faders taking up almost the whole of the left side of its front panel. The first five of these are dedicated and respectively control the vol-

umes of bass, snare, hi, med and low toms while the other two simply control master levels for the left and right outputs of the whole kit. Above each of the faders is an LED which glows in two strengths. A bright light denotes which drum is being triggered, while a slightly duller one says which drum is being worked

which is actually two parallel rows of green LEDs (nine in each) with a red one at the end. They're numbered and labelled Pre-Set at the top and User at the bottom and serve to indicate all the numeric information relative to programming and selection (the top row shows tens and the bottom one units, so to show a

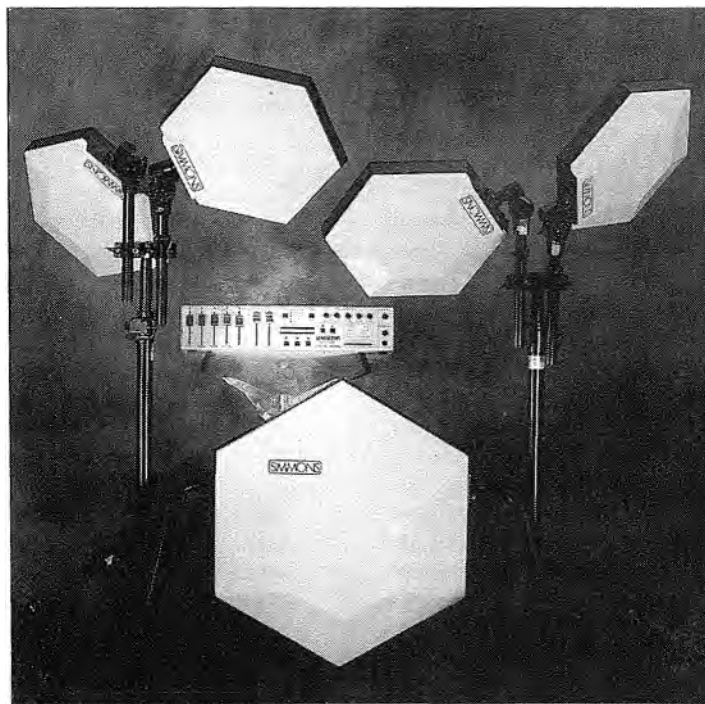
best shot. 2000 will memorise the dynamics of the hit within a second and that's it. In thirty seconds or so you can set the sensitivities for all five pads and you shouldn't need to do this again unless you inadvertently change the pads around).

Pots

Further to the right is a bunch of five 'pots' which are our programme controls dedicated to bass, snare and the three toms with Up and Down buttons below them. As usual these allow us to adjust numerical values up and down as well as enabling us to step backwards and forwards through kits and reverbs. The only other things on the front are a pair of 'pots' to control the amount of Reverb (against the straight drum sound) and the all-important Headphone volume control which allows you to not only programme in silence, but of course use SDS.2000 as a practice tool (I understand that at a pinch this output could take a mixed signal of your drums to an amplifier which could act as a monitor sys-

tem) A horizontal slot at the very bottom takes one of the Simmons' Sound Cards which are factory-loaded with up to ten stimulating sounds from SDX.

The back of SDS.2000 is not at all complicated. There's simply a row of five jack sockets for pad Input with an equal number for Outputs as well as Left/mono and Right for an overall mix. Otherwise there are the usual Din sockets for MIDI In, Out and Thru, a jack socket for an optional footswitch (to allow you to step through certain functions like Kit Select) as well as Europlug mains socket alongside an On/Off rocker switch.



SDS.2000 - from the people who started it all

on in the Programme mode. More of this later.

To the right of the faders are a couple of square buttons with a vertical row of five LEDs in between them labelled Drum Type, Kit Tuning, Pitch Shift, Reverb Type and MIDI. When you're programming a drum or a kit, the first of the two buttons selects one of those categories, while the other serves to enter your changes and memorise them (with the exception of reverb and MIDI data you can't effect programme changes on the eight Pre-Set kits, only on the User ones). Below these buttons and lights is what is known as a Bar-graph

MIDI number of 36, which is note C1, light number three on the top and six on the bottom would glow). Below the Bar-graph are three more square buttons: one marked Kit which selects any of the twenty available Pre-Set, Sound Card and User kits held within SDS.2000's capacious memory. The centre one, marked Vu, gives you an indication of overall level just like on a cassette machine; while the third, once pressed allows you to adjust and set Sensitivity very easily (in more or less the same way as Trixer you simply press that Sens button twice whereupon it will flash and you hit the pad with your

Making it go

Right, I've listed all the controls so now I'll take you through what they do... Operating the SDS.2000 (and indeed all the latest products from Simmons) has been intentionally made dead simple. The key to programming it is through those functions I mentioned earlier: Drum Type, Kit Tuning, Pitch Shift, Reverb Type and, of course, MIDI.

As I said, we already have eight kits-worth of Pre-Set sounds and a further couple on the Sound Card (which is an optional extra at £79) but drummers will no doubt want more and it's very easy to create them.

SDS.2000 powers up in Vu mode and shows the output with a red LED at the end to show peaking. After a while this will disappear leaving a single numbered LED lit to denote which software has been implemented at the factory. Next we enter Kit mode by pressing that particular button (incidentally the machine will come on to whichever was the last kit selected before it was switched off).

Editing

If we want to do serious editing we need to first transfer Pre-Set sounds into one of the 10 available User kits (which are also crammed full of sounds programmed at the factory but of course may be overwritten). So first choose a Pre-Set kit (in Kit Mode with the Up and Down button), then press Select which illuminates either of those five specific functions I mentioned earlier. The LED above the fader of the drum in the kit we've selected will glow showing it's ready to have any, or all, of those variables altered. It's easy to copy kits and the Bar-graph shows the kit in question in one row and the destination we're copying it to in the other. We can also cap-

ture specific drums from other kits to make up a single composite kit. In this case the display will show the factory kit number in the top row with the drum number in the bottom (when we're creating new kits we don't actually have to assign a particular drum sound to the traditional pad. I find it's always interesting to have a kit reversed where the bass drum plays with snare drum and vice versa). Anyway to place drums we simply dial up any of the 40 pre-set drum sounds (or

"The other wonderful thing we can do with SDS 2000 is utilise its MIDI capabilities."

the other 10 if we've invested in one of those cards) via those dedicated 'pots' we spoke of. To capture these changes for posterity we only need to press the Enter button. However, SDS.2000 is sophisticated enough to allow us to make absolutely all of our programming changes before we need to enter them.

Tuning up

We can change the pitch of each drum type of pressing the Select button until the LED alongside Kit Tuning lights. Each drum in a kit may be individually tuned over a range of seven semitones which shows up as a row of lights on the Bar-graph. Pitch Shift is a variable feature which Simmons have always been strong on. It's used to make an electronic drum sound more natural by reproducing the tone of

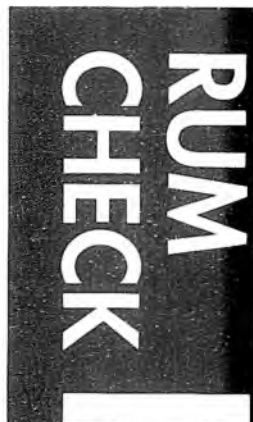
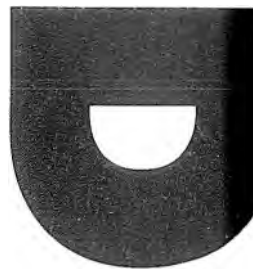
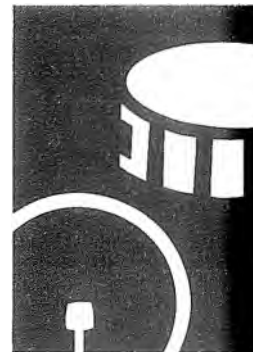
an acoustic drum, which as we know increases slightly in pitch for a very short time as the stick strikes the head, before returning to its fundamental. It works within exactly the same tuning range as the overall pitch control.

Reverb

Reverb is the next feature on the agenda. SDS.2000 is, in its not costly form, possessed of a 16-bit DSP (Digital Signal Processing) reverb system which comprises 30 different patches. These, according to the Simmons instruction book, allow you to play SDS.2000 in a variety of room simulations varying from a cupboard to an auditorium. The different reverbs are grouped in Small, Medium, Large and Live Rooms as well as Large Hall, all with various different decays starting at 500ms up to 20 seconds. That takes care of 17 of the reverbs and the remainder are taken up with 5 Reverse effects (from 100 to 600ms) and 8 Gated (from 100 to 500ms). The reverbs are selectable via any one of the Programme control 'pots' and can be numerically identified in the usual way on the Bar-graph. Although the 2000 will only allow one reverb type per kit, we don't have to have echo on all the drums in a particular kit. We can have the effect on toms alone, toms and snare, or toms and bass (for some reason we don't appear to be able to have it on snare alone, which seems to me be something of an omission, but that could change). To commit a reverb setting to memory we press the Enter button in the usual way.

MIDI and more

The other wonderful thing we can do with 2000 is utilise its MIDI capabilities. It can either access another MIDI-equipped device like a drum machine, an



expander, a synthesiser, or even another Simmons drum kit like SDS.9 (alternatively it can act as a 'host' and be itself accessed by another MIDI instrument). In that case each of its kits can have their very own setting of MIDI notes and channels. So, as I said, if you want to have a complete set of 'different' percussion sounds on a particular kit (or kits) it's very simple to set them up providing you possess an expander, a drum machine, or what have you, which already contains them. All you do is

"Operating the SDS.2000 (and all the latest Simmons products) has been intentionally made dead simple."

press Select and MIDI, choose a drum, whereupon its own MIDI note will show in the Bar-graph (in the range from 36 to 96 where most drum machines start and finish), then choose the pad to which you want to assign the new sound. Finally set the relative MIDI note numbers for host or slave via the Programming controls, depending upon whether the messages are incoming or outgoing.

Auto Assign

2000 also allows you to set up the usual MIDI channels from 1 to 16 (allowing up to 16 instruments to be interfaced) for each drum in each kit simply by pressing Select again. This time the MIDI light will flash whereupon it too can be changed, as we did with MIDI note, via one of those Programme 'pots'. An added bonus within the MIDI capabilities of the 'brain' is something called Auto Assign. This allows a new Note or Channel from incoming MIDI (from say an Octapad) to be displayed on the Bar-graph and automatically set up, instantly.

SDS.2000 has another very usable feature which is, as far as I can ascertain, meant to be used by dealers as an easy way of demonstrating those Pre-Set kit sounds. Two different demo sequences can be implemented by pressing Kit and the Up and Down buttons together. However, you can also use these sequences as a bed track and play along with them (they can be speeded up or allowed down to taste).

Another of SDS.2000's attributes was first seen on SDS.9. It is able to automatically cycle through the drums in any of the kits to give you an idea of how they sound together. It can be particularly useful, not to say revealing to hear how they sound out-front. The rate of this cycle can be controlled by the bass programming 'pot'.

The manual supplied with SDS.2000 intimates that optional extras include the same acoustic trigger bugs used with Trixer. This presumably means that you can trigger its sound from acoustic drums too. I wasn't able to do this when I carried out my 'check' but I'd say that with 2000 having a Sensitivity control which is so easy to operate, you'd stand a very good chance of doing it successfully.

The Pads

I have personally written reams about Simmons pads over the years, so I hope you won't mind if I don't bore you further on the subject. Suffice to say that the pads supplied with SDS.2000 are, to all intents and purposes, the same easy to play ones which were standard for the now discontinued SDS.9. In essence, these were also the ones supplied with SDX (although they had the benefit of the much more sophisticated ZI played surface). The only difference between the '9' and '2000' pads is the fact that SDS.9's snare pad was fitted with two piezo pick-ups (one on the rim) while the 2000, in common with all its pads, has just the one. Because of this it doesn't sound quite as natural as SDS.9 (which cycled randomly through several different snare sounds) and a roll is slightly more difficult to achieve (although not impossible).

Construction

The playing surfaces are made from thickish rubber held in place with a polycarbon rim, which rest on a shaped piece of plywood, that fits into the mouth of the pad's bowl and serves to create a playing surface. Inside the bowl and beneath the board is a piezo pick-up (set in the centre of the drum) whose wiring is insulated in a non-setting gel to cut down unwanted vibrations (in the early days of electronic drums these sometimes gave rise to false triggers). All pads have pipe clamps inside to mount them to those tubular 'L-shaped' tom-holder-type arms which attach to a double stand or alternatively to a much more modern-looking rack. As before, a square-headed bolt penetrates the top of each pad and a normal drum key fits to it in order to effectively tighten the clamp within.

The bass drum pad is much bigger than the others and different in that only the very centre of its playing surface (where the beater hits) moves. To accomplish this, a square in the very centre is cut out then replaced with the addition of a piece of Pirelli rubber webbing stapled right across the back to join it once more to the body of the pad. This simple but effective system springs the centre of the bass drum pad very successfully. It stands on a tripod formed by its own integral, tubular, sharp-ended spurs and an 'L-shaped' piece of metal fixed to its very bottom to retain the bass drum pedal. Large 'T-screws' lock the spurs into their clamps and, as with the smaller pads, the usual cast memory attachments ensure that they set up in the same way every time. As with all the less expensive Simmons pads the company fit mono jack sockets to take their vibrations to SDS.2000's 'brain'.

The Sounds

Screened to the front of the 'brain' is a list of the Pre-Set sounds fixed in 2000's ROM. 1 and 2 are different Rock kits, 3 is Jazz, 4 is Electronic (which has samples of the evocative old SDS.7), 5 is Ambient, 6 Studio, 7 Live and 8 Hip Hop. The Sound

Card library which 2000 shares with Trixer consists of five cards so far. They're designated 'Latin', Ambient, Street/Studio, Live/Hip Hop and Practice (which includes hi-hat and cymbals). So many good sounds are available within 2000 that it's inconceivable that you won't have the wherewithall to create enough personalised kits to fill all its User banks. If I had to choose, I'd say my favourite sounds were the ones which were sampled from the old SDS.7.

Summary

Last time I summed up my review by saying, 'It's an impressive piece of equipment which I'm sure would have done a great deal for the Simmons Company had it been available when the world was clamouring a few years ago'. But, as I already said, all this would have been prior to SDX so even if a budget kit had been available before, no way would it have been as good as SDS.2000 because the technology simply didn't exist then.

I know that electronic drumkits aren't particularly fashionable at the moment but SDS.2000 has great sounds which are infinitely and easily changeable and, if there is any justice in the music world, ought to do very well. Come on, we're talking about a set from the people who started it all and without whom sampling, larger than life drum sounds and a great many other things in the drum world which we take for granted now, would never have seen the light of day.

Bob Henrit

AT A GLANCE

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SABIAN

B8-PRO ●

RRP: SEE COPY

SABIAN BROUGHT out their original B8 cymbals a few years ago

but this latest lot are quite a bit further up-market. They're still made from exactly the same amalgam which comprises 92% copper and 8% tin, but I'm told they start out with a thicker uncast blank nowadays, which of course gives them more room to move as far as more subtle machining and planishing on both sides goes. Furthermore Pros are auto hammered like AA's whereas their B8 predecessors (*Plus and Rock*) had what was simply cosmetic machining. The other big difference is that B8 Pros are given a 'brilliant' finish which not only looks good, but hardens their sound a little.

The B8 Pro

'B8 Pro' is actually a whole range of cymbals in pretty much all the usual sizes. They start with Splashes at 8, 10 and 12", through 14" medium and heavy hi hats, to 16 and 18" Crashes (in *thin, medium and heavy weights*) and ultimately a single medium 20". Their Rides come in the normal 20 and 22" sizes with medium and heavy weights for the smaller diameter and just plain heavy for the big ones. Otherwise the range has 18 and 20" Chinas and somewhat unusually, an actual set called 'Performance' which has a pair of hi hats, a ride and their smallest crash.

The actual profile of these cymbals seems to be pretty traditional with an average-sized bell and bow, but the Splashes seem to deviate a little since their domed bell is relatively large compared to their overall diameter. Sabian make three Splashes 8, 10 and 12" all of which are lightweight and like all B8 Pros have a certain amount of gong in their sound, which I found disappeared as you moved further away. My favourite was the smallest which was ideal for using within your patterns as MANU KATCHE and MARK BRZEZICKI do to great effect. Otherwise I felt the 12" worked better as a



The B8 Pro: veering towards the heavy

small Crash (*it doesn't to my mind have the decay characteristics of a Splash*) and the 10" sounded really cool with the 8" resting on top of it.

The 16 and 18" crashes were actually both exceedingly well matched; meaty with a lot of balls and an attractive overall shimmer. The thinner ones 'spoke' more quickly of course but I guess if you were a Rocker the medium would be a safer bet.

Both different sized Rides had plenty of ping with reasonably strident bells. The lighter 20" was actually quite pretty with a rather jazzy sound although for me the heavier versions were more convincing because they had less overtones. Both were more strident with lots and lots of sustain. They're obviously Rock cymbals and very weighty with hardly any blur at the very edge.

Sabian's Chinese cymbals have an upturned flange with a regular profile and a medium sized bell. They're really trashy and I wasn't at all surprised to find the 20" was better the wrong way up since not only were there more sound options with it that way, but it was louder. We're talking LOUD here (*by the way the 18" actually sounded OK the right way up too*).

The only things left to evaluate are the hi hats. They have the usual profiles but are inexplicably not designated top and bottom (*perhaps this is to encourage you to experiment with the lighter one on the bottom but I find it a little inconvenient*). Both the heavy and medium pair had a good 'chick' sound and were strong and strident open, half open and

closed. In a way this could be their downfall since they really are very Rocky (*if you're looking for jazzy hi hats the mediums don't really make it, but if it's heavy sounds you're looking for they've both got them*).

Conclusion

I saw some photos of just how Sabians are made recently and they certainly do pack a great deal of care and expertise into them. They're a rich golden colour, not too brassy at all. As a matter of fact with their striations and hammer-marks they looked a bit like Sixties' Ks.

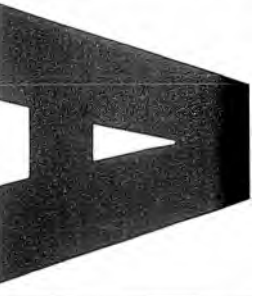
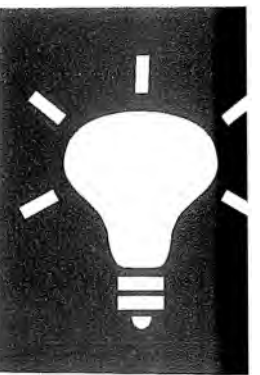
I heard these cymbals being played alongside more expensive Sabians at a demo recently and whilst they weren't as good, there certainly wasn't that much difference. So, if your playing style veers towards the heavy and you're looking for reasonably priced cymbals, Sabian's B8 Pros are well worth investigating.

Bob Henrit

AT A GLANCE

PRICES: hi hats - £113.40,
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The Guitar Magazine

FEBRUARY 1991

G O D I N B A S S

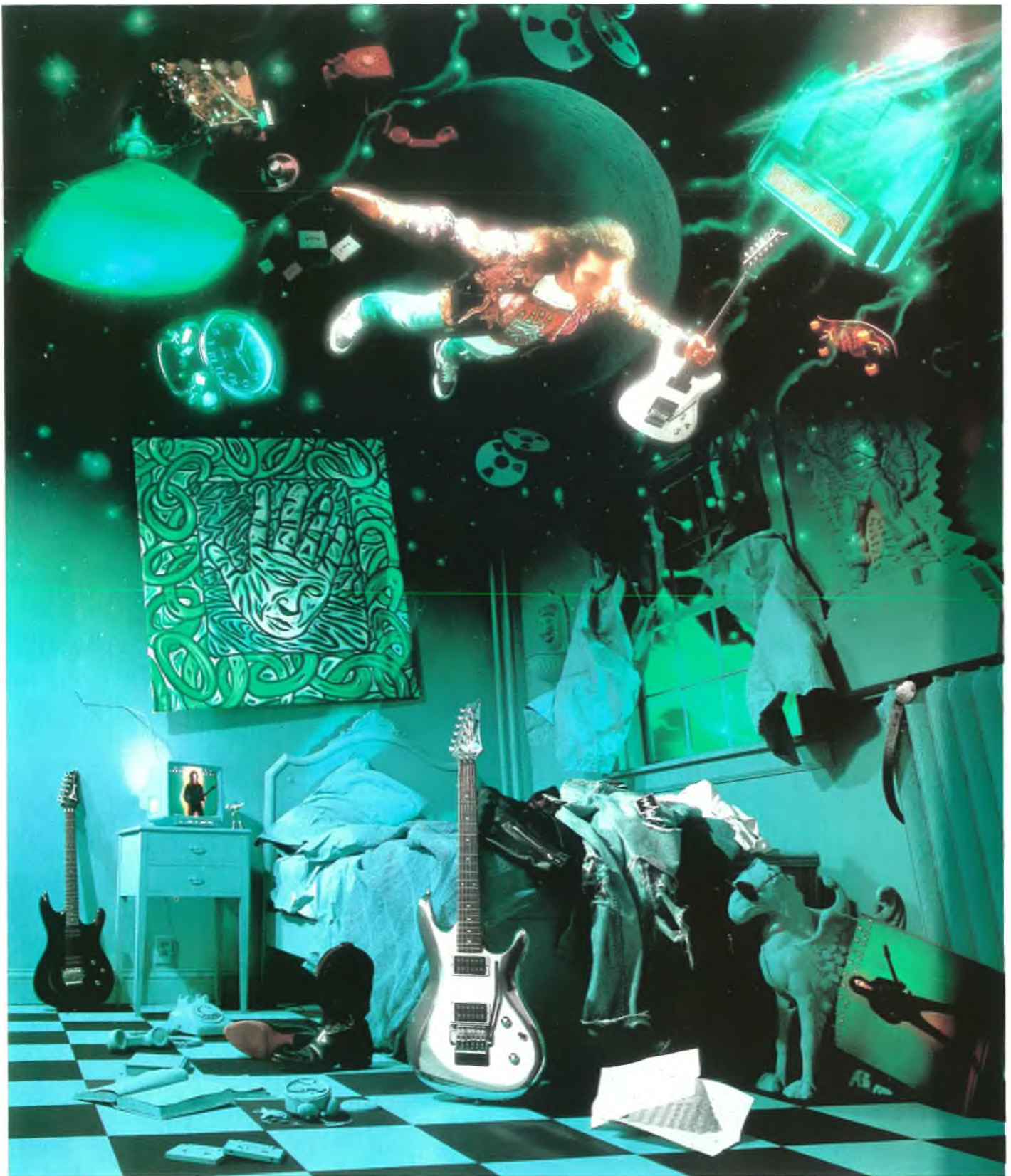
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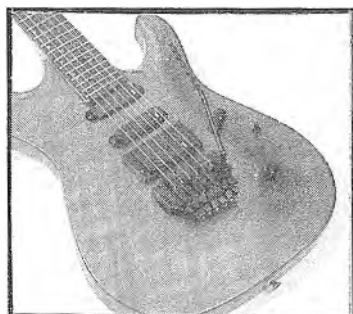
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BASS



H E A D



*TACKHEAD's bass man
DOUG WIMBUSH on how
to get into and out of
sticky situations...*



DANCE HEAVY GROOVES, RAVE CREDIBILITY

and sheer muso virtuosity appear to have reached some sweat drenched point of consensus in the hard funk'd rumblings of the high tension carrying TACKHEAD. An unholy amalgam between three session superstar players, with form as long as your arm, UK Dub master desk man ADRIAN SHERWOOD and BERNARD FOWLER. While Bernard, pre-Tackhead, was tramping the boards and studio floors, gaining a reputation sufficient to secure vocal employment with the likes of BILL LASWELL, HERBIE HANCOCK, PIL, SLY AND ROBBIE, PHILIP GLASS and MICK JAGGER, DOUG WIMBISH (bass), SKIP McDONALD (guitar) and KEITH LEBLANC (drums) were clocking up recording time as Sugar Hill Records' in-house band. As such they were the sound house on cuts like *Rapper's Delight* (SUGAR HILL GANG), *The Message* (GRANDMASTER FLASH) and *White Lines* (MELLE MEL). By 1984 they were at the board with Sherwood putting down all sorts of sound onto tape and some it was just too weird to fit the task in hand – Fats Comet. But it was these out takes that spawned Tackhead (previously a tag for Sherwood's self-originating musical-by-resourced sound system now resigned the On-U-Sound System).

The Real McCoy

Everything that's out there is all hands, sticks, strings and MIDI triggers. There isn't a computer or sequencer in sight. Right from the start, there was never any question of trying to imitate any rack mounted studio bound sculldugery. As Tackhead, or backing MARK STEWART as THE MAFIA, Wimbush, McDonald and LeBlanc do it all, right in front of your eyes.

Keith LeBlanc makes it pretty clear what his set up is all about with a ten minute showcase in the middle of the Tackhead show. What is more

of a mystery is what exactly Doug Wimbush is up to, with his ability to seemingly transform four or five strings into something sounding like an entire Funk ensemble. This is the story of one man's strange affair with the humble bass guitar.

"When I was coming up everybody wanted to be a guitar player, this was when the wah wah pedal first came out and everybody wanted to be HENDRIX, or JEFF BECK, or WEST MONTGOMERY. What happened with me was that things broke down and I ended up having a four string guitar, that was my first bass, playing back-up to another Hendrix clone.

"My mother's from the Bahamas and I heard a lot of Junkanoo music and certain dance music that was happening over there, they were into the disco open hi-hat type thing way back in '65, that was how you got records like *Funky Nassau*. I grew up in Hartford, Connecticut and they have the second largest West Indian population next to Brooklyn. There was a lot of stuff coming up from the Carribean. There are loads of Puerto Ricans in Hartford and loads of interesting stuff on the college radios.

Directions

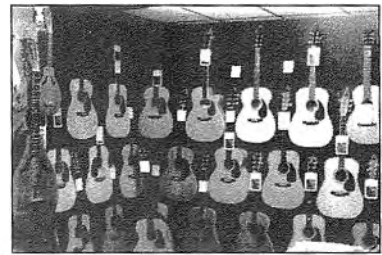
"From '70 to '74 I played guitar in a couple of bands and bass in a Jazz band. Whenever I was playing guitar it was in a Top 40 band or whatever and when I was playing bass it always seemed to be in a Jazz band. There was a lot of different influences on me, pre STANLEY CLARKE. I'm thinking of the Motown basses like JAMES JAMIESON, or the guy in RARE EARTH and MARY GRAHAN of course. Then there was BOOSTY COLLINS and JACO PASTORIUS, PAUL JACKSON from HERBIE HANCOCK's band – people who took it in all different directions. When I was coming up there were all these effects coming up that I collected, like the MXR Phase 90, the Echoplexes. So when I met Skip and Keith, I was doing the same sort of thing I'm doing now, only with wah wah, fuzz, phase and Echoplex. That was in '74. Then there was the thing they called the Mutron pedal and the Korg Synth pedal, it was like an envelope follower, way beyond a wah wah pedal, it was wicked man! If it had a good sound to it I would get it. I was doing all hat with my own stuff, all my studio work was

**"As TACKHEAD,
or backing
MARK STEWART
as THE MAFIA,
Wimbush,
McDonald and
LeBlanc do it
all, right in
front of your
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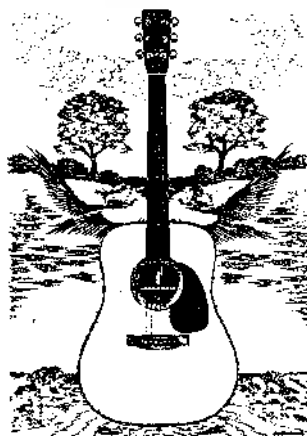
J28 - SITKA SPRUCE TOP, BACK AND SIDES INDIAN ROSEWOOD. LOW PROFILE NECK ADJUSTABLE ROD 45 STYLE INLAY IN HEADPLATE. 28 STYLE VOLUTE ON BACK OF THE HEAD. THE FINGERBOARD HAS STYLE 42 SNOWFLAKE INLAY THE FINGERBOARD IS UNBOUND. TORTOISE PICKGUARD IS ON TOP OF THE FINISH. WE HAVE TWO, ONE WITH AGEING TONER AND ONE SUNBURST IN FITTED CASES. £1795.00

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000-28 - SITKA SPRUCE TOP HERRINGBONE ROSETTE BACK AND SIDES INDIAN ROSEWOOD HERRINGBONE BACKSTRIP, SCALLOPED BRACED, TORTOISE HERRINGBONE TOP INLAY WITH BLACK

& WHITE BETWEEN HERRINGBONE AND BINDING. LOW PROFILE NECK ADJUSTABLE ROD 24.9 SCALE 45 STYLE INLAY IN HEADPLATE NO BINDING ON HEADSTOCK. 28 STYLE VOLUTE ON BACK OF HEAD. THE FINGERBOARD IS INLAD 45 STYLE SNOWFLAKE. NO BINDING ON THE FINGERBOARD. THE TORTOISE PICKGUARD IS ON TOP OF THE FINISH. THE EBONY BRIDGE IS INLAYED WITH THE SIX POINT SNOWFLAKES
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HD 28 - SITKA SPRUCE TOP HERRINGBONE ROSETTE BACK AND SIDES. INDIAN ROSEWOOD HERRINGBONE BACKSTRIP SCALLOPED BRACED THE BINDING IS TORTOISE HERRINGBONE. TOP INLAY WITH BLACK / WHITE BETWEEN HERRINGBONE AND BINDING. SIDE INLAY AS HD28 GRAND MARQUE. LOW PROFILE NECK. ADJUSTABLE ROD, SQUAREHEAD 45 STYLE INLAY IN HEADPLATE, THE FINGERBOARD HAS 45 STYLE SNOWFLAKES AND IS BOUND. THE EBONY BRIDGE HAS SIX POINT SNOWFLAKES, THE MACHINE HEADS ARE ENGRAVED.
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 RICKY SKAGGS, C.M.A. ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR.

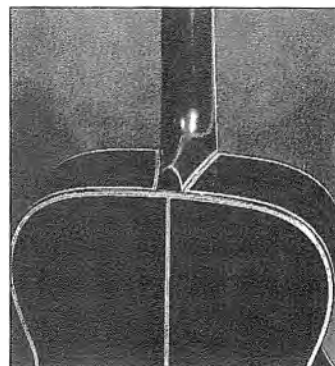
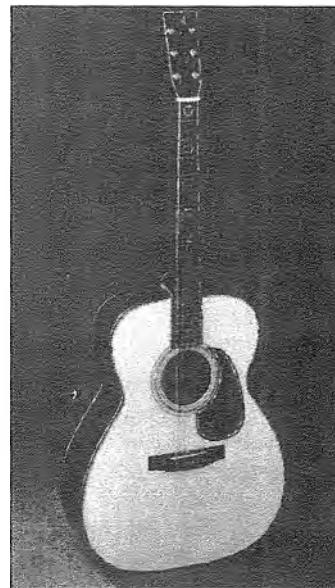
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straight, if you listen to the Sugar Hill stuff up until '83, it was all straight. Originally we were just the in-house musicians but it ended up us being actually musicians, writers, arrangers, producers.

"We were like the liaison between the groups and the record company a lot of the time too. Because the Rappers that were becoming involved with the company, it was the first time they were doing anything properly in the studio and we weren't no threat to them, we weren't signed to the label, we were a help. People like Sugar Hill Gang, Grand Master Flash and SEQUENCE. I did a song on the *Miami Vice* album. I did all the music for Melle. It was a good situation for us, we were in the studio 12 hours a day and at one point there were two studios going on and we got to split our services up - Keith would be up the hill cutting on a track and Skip and me would be down the hill in Switch. We were getting more studio time than the top boys over the river, you know. A lot more hands-on experience rather than just coming in and banging something down on somebody's track and f**king off. We were more personal with the artists because that's the way we are. Our rewards were being able to be together and being involved in so many different styles and directions. At one point there were about 70 different artists signed to the label and we were able to experiment and play on a lot of different stuff. We did an album with CANDY STATION, JACK MCDUFF, the THE WHISPERS came by there one time, STUART COPELAND, the guys from SQUEEZE. We were like another one of those rhythm sections like Sly and Robbie, or BOOKER T AND THE MGs.

Bass Innovations

"With Tackhead I am trying to mix myself live and create different images with the bass. It's like I'm dubbing with my own sound. The sort of set up I have now began with Boss stuff. I got a flanger and a DDJ delay pedal and a couple of the digital sampling pedals. The SPX90 was the first big piece of gear that I bought and that's what the set up was for quite a long time. With the two sampling pedals I could put notes in it while playing solos as well, which is always fun. From there I started using the Rockman - the guitar Rockman, not the bass. That's how I get a lot of the distortion stuff out of it. Because I play the harmonic and then use the Rockman with distortion and a lot of cats really think that it's a guitar coming out. A lot of times I'll layer a few tracks, cut a theme bass track for thickness and then go on top creating guitar sounds and stuff with slides.

"For the Rock stuff I got a TC22/9D with about 22 seconds sampling and a Digitech DSP256, rack mounted effects unit. The TC is the basic brain for all my rack stuff and what I do on the pedal board is split it up so that the bottom row becomes an effect on/off type set up. You can feed five external effects into it, I run the SPX into it, the Digitech and an RX50 as well. I'll set one up for a pitch change and another one set up for different random stuff. Then I have a rack mounted TC parametric. I like stuff with knobs. The parameter stuff is not user friendly, especially for a gig. I also have a MIDI bass made in Australia by Steve Chick, it's the same system that Wahl use and that's linked up to three D110s and a TX81Z. I used the D100s on a couple of tracks on the album to produce some wicked bass sounds, mixed in with the bass guitar.

Finger On The Trigger

"I can use it to program stuff into the computer and it's great because you get stuff, slides and things, that come out a lot differently than if you were doing it on a keyboard. I'm also using an S1000 and S900, with

S1000 with the hard disk. I'm triggering samples of speech, maybe a little keyboard part, turntable scratches, samples taken off our own multi-tracks. We have a policy that we have to play all our samples in, no sequencing. I also put a couple of bass parts on there for songs where on the record there are two distinct bass parts and Keith triggers them off a pad. I've also got a new piece of equipment called a Sans Amp. It's a preamp that's made by a mate of mine in the States. It has eight different pre set sounds, Mid Range Boost 1, Mid Range Boost 2, a Clean setting and so on. It has a presence, a master gain and a whole lot of stuff, so that you can really tweak the sound you want: it's wicked. I got them to modify some of the sounds for me and I can get really thick sounds like a Marshall out of this thing. It recreates a lot of harmonic things that aren't there. I'm using Trace Elliot GP11 heads, 300 watt heads, two of those for the bass and one for the samplers - the D110s go into a little Yamaha mixer and out to the desk. I use two cabs with 15s in them. I don't use the pre-shape switch on the amp, it's a bit twangy to me, a bit like everybody elses sound. They've been very good to - me they really look after me man."

If that all sounds fairly complicated it's when you ask Doug about guitars that you really get into a grey area. He's got more of them than he knows how to count and dotted around different places over two continents. "I have something between 35 and 40 basses now. I've got them all over the place, both here and in the States, my house, my mom's house some at Bernard's place even some over at my mate Tim Simenon's place. I started off playing a Fender Jazz and I'm a Fender player by heart, all the Sugar Hill stuff was done on a '72 Maple neck Fender with Bartolini pickups when they first came out. It wasn't till I came over here that I started using anything else and that was a Wahl bass first off.

Spectral

"On stage I was using seven different guitars, a Spectre four and Spectre five string, a Warwick six string and a Warwick five string and I was using another Warwick four string - with Jazz pickups - which was similar to my Spectre. I was also using a Status 5-string fretless which is really good and they're about 15dB louder than any other bass, so you can't crank it up. There's something about the pickups configuration that gives it a really distinctive tone. You've got to tweak the tone a bit though.

"The next piece of equipment has got to be a programmable equalizer, because all the different basses need tweaking. The seventh one is a little Guild Asbury bass with rubber strings. I've been using one for about four years. That's my dope fiend bass, it's like a Mini Moog man. A very, very thick loose sound. People don't believe me when I turn up at the studio with that but they always ask me to bring it back, it's a head turner. At the moment I'm trying to work on different pickup configurations that can work for lead and bass sounds. One of the others that I've got is a Kramer Ripley 5-string stereo bass which has a pan control for each string. It's a killer, I've got a solo album coming out and that'll be on that."

Doug's solo album is already on the way and hopefully will be available early in the new year but don't expect any studious self indulgence. "I'm more into like let's take the piss, I'm not into all this artsy fartsy bullshit. It's a bit of everything, some Funk, some Rock, some Reggae. It represents me and I'm a representation of the last 15 years of style."

Keith Grant



"We were just the in-house musicians but it ended up us being musicians, writers, arrangers...."

TOTO

RECALL

IM's arpeggio man, MO NAZAM, has a real heavy session with lucky STEVE LUKATHER



THE CREAM ALWAYS RISES TO THE top. It's a crass saying, no mistake and when applied to the music business it makes one wonder. About the charts for instance, where it's not so much the cream that rises as the de-hydrated milk powder. However, in some instances there is a ring of truth to the saying. Take the ultra-competitive L.A. session scene. To make the initial break into the studio network in Tinseltown takes a combination of ability, attitude, state of the art gear, versatility and a liberal helping of luck.

To reach the position where you are the first guitarist called by people like MICHAEL JACKSON, QUINCY JONES,

PAUL MCCARTNEY, CHER, DIANA ROSS, HALL & OATES, LIONEL RITCHIE, BOZ SCAGGS and a plethora of others, when they need a hot solo or a cooking rhythm track, takes a little more than just being good at your job. Hip dude-about-town STEVE LUKATHER is in the enviable position of not only being one of LA's first call session rats, but also a member of the massively successful band TOTO, with worldwide hit LPs and singles to their credit.

At the age of 19 he found himself touring with Boz Scaggs whose *Silk Degrees* LP had just sold more copies than there are weird people in *Twin Peaks* and on his return to LA he flung himself headlong into a hectic studio schedule. For some this would be enough, but in 1977 Steve joined JEFF POCARO (*drums*), STEVE POCARO (*keys*), DAVE PAICH (*keys*), BOBBY KIMBALL (*vocals*) and DAVID HUNGATE (*bass, later to be replaced by MIKE POCARO*) to form TOTO.

The band (*mega sessioneers to a man*) had hits with their first LP and the single *Hold the Line*, still regarded by many as a classic slice of AOR. In 1983 they swept away no less than five Grammy awards for their fourth LP, which also yielded *Rosanna* and *Africa*, two of the biggest selling singles of that year. And he's still in demand in the studios. Some people, eh?

Inspiration

Inspired by THE BEATLES and British bands of the Blues Boom in the '60s, Steve began on the guitar at age seven and soon found himself playing in various school bands. "I used to hang out with older guys who could play better than me, sponge off one and once I'd learned that I'd go on to the next and I played in bands since I was nine years old. I was always playing with guys who were 16 and for some reason it just started to become a little easier for me. I was always listening."

IM: "Did you take lessons?"

SL: "I was self taught until 16 and then I realised I needed to learn more. I wanted to read music which is very hard to do if you've been playing for a long time; so that was difficult, but I learned a lot. I had a great teacher named Jimmy Wyble. He took me from the raw state that I had and focussed me more. I went through the Jazz phase and the influence is still there but I'm not a Jazz player. I would never sit next to JOE PASS and say 'I'm a Jazz player' because he'd f**king dust me, man. But I've listened to it, like MILES and all the great guitar players. It's a subliminal influence. Like you can figure out ways to get from point A to point B that a Rock'n'Roll player wouldn't tend to go to, although there are some fine new Rock players. It's scary. I hate them all."

"I played in bands since I was nine years old. I was always playing with guys who were 16..."

Session Playing

IM: "How did you get involved in the sessions scene?"

SL: "That was an accident. I didn't even know what a session player was. When I got into high school I met all the Pocaro brothers and then I became intrigued with the concept of being able to fit into any situation





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and play with big, huge stars. I started to get into reading names on the backs of albums and figure out styles and say 'wow, this guy didn't play anything like that on this other album'. The fitting-in thing was something that I thought I could accomplish. I came to it with a more Rock'n'Roll attitude which is maybe why I became successful at it because I was rawer than LARRY CARLTON, or somebody like that, who I think is a brilliant player. Though, through my affiliation with the Pocaro brothers I was asked to play in Boz Scaggs' band back in 1977. I was 19 years old. My first tour."

IM: "It must have been a great experience for a 19 year old?"

SL: "Yeah, I was still living with mum and dad. It was everything I imagined it would be and then some."

IM: "Were you best known for your hot soloing and then called up for that?"

SL: "Yeah, I do a lot of that but I also do a lot of rhythm too. I think rhythm guitar is happening. A lot of kids now learn hammer-ons from day one. The first thing I learned was strums (G and D in 8th note style)."

Toto Poll

IM: "How did Toto come about?"

SL: "That came after the Boz Scaggs thing. Jeff and David were talking about putting together a band. The record company knew that they were the guys behind Boz's success and they said, 'whatever you guys want'. I'd been on tour with Jeff and he said he liked my playing. It was always my dream to play with those guys. I was in a band with Steve Pocaro in high school, CARLOS VEGAR, MIKE LANDOU, me. That was the high school band."

IM: "That's a pretty precocious high school band."

SL: "Yeah, well we learned the whole *Katey Lied* album by STEELY DAN before it came out because Jeff played on it. He did the whole album. So we'd be doing high school dances and people would be going, 'Man, what tune is that?'. Those were fun days. Everyone was studying real hard, really trying to learn and wanting to be somebody. You had to keep up. Plus it was inspiring to play with somebody of Jeff Pocaro's calibre. It's like, wow, the drummer of Steely Dan is coming down to play in our high school gig with us. It was a trip."

IM: "How did you get involved in the writing for Toto?"

SL: "I had always written but I was intimidated. I realised I had to up my calibre. The criteria is that it's always the best songs that get on the record. There's never been a time when people would say, 'well I want my songs on the record'. That's bullshit. It's not how we operate. Quality is the thing."

Plaudits Aplenty

Toto's career has been a long one, what with Grammys, platinum records and sell out tours.

"It's been a nice road. We took a couple of years off because of losing lead singers and I went and did a record of my own. Then we sort of missed each other and the record company was after us to do something

and they found this guy from South Africa (new singer JEAN MICHEL BYRON). Not what we normally would have picked. It was in our contract to do a *Greatest Hits* album but we wanted to do a real album. They said, 'just put one new song on it and we'll put it out'. We said, 'no, you can't rip people off like that. At least do four, especially as we have a new guy. Then we'll do a tour and see if people remember us'. We sold like a million records on the continent in two months or something like that and played big venues that were 10,000 people, all sold out. I mean England's our weakest market in Europe for whatever reason, radio or the press hate us. They'd rather talk to SIGUE SIGUE SPUTNIK or another bunch of no-playing fools."

IM: "How do you feel about the current crop of guitar heroes? Do you have any required listening or favourites?"

SL: "JOE SATRIANI, STEVE VAI... MICHAEL LEE FIRKINS blew my f**king mind. He's scary, like HOLDSWORTH meets... I don't know what. ZACK WYLDE is a killer guitar player. He plays all this Country shit, chicken picking in a Heavy Metal style - very refreshing. SCOTT HENDERSON's a brilliant player. METHENY obviously, he's like the grandfather of the new breed - this guy doesn't play a bad note, he's pretty scary. I'll tell you who else is scary - ERIC JOHNSON. I saw him at the Roxy and just wanted to put my guitar in the closet. I like to hear people who have a sound. A lot of these guys have a lot of chops but you go, 'that's great, but who is it?'. I like it when you say, 'man, that's gotta be whoever'. BECK is one of a kind. *Guitar Shop* is awesome. He never ceases to amaze. It's an honour to say he's my friend. It blows my mind. It's all for real too. He just uses a fuzz tone, an amp and his bitching yellow Strat. That's it."

Playing Style

IM: "How did you develop your technique? For instance, your right hand and left hand picking facility?"

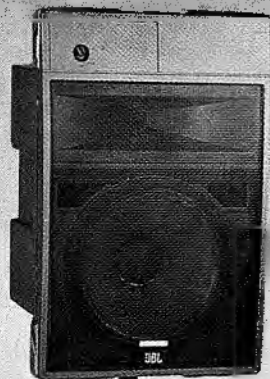
SL: "Oh man. I don't really think I do have that much facility. It's a lot of double picking stuff. The whole key is to relax. You can over-do it and the muscles just go, 'hey, f**k you', so that just puts you out of commission for six months because you try to do impossible things. At home I practice about an hour a day. When I first wake up in the

morning I'll head into my little room and maybe I'll look in a book or maybe I'll try to figure out some new weird shit. Maybe just goof around. I like to play music. It's great to be a technician and I'm proficient enough to play what I hear. But I do what I do, and all I've ever strived to be is an individual. I like to fit in and play with other people. Be a team player. I could be playing a lot more flashy shit on our records; be a show-off, but inherently it's what's right for the tune. Like, I can get away with a lot more shit live. I like to mix it up and be somewhere in the middle. I play in this club band in LA called LOS LOBOTOMYS. It's different guys every time. On drums it's either JEFF VINNEY CALUTER, GREG VISANET or CARLOS VEGAR. Then NATHAN EAST, JIMMY JOHNSON or JOHN PAYNER on bass and we have some original stuff and some jam tunes - it's freak-out music. Some of those guys can bop - so you play with those guys for a few years and different ideas and phrasings come out. There's a Latin thing to it too. It's like Heavy Metal-Latin-Jazz-Fusion music. It's weird. Great music. We did an album all live."

The image displays three musical staves for guitar and bass. The first staff is for the song 'HYDRA', the second for 'HOLD THE LINE', and the third for 'ROSANNA'. Each staff shows a guitar line with notes and a bass line with a corresponding tablature below it. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

A little light reading

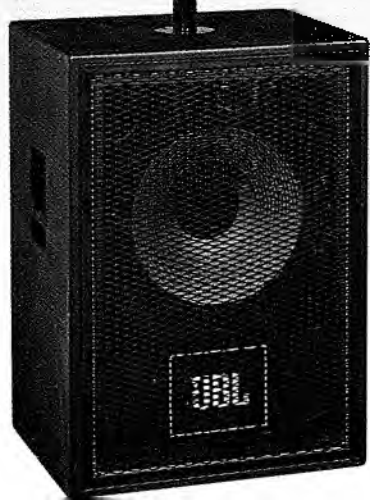
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Recommended Minimum Amplifier Power Into 4Ω : 600 Watts

Nominal Impedance: 4 Ohms

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Nominal Dispersion: 90° Horiz. 40° Vert.

Dimensions (HxWxDmm);

Control 12SR: 610 x 432 x 300

Control SB15: 775 x 546 x 448

Weight;

Control 12SR: 20kg (44lb)

Control SB15: 36kg (80lb)



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Jamming Devils

IM: "Did it get released over here?"

SL: "No. Nobody wanted to know about it. It's rather unfortunate that record companies are only looking for the long dollar. They don't look for music. Maybe only 10,000 people will buy the LP, but it doesn't cost anything to make it; so what's the big deal to put it out?"

IM: "That's a pretty serious jamming band with that line-up."

SL: "Yeah and we never rehearse so it stays fresh. Even if we play the same tunes each week, it's different. One new player in there and you get a whole new set of ideas to follow. It's another part of me. I like to do real hard Rock'n'Roll, I like to play Pop music, I like to play Toto music. I'd get bored doing one thing. ELTON JOHN phones me to hire me and I'm there."

IM: "Your just a guy who can't say no."

SL: "Well, not to certain people. I remember calling up Warner Brothers when I heard that CLAPTON had hired Jeff. I said, 'who's dick do I gotta suck to be in on the session?' I said, 'I don't want any money, I wanna hang. I'll just sit in the corner and play back beats. I just wanna be there'. It turned out that Eric liked my playing a little bit and said, 'Yeah. Have him come down'. I can't believe I know those guys and they're the nicest people. The guys who are shit heads are the ones in the pseudo-Heavy Metal bands that really think a lot of themselves and they go to the Rainbow in LA to be seen and get some head from some ugly broad."

Ringin' The Changes

IM: "Getting back to your guitar playing, how do you approach playing over chord changes?"

SL: "Well, I sort of stole the LARRY CARLTON method because when I was coming up Larry let me hang out with him."

IM: "You did a hell of a lot of hanging out."

SL: "Oh yeah. Hey bud, it's a very important thing to hang, to see and go and meet people. Don't be a jerk, but if someone sees you at all the gigs and you get introduced to these guys, then you can get to talk to people and if they like you they might help you out. But his whole thing is that he looks at chord shapes and inversions that help you to get from point A to point B. Thrown in with a little chromaticism here and there. It's a basic Jazz concept rather than looking at it linear scale-wise. It's a lot more melodic that way, rather than, 'OK, I'm going to use the pentatonic to a phrygian to an aeolian'."

IM: "So you can don't really think about those terms when you're playing?"

SL: "No. I just play. I come from a Blues base. The Blues is it. If I did a Blues record I'd be the happiest guy in the world but it would be a demented Blues record. I heard Steve Vai say that he didn't like the Blues. I said, 'wow, I cannot fathom guitar players saying that'. It just feels good. The notes are right. They do something inside. You could be playing major 7 against a minor chord and stuff like that and that's Be-Bop or some kind of Indian scale, but still when you're playing to a crowd of people you play the Blues and they'll be on their chairs."

Improving Improvisation

IM: "Can you suggest any ideas for developing your improvisational abilities and phrasing?"

SL: "Well, my advice is to learn the Blues first. That's the bottom line. Get that under your fingers, unless you wanna become Mr Be-Bop, in which case you just get your Joe Pass records and learn them. Or sax players, they're all great. Sax players are generally the best improvisors, although there are some great keyboard players too."

IM: "Although rhythm playing is pretty much an instinctive thing,

how can people improve that side of their playing?"

SL: "Listen to R'n'B records and the rhythm playing on that. Any of them. People like PAUL JACKSON JUNIOR, RAY PARKER, or old Motown records. Listen to the parts because one stupid part can really make a record. On their own they may sound corny but over certain grooves and chord progressions it can be very cool."

IM: "When you listen to other players, do you still try to learn their solos or their rhythm parts, or do you just listen and get the general vibe of what they're getting at?"

SL: "I don't sit down and learn solos any more. I'm too old and too lazy, but if I see somebody like Jeff Beck live, there's a whole lesson there. You don't have to be holding your guitar; just watch, listen, keep your ears open."

Soloing

IM: "Moving on to some of your actual playing, how did you approach the first solo in *Rosanna* which I believe was straight off the cuff?"

SL: "Yeah, that was straight off. I just went for it and everyone said, 'but the thing at the end is just blowing'. That's not doubled. It was a one-off which luckily you happen to get once in a while. As a matter of fact, the song was supposed to end but Jeff carried on and Dave started playing the honky-tonk piano and we all just followed on. We've done that a few times, we've been playing together so long that it's like that."

IM: "When you're laying down stuff in the studio do you get wound up about tiny mistakes and have to re-do things again and again?"

SL: "I make a lot of mistakes and I've kept solos that have had mistakes in them. It bothered me like crazy at the time, but if I don't listen to it for a year and then listen back I say, 'ah, f**k it'. My favourite guitar player is EDDIE VAN HALEN and on his albums there's stuff that's loose, a little out of tune here and there, but he's going for it. The spirit of going for it comes across on the disk as opposed to some of these guys who just make guitar records. Like every note is doubled and tripled, all their solos are worked out. They've learned everything. It's like an exercise rather than a real statement improvisationally, which is fine for people who like that sort of thing, but.... People say that our music is slick, but how much more slicked out can you get?"

Mo Nazam

EQUIPMENT CHECK

"Bob Bradshaw's on the road with me and I'm using his MIDI rack. I play through a Soldano preamp, which is the very first prototype, that has been modified by Bob and I got an old 100W Marshall head, also modified by Bob. My effects are pretty simple. I use an M3000 Eventide harmoniser, an SPX 900, two Lexicon PCM 70s, a TC chorus, DBX160X limiter, SRV2000 digital reverb and a Wah Wah pedal. That's it. It ain't David Gilmour's rig, who's another stunning player. I love Floyd, man. The way he uses effects. I stole a lot of shit from him, like the way he layers echoes.

"Valley Arts. I've got three of them out here and that's all I'm using. My main one's the one with all the silver stuff on it and then there's one with robots with their tits hanging out and the other one's a red quilted maple sunburst. I love the Floyd Rose. I don't like the other ones, they're too soft. Floyds can take a beating."

EPIPHONE GUITARS

Epiphone 635 and Epiphone Coronet
RRP: £369 and £699 respectively

THE GOLDEN PERIOD FOR THE GIBSON BUILT Epiphone solids was between 1959 to 1969, after the company was purchased by Gibson in '57 and before the Epiphone name became associated with Japanese production guitars.

The solidbodies now built under the Epiphone banner in both America and Korea are a strange bunch. From the cheap, very un-Gibson 310 Strat copy – a very successful guitar in America – to the USA-built Pro Super Strat, not to mention the Les Pauls and SGs, the range lacks focus and takes little account of the brands illustrious past. This review concerns the 635, the cheaper version of the USA built Pro and the latest addition to the Epiphone range – the Coronet – loosely based on a Sixties design.

THE CORONET

Although the new Coronet doesn't adhere much to the original it still retains a little of its original magic. The body – covered in a red metallic finish – with its stubby offset horns – that give great top fret access – looks reasonably accurate, although the earliest Epiphone solids had a symmetrical body pretty similar to the Telecaster but with an even double cutaway. Here the thin 38mm Mahogany body has a typical large side radius and ribcage contour.

A glued-in maple neck is featured with a 24 3/4" scale length and 24 frets – the originals would have featured a 22 fret neck. The flat cambered rosewood board with block inlays – dot inlays would be more in keeping with the Coronet style – also features white binding and tidy medium gauge frets.

The Coronet never had a reversed Explorer style headstock and the inclusion of one here is questionable! It not only looks wrong for the older styled body but it's pretty impractical too. Quite why Gibson couldn't have used Epiphone's original three-a-side or stylish and topical six-a-side "batwing" head, I really don't know.

It gets worse.

A Floyd Rose II tremolo? I'm afraid so although at least a tune-o-matic and stop bar assembly is offered. Joking aside, the Schaller built Floyd Rose II is a fine piece of kit yet highly incorrect for this style of guitar, a Bigsby would be more correct!

So, with the exception of the basic shape and the white pickguard, little of the original Coronet remains. Certainly the pickups and electronics are very individual. The original Coronet would have featured a single P-90 single coil pickup, often with a

chrome cover as featured on Gibson's ES330, with just a volume and tone. However the '90s Coronet has a Gibson L-6 open coiled humbucker in bridge position with a NSX single coil slanted so that the bass side starts in the middle position with the treble side angled towards the end of the fingerboard.

A master volume and tone control, each with modern black plated and knurled Telecaster type knobs, sit either side of a five position selector switch with a rather unstylish but practical – it's easy to move even with sweaty hands and you can see what position you're in – pointer control knob.

The rotary selector switch works in conjunction with an active circuit – designed by Bob Wolstein – and a dummy coil mounted under the pickguard. This later, unusual feature enables a humcancelling performance from a single coil pickup while retaining a single coil tone. I can't comment on exactly what the active electronics are doing to create the five distinct tones available on the guitar. No one in England had the foggiest idea and I also drew a blank with Gibson in Nashville.

"Although the new Coronet doesn't adhere much to the original, it still retains a little of its original magic."

Select Electronics

However the most obvious aspect of the electronics is the coil selection that produces the distinct tones. With position one – full anticlockwise – selected the bridge humbucker produces quite a standard humbucking tone, nice and middly but with a clear if not overly dominant top end. Position two mixes the front coil of the humbucker with the single coil and what sounds like a bright EQ to give a modern Strat – bridge and middle pickup combined – type tone.

Position three selects the back coil of the humbucker giving quite a single coil tone but a bit fatter with less harmonic content. Gibson suggest this is a back pickup Telecaster tone – personally it sounded more like a back pickup on a Strat! Position four is just the neck pickup, again single coil in character, sort of halfway between a good Strat neck pickup and the middle position.

Lastly, position five combines both pickups and gives a thick rounder tone with more depth and interest perhaps than just the straight humbucker alone. I found that position three picked up most RF hum and position four the least, while position four and two – both the single coil selections – were least susceptible to low frequency hum. Clearly if as I suspect the dummy coil is introduced on the single coil selections it's doing a very effective job.

The Test

Testing this D.I'd through a Marshall Series 900 and Hughes and Kettner combo, I really found it sparked in every environment. From clean Strat-like tones to thicker jazzy voices the Coronet came up trumps. I welcome this kind of innovative circuitry – how much longer do we have to put up with guitars that electronically offer little difference from those constructed in the Fifties.

It's a light, well balanced guitar that felt immediately comfortable. Sustain was good with a nice bright acoustic ring and the overall playability and set up – that includes the tremolo – was excellent. Perhaps a Floyd Rose trem is wasted here there's no back route for example, couldn't they use one of Steinberger's lockable tremos?

THE 635

Constructed from Poplar, the 635's body shape, again finished in a metallic red, is derived from a Stratocaster but with an enlarged and more rounded upper horn. The more obvious difference lies in the arched top, very much in the Les Paul mould that gives the shape, in conjunction with the two large chamfers on the horn cutaways, a certain originality.

The back of the guitar has a shallow rib cage contour again borrowed from the Strat, plus a large relief under the heel reducing the bulk and adding to top fret access and comfort. The end of the heel is cut off at an angle to contribute to the comfort factor.

Instead of the typical four screw and neck plate bolt-on neck fixing, four offset screws sit in large cups recessed flush with the back surface of the body. However although the four screws are tight, there's a little play in the neck joint. Removing the neck from the body it's not hard to see why.

The platform on which the neck sits is uneven and covered with the thick finish while the long side of the neck socket is a little untrue. Add to this the neck shim, used to get the strings to the correct height at the bridge and there is only a little area that the neck

actually is in contact with the body!

Appearance

The clear, satin finished neck is made from a dark coloured Maple topped with a chocolate coloured fingerboard. Using a 25" scale length the guitar features 24 frets, approx 2.5mm in width, left with a low but square topped profile. Small position dots placed on the bass side give a stylish aspect to the board that apart from needing a good final polish combines with the smooth flat oval of the neck to create a very reasonable neck.



Epiphone: take a closer look

Like the Coronet, the 635 has an Explorer headstock – only this time it's the right way round! An original Epiphone logo – with its round 'E' – is inlaid, rather untidily, into the black faced headstock but at least from a little distance it looks perfectly acceptable!

It's good to see a Kahler Spyder tremolo fitted to a guitar in this price range. It's a quality piece of kit, based on a Floyd Rose but without saddle locks. The flush saddle elements are comfortable for right hand damping and the two fulcrum posts sit in

very large brass inserts insuring,

I would think, that no post movement occurs. A behind-the-nut Kahler lock is used, though I must say I prefer the Floyd Rose type nut lock for ease of re-stringing. However there's no doubt that the Kahler lock does its job efficiently as do the unnamed, black plated machineheads.

The 'i's Have It

Epiphone are keen to promote "their exclusive high output 'i-series' pickups". Fitted here is a bridge humbucker and two

single coils each with a black cover with a white 'i' logo. Under the covers the single coils look like typical strat pickups, while the humbucker looks to be very typical Korean fodder with its three screw height and tilt adjustment. Placed in a over large control cavity the simple electronics feature just master volume, tone – with push pull coil tap for the back pickup – five way pickup selector plus a side mounted output jack.

The quoted high output of these pickups seems a little exaggerated, I'd class

A GIG?



THE RIG!

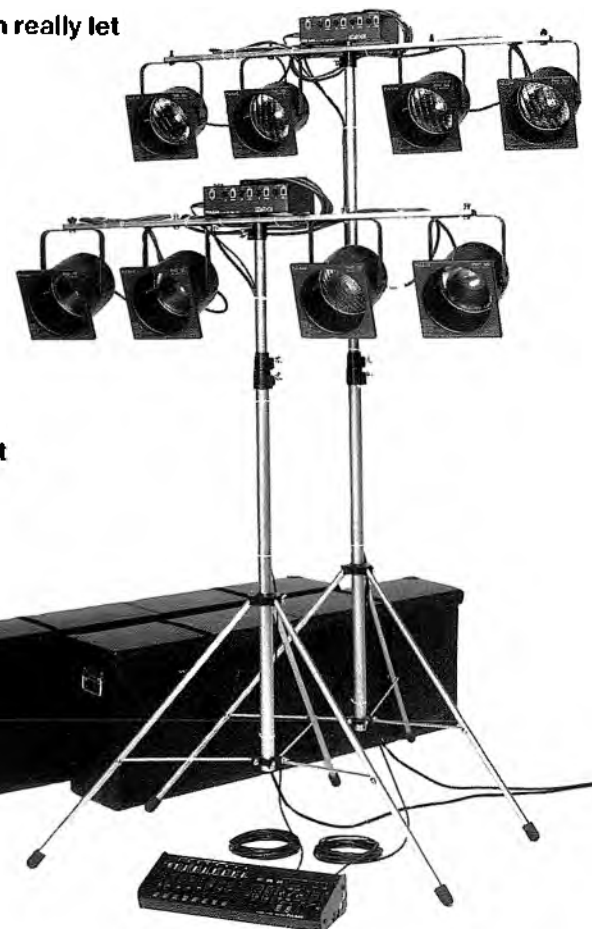
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The Coronet and 635: a full view

them as medium. The back humbucker is quite spiky, a little lacking in low and midrange with quite a hard top end sounding more single coil-like than typical thicker humbuckers but it combines well with the middle pickup to produce quite a well rounded and full sounding Strat tone.

Pull up the coil tap on the humbucker in this mixed position and the sound is thinner and slightly brighter with less middle body. On its own the split humbucker has a good acoustic edge, very hollow sounding suiting a clean or mildly overdriven amp.

Theme And Variation

The neck and middle pickup continue the hollow Strat character, the neck pickup lacking a little body I felt, verging on the kind of EQ you'd give a Strat to make it thinner more brittle sounding.

In the mixed pickup positions the guitar is less susceptible to extraneous hum pickup (indicating a reverse wound reversed

polarity middle pickup), but on their own the single coils can be very noisy.

Sustain is quite average, typically Fendery with a big attack – rather than the smooth Gibson sustain – which for the most part suits Funky clipped lines rather than gutsy soloing. I felt happiest with a cleaner amp tone, the guitar was a little bright to achieve really smooth overdrive without using auxiliary EQ.

Overall the tremolo performed well, not quite as effective as a double locking system but less hassle. There was plenty of up and down travel too. My only criticism lay in the intonation set up which was rather sharp, consequently higher chords sounded well out of tune.

Conclusions

The active circuitry in the Coronet is excellent but does this versatility suit the guitar? Placed on a Les Paul type solid I'm quite sure the guitar would be more successful. If Epiphone want to re-launch the Coronet I wish they'd do it in one of its

original forms.

However, styling aside, the Coronet remains an interesting and very playable, quality guitar with a really excellent tone.

By comparison the 635 is rather dull. It's reasonably made but I don't rate the pickup system as highly as Epiphone do although it offers some nice bright Strat type tones.

However, like the Coronet it's very playable and quite stylish but there is little to make this guitar stand out from the competition provided by Hohner, Washburn, Aria and many, many others.

Dave Burrluck

AT A GLANCE

Dimensions in mm unless stated

	CORONET	636
Scale length	24.75"	25.5"
Width of neck at nut	44	44
...at 12th fret	53	53
Depth of neck at 1st fret	20	20
...at 12th fret	22	22
String spacing at nut	36.5	35
...at bridge	52.5	54
Action as supplied		
...at 12th fret treb	1.5	2.0
...at 12th fret bass	1.5	2.0
Weight (Approx)	7.75lbs	8.5lbs

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Godin L.R. Baggs Acoustibass
RRP: £629



GODIN'S L.R. BAGGS ACOUSTICASTER, RELEASED ON the unsuspecting UK market in the Autumn of 1989, has to be one of the more interesting electro-acoustics yet produced. Shaped like a Telecaster the small, hollow bodied guitar with the combination of it's L.R. Baggs pickup, internal harp and three band graphic EQ produces a wide range of acoustic and semi-acoustic tones when amplified. Relatively unworried by feedback – certainly in comparison to something like an Ovation – the Acousticaster has already found favour with top names that include MARK KNOPFLER, CHET ATKINS, BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, JACKSON BROWN – who played one at the Mandela concert – and ERIC CLAPTON.

The bass version – entitled the Acoustibass – offers pretty much the same thing although it wasn't as easy as Godin thought to produce, taking another year before it was ready for release. Godin rightly believed previous acoustic electric basses to be unsuccessful with their unmanageable big bodies and notorious dead spot problems. Godin doesn't intend for the Acoustibass to replace the Jazz or Precision but to offer a more acoustic sounding option when amplified, yet with the playability of a standard electric bass.

Construction

Outwardly it looks like a solid bodied instrument with a body depth of only 44 mm yet like the Acousticaster it's a hollow bodied construction. The back and sides are formed from a solid lump of light Maple which is machined out, then capped with a Spruce top leaving an instrument that's approximately 80% hollow.

Unlike the Acousticaster I couldn't detect any internal back bracing although there are some fan struts that splay out from the front of the bridge on the underside of the Spruce top. A large transverse brace is placed directly under the bridge which has the dual purpose of strengthening the top as well as forming the basis of the Acoustibass's secret weapon – the internal harp!

In my first review of the Acousticaster this harp wasn't mentioned – no-one told me about it! It was only after speaking to Robert Godin that he explained the principle of this harp. Attached to this transverse brace are a number of protruding rods that sympathetically vibrate when a string is voiced creating more bass response and a 'bigger' sound.

The Acousticaster and Acoustibass function on the same principles that apply to an standard acoustic instrument: a string is plucked, the top vibrates to create the tone and volume. Obviously the size of the 'box' or the instruments body greatly affects the acoustic tone and volume. With such a small acoustic space on these guitars the internal harp is necessary to create more vibrational energy that apparently fools the guitars top into acting like the top on a larger bodied acoustic.

Using an inspection lamp inserted under the control plate and peering through the hole left with the jack socket plate removed you can clearly see this harp. Godin originally stated that these rods were wood. On this bass however I counted eight rods apparently from a

smaller section metal. Also because the bridge is placed so close to the base of the body the rods protrude from the bridge towards the neck – the reverse of the Acousticaster.

The outward shape of the bass is not dissimilar in proportion to a Precision or Telecaster bass with the even, lower bouts while the horns are offset. The smaller treble side horn is not as rounded as its Fender counterpart and there is only a very small ribcage contour on the back of the body. A strip of dark Rosewood runs parallel to the low E string giving a wide thumb rest for fingerstyle playing.

A problem with the Acousticaster was one of balance; with the proportion of a solid body design the hollow body nature of these guitars means that the balance is very top heavy. This bass is no exception, certainly strapped on the bass's neck takes a floorward drive unless you support it with either your left hand or your right forearm. If anything the bass is more manageable than the guitar as typically you'd rest your right forearm on the basses body anyway.

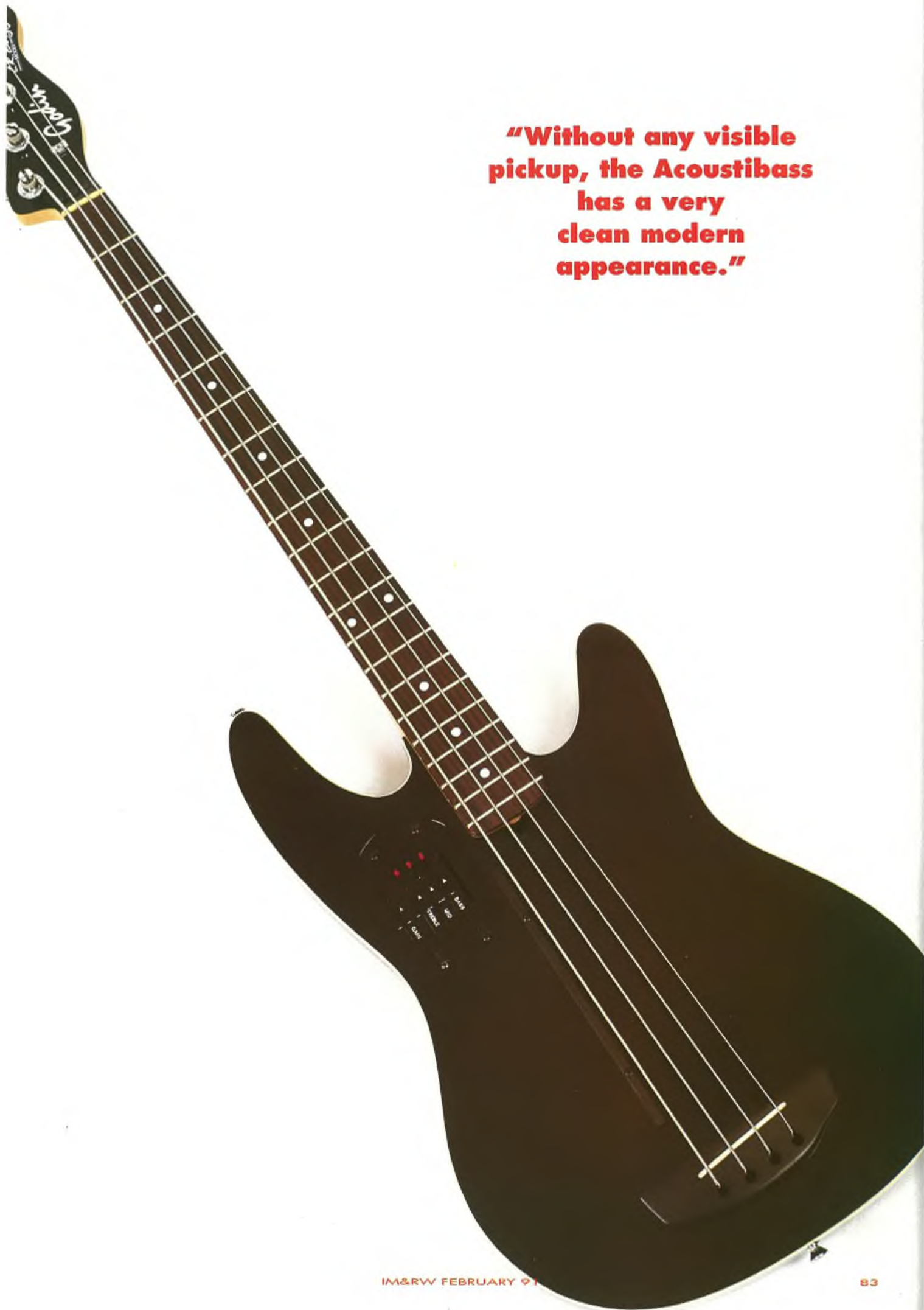
Finishing

My sample was finished in an opaque black lacquer and to a very high standard. There's a single cream binding around the top edge with just a small radius back edge. A Mahogany bodied/Spruce topped version is available with a slight darker tone which is offered in a clear lacquer. Two neck formats are available – Jazz and Precision widths – either fretted or fretless. The fretless version features an Ebony fingerboard as opposed to the Indian Rosewood board fitted here and costs an extra £20 on the quoted price. The bolt-on neck is secured to the body in the time honoured fashion of four screws through a chromed neck plate. Like every other constructional element of this bass the neck joint is very tidy and no movement was apparent. However the curvature of the neck starts a little way from the heel – which I think is unnecessary – leaving a square edge to the top portion of the neck.

Made from Eastern Hard Rock Maple the neck on my sample had a 38mm Jazz nut width – presumably the Precision width would be greater at around 44.5mm. In depth though it's not the slimmest Jazz bass type neck I've ever encountered, it could lose a couple of millimetres to be in line with a more modern design. Generally there's a deep rounded section that's nicely shaped yet could be considered a little unnecessarily bulky. Mind you the thin satin finish is quite appealing and although the neck section maybe a little oversized its comfortable and very playable nonetheless.

In keeping with Godin's preoccupation with the Telecaster the basses headstock follows that of Fender Telecaster bass, with a rounded and quite slim outer cheek. Of course the machineheads are placed in a line on the bass side of the head while the head is typically Fender in the way it lies parallel to the fretboard. To create sufficient behind the nut angle a single, pressed metal string retainer holds the top G and D strings to the front of the black backed headstock. It actually causes

“...a more acoustic sounding option with the playability of a standard electric bass.”



"Without any visible pickup, the Acoustibass has a very clean modern appearance."

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these strings to hitch a little, which did cause a couple of minor tuning problems, yet insures a good sustaining open string.

The Rosewood fingerboard is simply decorated with pearl-like position dots while 20 medium gauge (approx 2.2mm) frets are neatly installed and well polished with smooth ends – all in all a very professional job. As with the Acousticaster the truss rod adjustment point is at the bottom of the neck, easily accessed without having to slacken off strings or remove cover plates.

When I reviewed the Acousticaster I was quite critical of the acoustic type bridge which offers only a compromise in specific string intonation. The bridge fitted here is again based on an acoustic flat top design and has the similar single piece hard plastic saddle behind which are the keyhole shaped string anchorage points. Overall the intonation is actually quite good the G and D strings are intune right up the neck though the A and E strings aren't so accurate, the low E is noticeably sharp when comparing the fretted note at the 12th fret with the 12th fret harmonic.

A set of Grover, large buttoned and open geared machines are used, not perhaps the most obvious choice. I'd have thought the smaller Schaller M4s would not only be a little lighter – which would help with the balance – but also have a slightly more precise movement. These heads certainly do the job though don't seem quite as precise as they could be, not helped by the occasional string hitching caused by the string retainer.

The Electronics

Without any visible pickup, the Acousticbass has a very clean modern appearance. The pickup is fitted under the saddle and consists of three piezo elements per string, each separately amplified before passing to the three band EQ and master volume control. This L.R Baggs systems is again very similar to that fitted on the Acousticaster, the steel control plate with its five slots not only house the EQ and volume slider controls but also act as the instruments only soundhole. Power for the active circuitry comes from a single PP3 battery housed under the control plate and the output jack is securely mounted to a chromed metal plate on the side of the bass.

Sounds And Playability

Firstly the acoustic sound of this bass is surprisingly loud, typically with a middle range emphasis and quite a respectable twang! It's obviously not as loud as a full acoustic bass

would be but then neither is it as quiet as a solidbody, it's plenty loud enough for good practice sessions without needing any amp though not loud enough for a busking session with other acoustic instruments.

Plugged via a DI box into a mixing desk the quality of sound is immediately apparent. With the EQ's in their centre positions the bass sounds bright and bell-like with a good low bass representation. There's a strong mid-range element to the tone, both the higher and lower frequencies are softer by comparison.

The sustain is interesting in that there's a lot of front end volume yet the notes decay is a little quieter though with a healthy ring. There's plenty of life to the tone, not a dull thud that conjures up thoughts of old semi-acoustic basses. Certainly the character of the tone is very acoustic sounding.

I couldn't detect any particularly soft or dead notes and although the overall volume between strings seemed matched the richness of tone does tail off on the G string, fretted up

"It's not an essential buy yet like the fretless bass offers different possibilities..."

the board and the low E string is prone to sounding a little dull up the neck as well. It's very dynamic too; a wide range of different volumes can be easily achieved. On the negative side the bass can become a little microphonic and feedback, though a lot better than a standard hollow body or even semi-acoustic bass, could be a problem if you plugged this into a loud bass stack.

The treble EQ sounds quite high; matching it with a graphic EQ I obtained similar tone with a 10kHz peak. Soundwise it adds a nice crispness to the very top (and also increasing string handling noise) and when cut provides a duller older string sound that is still clear and unclouded. I couldn't pin down the midrange boost so easily it gives a good attack and boosts a certain piano like quality into the basses top end. When reduced it gives a far softer, more double bass like tone, especially when combined with the treble reduction. The low bass EQ would seem centred around 80-100Hz, perhaps slightly lower, giving a low end warm-

th or cut. Personally I missed a bit of lower middle boost around 250kHz which, when introduced from the desk, gave bite and warmth inbetween the middle and bass boosts offered here.

As far as applications go this isn't the ultimate Rock bass. The acoustic character leads it towards more perhaps Country/Rootsy applications or anything where a more controlled double bass tone is required. At times the clean piezo tones reminded me of the Ashbory bass, at others – especially when played next to the bridge – there's a Jazz bass-type growl that with some outboard compression sounded a little more like a solidbody. It's a very quiet instrument, obviously not affected by RF or low cycle hum and the EQ, even with the treble on full adds only a barely noticeable hiss. It's an excellent instrument to D.I., an environment it seems well suited to.

Conclusions

In short this is a very playable, well made and good sounding bass with a real acoustic flavour. The EQ is versatile offering a wide range of tones that to my ears all have a particular acoustic and semi-acoustic character. It's not an essential buy yet like the fretless bass offers different possibilities, this Acousticbass gives a different range of tones. It's not the easiest bass to play, the light weight and unbalance do take some getting used to but its main strength lies simply in the sound – so long as you can find a use for it!

Dave Burrluck

AT A GLANCE	
Dimensions in mm unless stated	
Scale length	34"
Width of neck at nut	38
...at 12th fret	56
Depth of neck at 1st fret	22
...at 12th fret	25
String spacing at nut	30
...at bridge	58
Action as supplied	
...at 12th fret treb	2.8
...at 12th fret bass	3.0
Weight (Approx)	7lbs

Further info: Zildjian
Tel: (0344) 872262

SOLDANO & ART PREAMP

Soldano Series II SP-77 and Art 'Power Plant' preamps
RRP: £695 and £289 respectively

THIS IS NOT MEANT AS A COMPARATIVE CHECK between these two rack preamps – simply that there's so much rack product on the market that it seems to be the only way to catch up! On paper at least these two products – intended to do the same job – could not be more different in design, style, price or resulting sound!

SOLDANO SP-77

Correctly termed a 'Series II' model this is a Japanese made version of the very expensive American-built Soldano SLO 100W head and Trimode preamp (£2,075 each). MIKE SOLDANO has gained something of a reputation in the States for 'getting the Sound', his heads and preamps mix a Fender/Boogie preamp tone with more of a Marshall-type power amp creating a very sought after hybrid. Thankfully his Japanese sales agents suggested something a mite cheaper, but still with the same sound and 'Hey Presto!' the SP-77 was conceived!

Mind you, pulling this preamp from its box one's first question is perhaps 'of what tittle does Mr Soldano partake?'. The 2-U high 19" rack has a light purple (yes, I mean purple!) brushed aluminium fascia which didn't remind me of anything except the kind of satin trousers THE OSMONDS used to wear!

Powering up the unit via a standard plug-in kettle type lead doesn't do anything to persuade me that Mr Soldano wasn't interfered with at an early age by an extra from *Star Trek*. The mains switch is a large chromed toggle, the mains indicator an almost turquoise coloured 'jewel' bulb that looks like it's dropped off a pantomime turban. The white, screen printed logo and control labels are clear and bold yet the two rows of five controls have rather large grey plastic control knobs (quite possibly the extra from *Star Trek* brought with him a box from props marked 'Space Age Knobs', leaving them with the impressionable youngster when he realised his mistake!).

However the valve preamp uses four Chinese 12AX7A valves to run the two unnamed channels. The upper row of knobs – preamp gain, bass, middle, treble and Output Level are the cleaner of the two channels, whilst the lower controls, which have the same function as those above, affect the dirtier channel. There's a single front mounted input jack, whilst a small toggle 'bright' switch completes the front tone functions. To change channels (and watch the green and red status indicators clash with the purple fascia) you need an (unsupplied) footswitch

– there's no manual switch to achieve this – otherwise you're stuck on the dirty channel.

Apart from twin outputs and a fuse holder that's it! There's no FX loop as Soldano believes most players who'd use the unit would prefer a parallel split via a mixer into as many effects as desired – the way the pro's do it – rather than the sonically less successful serial linkage that a loop would give. Fair point, but until you get your rack mixer, you can only link up effects after the output of this preamp and before your chosen power amp. Personally I'd have thought an FX loop would be an advantage for those of us who haven't quite got to our rack mixers yet.

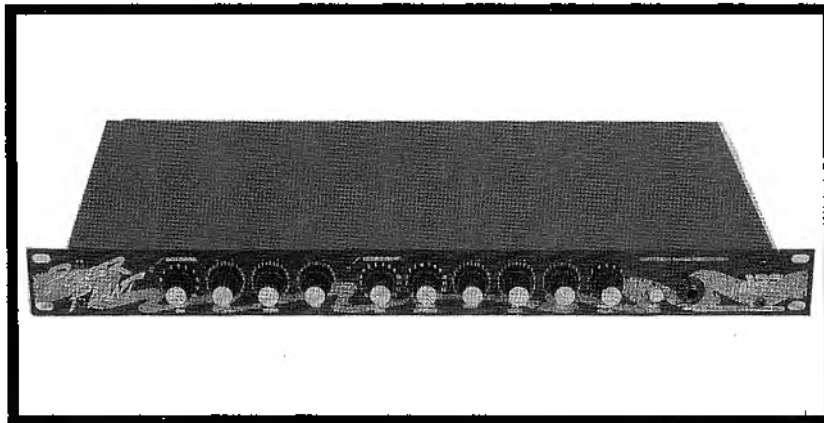
ART 'POWER PLANT'

From the distinctly *Twilight Zone*'d Soldano, ART's single rack height Power Plant preamp is refreshingly normal. Mind you ART are dab hands with the bright pink and grey graphics on the black metal cased rack. This very state-of-the-ART design does make some of the control labels illegible, plus – with the exception of the clean/distortion channel labels – all this important information is under the quite large control knobs. In lower onstage lighting you can't see a bloomin' thing!

The 10 controls are unfairly split; four for the clean channel – input gain, low, mid voicing and high – with six controls, harmonic superdrive (*presence*), thrust (*bass*), mid voicing, edge (*treble*) and Master Volume for the overdrive

channel. Perhaps rather strangely there's no overall master volume, always a disadvantage if you've achieved the correct balance between channels, but just want to increase or decrease the overall output level.

The rear connections are extremely versatile, another 1/4" jack input, two instrument level outputs for hookup to the front end of a guitar amp, a mono low impedance FX loop, remote footswitch input for channel switching and three equalised outputs; two low, 600 ohm impedance balanced outputs - XLR and jack with the latter doubling as a headphone output. Specifically for these two outputs is a dual power output switch -10dB or +4dB – depending on your requirements. There's one equalised output for power amp connection, either a mono jack can be connected or a stereo jack, splitting the single to connect the preamp to both sides of a stereo power amp. These 'equalised' outputs use ART's special ACM circuitry (*Amp-Cabinet-Microphone simulation circuitry*) which adds a great deal of realism to the DI'd tones. There's also the self-explanatory clean channel EQ bypass if auxiliary



ART 'Power Plant' preamp

EQ is preferred (*i.e. with a guitar combo*).

I set both racks up with a loop selector – so I could switch between the preamps without replugging – into the power amp of a Hughes and Kettner ATS combo and, as well as using the internal speaker, I plugged the whole set up through a Palmer Speaker Simulator into a studio desk. Selecting the clean channel on the ART revealed, with the EQs flat, an even, fairly average tone, quite uncoloured and well balanced. The EQ on this clean channel has quite a wide range from low bass and warm midrange through to not too high treble. In fact the treble boost is centred around 4kHz which gives quite an old style boost, especially nice for Strat-type guitar tones.

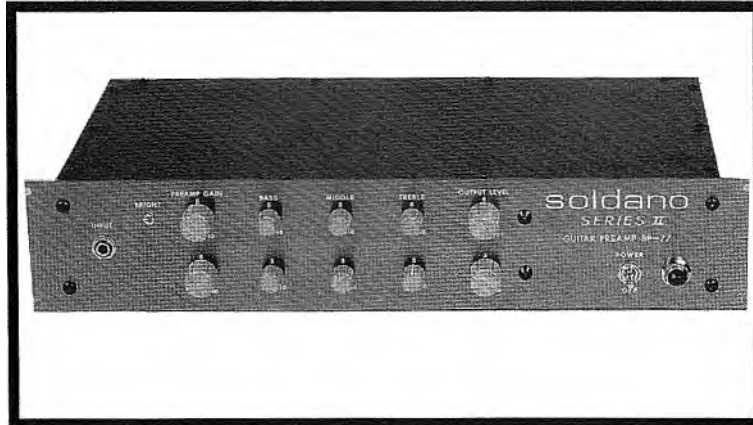
I don't think any distortion should be possible from the clean channel though in the described set up – perhaps I was overloading the power amp input – I did achieve some mild quite usable distortion with the input gain full up. However when repeating the test with a Gallien Krueger power amp the tone remained clean right up full. The EQ'd (ACM) output gave a good, though a little hard, tone that's very usable straight into the desk. I didn't expect it to be as good as the tone from the Palmer but it's perfectly reasonable and vastly better than an un-EQ'd DI output.

Do It Clean

Switching over to the clean channel of the Soldano, with the input gain around half and the EQ's on '5', I immediately achieved a warm rich vintage tone that certainly had a Fender character with a lot of body. The treble EQ adds an urgent brightness though it's not hard, whilst the middle control is similar to the ART adding or subtracting warmth. The bass EQ is more subtle attacking the real low end of the tone. That bright boost produces a crisper tone which, if used with too much treble EQ upsets the balance of the tone, but it's a handy option to have.

Unlike the ART, the Soldano is supposed to distort with the input gain full up and this produced, with the Hughes and Kettner cranked up, one of my favourite tones – a really cookin' Fender tone full of sustain, with a depth to the subtle distortion. A great preamp for R'n'B!

With the input gain at its lowest there's a very mild distortion on the ART, not really usable as the master volume is so high the rack becomes very noisy. With a medium raunch setting the unit sounds more at home, again the EQ range is wide. Thrust and mid shaping are especially important for tailoring the lower portions of the distorted tones. However the



Soldano Series II SP-77

overall character of the ART's distortion sounded a little too synthetic for my liking. It's also rather undynamic and all too quickly the input gain and Harmonic Superdrive takes us to Buzz Saw City!

However, whilst the unit doesn't react like a valve amp does to subtle guitar volume changes, the range of distortions is wide and the processed sound seemed quite suited to a harder, tight metal tone.

Dirty Cash

The Soldano further illustrates why it's so expensive in the dirty channel, where the tone changes towards a more fizzy Marshall character. Even at full input gain there's a creamy warmth to the sound that instantly reacts to the subtleties of the guitar's dynamics. Some of the less distorted tones sounded a bit brittle, yet the cleaner tones on this channel have a real early British tone – jangle with a little edge. If I have to be critical I felt the more distorted tones lacked a little of the clean channel's character although I'm sure both amps would benefit from a valve power amp cranked up high!

One of my favourite preamps as far as tone versus price is concerned is Marshall's 9004 which I hooked into my test rig specifically to compare with the ART. While I found the ART's clean tone had a bit more presence than the Marshall, though it was tonally quite similar, the distortion tones on the Marshall sounded a bit more natural. Of course the ART boasts a few more output

specifications but in terms of sound it's arguably little better than the 9004 which is half the price!

Conclusions

Tonally the Soldano sounded pretty good throughout, perhaps the cleaner tones being the most special. Generally I heard a good range of vintage tones – it was hard to get a duff tone from the preamp – and there's no doubt this is a quality sounding unit. However taking a peek inside the unit reveals just the mains transformer, small circuit board and four small tubes looking lost in the spacious large box. Totting up the valves plus the estimated production costs I really feel the Soldano is way too expensive, especially because it lacks any kind of user refinements.

The ART is one of those comprehensive packages that appears to have everything yet falls down on the fundamental distortion tone which is passable though not exceptional. I'd use this preamp for more heavily processed and treated tones where dynamics and vintage flavours weren't as necessary. Pricewise it seems fair especially with the output options and overall quality feel, yet for practical use, not to mention value for money, it has little to offer over Marshall's 9004, a very hard act to follow.

Dave Burrluck

AT A GLANCE

SOLDANO SP-77 PREAMP

TYPE: All valve, 2-U high, twin channel rack preamp

FEATURES: Footswitch only split channel with separate EQ. Mains power only. Footswitch not supplied.

Further info: Chandler Guitars

Tel: 081 - 940 5874

ART 'POWER PLANT' PREAMP

TYPE: Solid state, single rack, twin channel preamp.

FEATURES: Switchable channel – via front panel or footswitch – each with good EQ. Single FX loop balanced XLR and jack headphone outputs plus instrument level outputs. Footswitch not supplied.

Further info: Harman UK

Tel: (0753) 76911

PEARCE BASS AMP

Pearce B2p Bass Head
RRP: £1,100

SOME TIME AGO I REVIEWED A GUITAR COMBO from the American company Pearce and came away very impressed. Not only did it sound very good but the thought that had gone into the design made its mark too. I greeted the opportunity to look at a bass unit from Pearce with the proverbial 'eager anticipation' hoping that the thoughtful design would be replicated.

The B2p head duly arrived and I needn't have worried. Indeed the format and layout is very similar to the guitar version and knowing that this amp is a favourite of BILLY SHEEHAN, I wasn't worried that it would sound anything other than very good.

Other Pearce products include the BC1 bass preamp (£490), the mentioned G2R guitar combo (£1265) and the G2X preamp version that includes the same versatile twin channel operation complete with speaker simulation for £547.

Construction

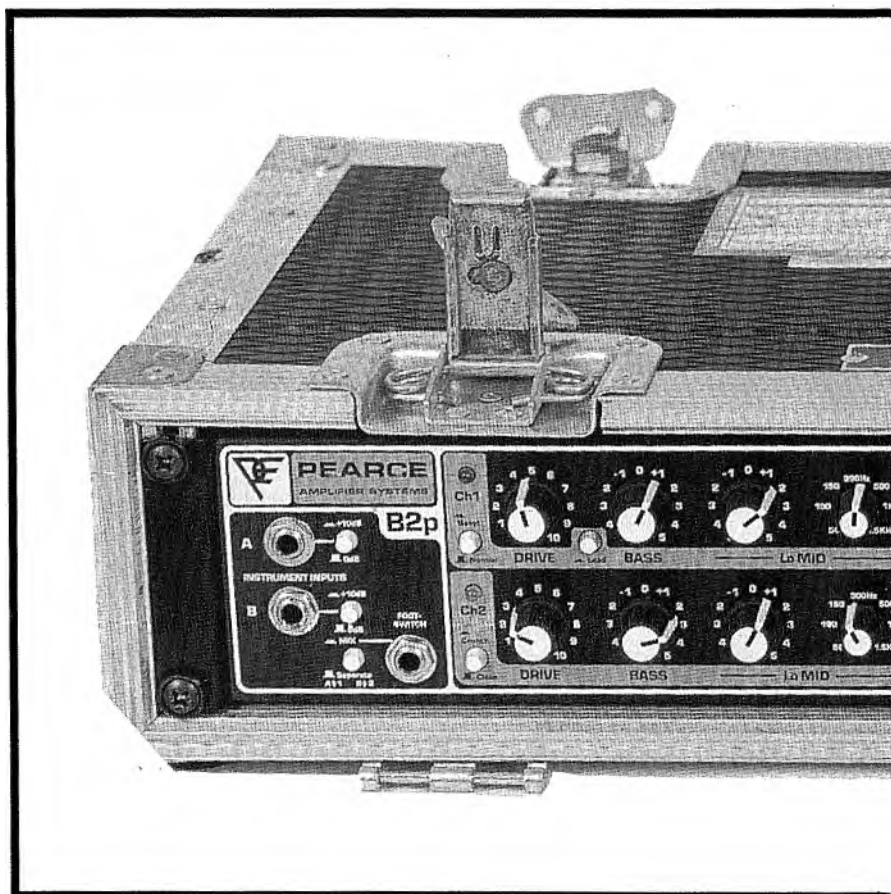
When you read the word 'professional' in any review, it translates to 'costing a lot of money' – only professional musicians can afford one! At £1,100 the B2p is no exception but even if you can't afford it, not only is it nice to dream, but the actual layout of this amp is an example for others to follow.

Basically the 2-U high rack unit is a twin channel amp – two separate 300 watt amplifiers that can be bridged to a whopping 600 watts of mono power. In the usual set up the amp can be used in Bi-amp mode where the two speaker outputs – Hi and Lo Amp – and the back mounted crossover control can be used, for example to send the low end to a 1 x 15" cab and the upper frequencies to a 4 x 10" cab. Indeed this was the set up I used for the test with two XL cabinets supplied by Hartke although Pearce do make cabinets in virtually all combinations. There's a special 1 x 15" with 2 x 8" equipped enclosure designed as a portable cab to accompany this amp. It's built in England and consequently costs a sensible £499.

But the amp is not just designed with its bi-amp mode. The Dual Mono/Stereo mode generates 2 x 300 watts @ 4 ohms but without the crossover facility. A balance control on the amp's front balances between the two mono outputs, as it does for the

Lo and Hi speakers in the bi-amp mode (*obviously to create stereo imaging some kind of stereo effect is necessary*). The third mode is to produce 600 watts @ 4 ohms via a single mono output – a mite loud in anyone's book!

Further options are available in the way you use the dual inputs and twin channels – 1 & 2. With the provided footswitch the most common set up is to use either of the jack inputs (*each switchable between 0db and +10db*) then switch between either channels 1 and 2 or use both simultaneously. In this mode both



The B2p: at £1,100 it's nice to dream!

inputs could be used – for example with a twin output instrument – or by switching the Mix/Separate button to Separate the inputs are dedicated to their respective channels, so two instruments could be amplified using the channel switch for quick onstage changes. Of course without the footswitch these options are still available though both channels remain on

“Although not cheap, you can’t complain that your £1,100 doesn’t give lots of features and with that an enormous amount of potential.”

– there’s no panel switch to select channels.

In terms of control functions both channels appear identical, the top Ch 1 has just one extra push switch. In fact the two channels offer the same EQ - Bass, lo mid and hi mid (*two control parametric*) and treble – but Drive and Volume controls give quite different

switch – Lead – offers a preset EQ that knocks out a little low end from the bass’s input signal to produce a smoother overdrive.

What do you mean distortion, overdrive on a bass rig? Yes, I know it’s not entirely common but numerous players require it especially Americans so Pearce feel it’s a valid inclusion. More on

with such a broad headroom you should be able to achieve a clean tone whatever your bass and at whatever volume you chose, so long as your speakers can take it! Switch to Crunch and a milder overdrive is offered, again introduced by the Drive control.

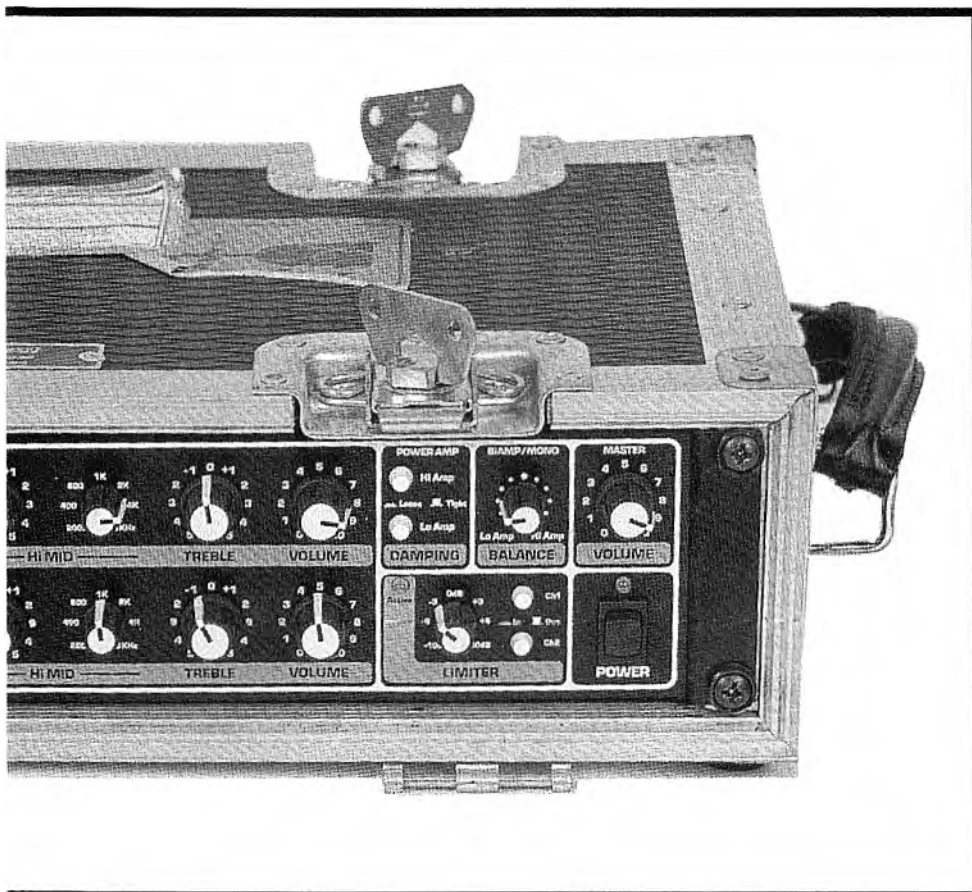
A limiter, assignable to either or both channels is included with a simple single control and an LED indicator to visually check if limiting is occurring. Set negatively the signal is squashed producing more sustain and set positively more standard peak reducing occurs.

Lastly is the power amp damping, which by Pearce’s own admission provides the ‘loose speaker damping usually associated with tube amps’. They also state that the tonal change will be dependant on what type of speakers you’re using. The two switches, one for each Hi and Lo Amp output, offer Tight or Loose sounds – even more to experiment with!

Loop The Loop

Pearce have gone for the ‘every eventuality’ design choice by offering five FX loops! This isn’t as OTT as it sounds; there’s the main or master loop affecting both preamps, then the individual channel loops so that the effect is switched in with the channel selection. An added bonus are the post crossover loops, again designated to the Lo and Hi amp outputs, that in hi-amp mode, for example, could allow you to add modulation effects to just the upper Hi amp output. To create stereo imaging in the dual mono/stereo mode these Post crossover send/returns (*either send could be used if it’s a mono input effect*) should do the job. Although not cheap you can’t complain that your £1,100 doesn’t give lots of features and with that an enormous amount of potential.

Further hookup potential is offered by



performance. Ch 1 is more Rock orientated, with overdrive being easily generated from the Drive control, functioning like a typical preamp gain. A Boost push switch increases the gain and thereby the distortion while that extra

this later!

Even Ch 2, designated the ‘clean channel’, doesn’t escape the overdrive circuitry. However, unlike Ch 1, with the Clean/Crunch switch set to Clean the Drive controls only the input level and

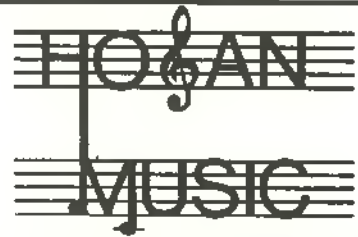


MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

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D12 SPRUCE TOP	£139	SVT15T-100w 1X15 EV'S	£572
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the Hi and Lo preamp outputs – these are ‘post’ (after) the FX loops and the internal crossover so your bi-amp split sound can be pushed through the P.A. or into a desk. For that later purpose a balanced XLR output (‘post’ Ch 1, Ch 2 and the Main FX loops but ‘pre’ for the internal crossover) provides a mono signal which may be more applicable – the choice is yours.

Don’t forget all this – whoops, I nearly forgot to mention the cooling fan – is packed into a 2 U high rack. This is not just a preamp but a totally integrated pre and power amp head. All you need is a cab – you don’t even need that for recording – and you’re off.

Ear Pearce-ing Sounds

Despite the wide amount of set-up options that the Pearce allows in use, once you’ve decided on your speaker arrangements, crossover points and power amp modes, actually getting down and playing the amp is easy, (dare I say a piece of Pearce?). Starting in the clean part of Ch 2 with the EQ’s set flat you’ll immediately hear a broad clean and warm tone that accurately reflects the character of the bass. From this natural tone the EQ allows quite dramatic shaping. The bass concerns itself with the real low stuff (+15 dB @ 30Hz) while the sweepable Lo and Hi mid allow boost or cut from between 50Hz to 1.5kHz and 200Hz to 6kHz and the treble allows shaping at a higher frequency still (7kHz).

Indeed that high treble, especially noticeable with the Hartke cabs – noted for their bright tone – enabled some excellent sounds from virtually acoustic transparent tones to thicker Rock orientated lower middle bites.

Engaging the crunch function on Ch 2, with the Drive on its lower settings, brings in a welcome bite to harden the sound. I felt it needed a thicker EQ to stop the overdrive sounding rather fuzzy. With the drive full up the tone is definitely fuzzy – not a typical bass sound in any way. Using the mix function on the footswitch one channel can be set clean, the other with a little overdrive to produce a thick ‘doubled’ sound from a mono signal.

Ch 1 distorts just by turning up the Drive control. Add the Boost function and more overdrive is activated – again careful EQ’ing is essential to produce usable thumping tones and a negative setting on the limiter is handy here to

smooth out the tone. More valve type crunch tones are only available with low drive settings which proved effective in giving the clean bass tone some ‘live’ edge.

“I wouldn’t like to say it’s better than another professional quality bass head, but it’s certainly deserves consideration alongside the big boys.”

The Lead function low end reduction results in a tighter, more focused, smooth distortion tone presumably for lead and tapped lines with a lot of Drive. Certainly the overdrive functions greatly expand the bassists arsenal and are clearly aimed at the modern American style Rock bassists. More subtle is the power amp damping which in my test set up offered a slightly harder tone on the Loose Hi amp setting while the Loose setting on the 1 x 15” bi-amp’d cab gave a slightly less defined open tone great for inducing ‘the rumble factor’. Conversely the Tight damping in the same bi-amp mode tightened up the low end if that’s what you require.

Conclusions

Using the B2p amp, either DI’d or with the Hartke cabs, to create a versatile range of quality tones was easy. Some kind of speaker simulation would be an added bonus for DI purposes, especially to make the overdrive tones more realistic.

Of course a great many players won’t want overdrive and perhaps wouldn’t consider this amp at all. However the mild drive setting on the thick sounding Ch 1 and the clean sounds on Ch 2 – without the crunch switch engaged – still provide a great amount of tone without using the distortions. Clearly it would be wrong to pigeon-hole this amp for metal bassists only. However, especially perhaps in the UK, a non-overdrive version that

featured just a mild crunch facility on Ch 1, to simulate a heavily driven valve tone, would be a favourable format for this exceptional sounding amp.

Personally I really didn’t think the actual distortion tones were that brilliant, yet there’s little to compare them with. I can’t stress enough that the distortion elements are only one facet of this amp; not only is it tonally versatile it has many set up options, is very well designed, apparently ruggedly constructed and bearing in mind it’s all packed into a 2-U high rack it’s extremely compact!

I wouldn’t like to say it’s better than another professional quality bass head but it certainly deserves consideration alongside the big boys. I can see why so many name players are realising that Pearce have a great deal to offer both for bassists and guitarists alike. A definite contender!

Dave Burrluck

AT A GLANCE

PEARCE B2p BASSHEAD

TYPE: Solid state dual channel head offering either 2 x 300w @ 4ohms or monon 600 watts @ 4ohms

FEATURES: Bi-amp mode with built-in, variable crossover, Dual mono/stereo and mono modes. Twin channels – 1 and 2, each with own EQ. Overdrive facility available on both channels if required. Built in limiter/sustainer. Dual inputs, five FX loops, DI and Preamp outputs all in a 2-U high rack.

FOOT SWITCHABLE FEATURES: Channels (footswitch supplied), either individually or both kon together

Thanks to John Henry for supplying the Hartke XL Series cabs, a 4 x 10” (£760) and a 1 x 15” (£589). A cheaper Transporter Series offers a lighter construction, less power cabs which in the same configurations would cost £510 and £429 respectively.

Further info: John Henry Ents, Tel: 071 609 9181.

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MUSIC THEORY - GETTIN' THE READING THING

This new section will be breaking down some barriers to hopefully make your reading of music a little easier. As time progresses, so hopefully will you, as Viv Lock takes us through many and varied techniques that have become obligatory for the modern guitarist – starting with the real basics....

FOR MANY GUITARISTS READING MUSIC CAN BE frustrating as well as demoralising – we've all been through it, trying to find what notes are on the staff then trying to find those notes on the fretboard and then trying to fit this to what the rhythmic phrasing is doing, phew! At this stage the music goes back into the cupboard, your amplifier is turned up to number 11 and you blast your speaker inside out with your favourite licks. Frustrating eh!

So why bother reading music? Some of the reasons for reading music are that you may be after a piece of music that could be quite obscure – some Jazz standards, Classical, Rock, Funk whatever – and the music may only be written in notation form. Another reason for reading is that if you intend to turn professional you may find it an added bonus for earning power. I'd like to point out at this stage that reading music is not the be and end all – as we are well aware there are many superb players who do not read well if at all. Right lets start with the notation values, Fig 1.

Most of the notation in Fig 1 you would probably be using when starting to read music. It is more than likely you would only be using notes to the value of crotchet beats, quaver beats and semi-quaver beats. In Fig 2 a staff is shown with notation. As well as learning the notes on the staff, try spending some time on the notation above and below the staff (*i.e.* ledger lines).

In the above diagrams – both the notation on the staff, and the ledger line examples – you will notice on the TAB the various fret positions on each string for the particular notes (*normally the fret positions on the TAB when stacked as above would indicate a chord*).

Tablature

Tablature within contemporary music has become more and more of a standard feature in guitar tuition books. Firstly Fig 3 will explain how it works for those who are not familiar with its use.

The advantage/disadvantage with TAB is that it shows exactly what fret on the guitar to play, and yet if you are not familiar with the rhythmic phrasing of notation above, on the staff, you will find that the piece of music will not sound as fluent as it should, unless you already know the piece of music. In the section below I will explain how to use rhythmic phrasing.

Understanding Rhythm

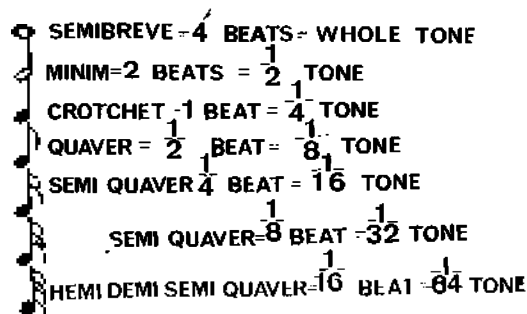
Every piece of music played, whether a guitar, bass, drums, keyboards, or whatever, will have some form of rhythmic phrasing within the notation. If at present your soloing skills are fairly basic, you will soon come to realise that it's a bit more than actually just playing notes on the fretboard at random without thinking of some kind of rhythmical phrasing. In Fig 4 I have given some examples of how to count crotchet beats, quavers and semi-quavers.

On the first diagram the crotchets are counted 1,2,3,4 (4 beats to each bar).

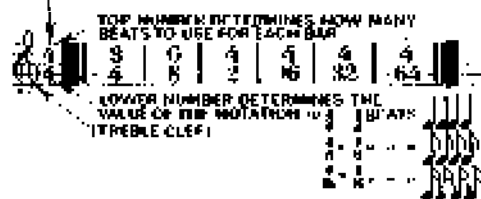
The second diagram is using quavers which are counted 1+, 2+,3+,4+ (the + is spoken as 'and'), still 4 beats to each bar. Finally the last diagram shows grouped semi-quavers this is counted 1e+a, 2e+a, 3e+a, 4e+a – also 4 beats to a bar. If you are not familiar with counting rhythms, start slowly until you feel more confident about speeding things up. It would be a good idea

Fig 1: Notation & Time Signatures

NOTATION VALUE



TIME SIGNATURE



Chord Construction

to use a metronome or a click track (*i.e. drum machine*). Even if the notation in the above diagrams had rests it would still be counted exactly the same.

Using this method of counting the beat in rhythmical form should make it easier when reading from TAB. Also, out of interest, the more you develop your skills at reading rhythm the more you will develop these structures within your own soloing. I have only used crotchets, quavers and semi-quavers for the above examples just to give some idea of counting the rhythm – if you want to study further on this I would suggest investing in a drum tutor book (*no matter what instrument you aspire to – the rhythm is the important thing*), which would include a vast selection of rhythm exercises ranging from crotchets to triplets.

Understanding The Fretboard

Finally, here are some tips to help you understand your fretboard a little better. The six strings on a guitar are (*normally*) named E, A, D, G, B, E (*from thickest string to thinnest*). Once you have learned the names of these strings you have also learned the notes at the 12th fret which are exactly the same but one octave higher (*8 notes above the root note*).

If for example you learn the fret names on the bottom E string (*thickest*) you have also learned the fret names on the top E string although they are two octaves higher. So with the art of elimination this leaves us with four strings A, D, G, B.

If you were to place your finger on the first fret on the bottom E string (*F note*) and then place a finger on third fret on the D string the note is exactly the same although one octave higher. So in theory if you know the fret names on the bottom E string you could create some kind of picture pattern to help you find fret names on other strings (*if you use this method to hold down a fret on the bottom E string, the note/fret on the D string must be two frets higher than the note on the bottom E string*).

That now leaves us with the A, G, and B. If you now learn the fret names for the A string you can use exactly the same method to find the fret names for the G string as we used to find the D string from the E string. This will just leave the frets on the B string to be learned.

This method may help, it may save some time in trying to learn the fret names on the guitar. When you first start reading music it may seem a little daunting and yet with practise and study it should become fairly straightforward. In reality it is a language that with effort can become more fluent.

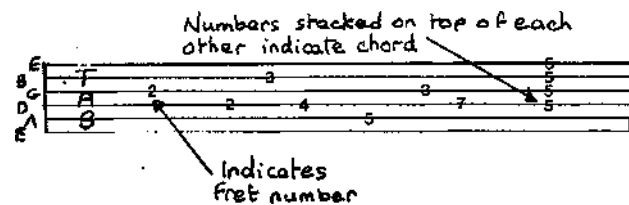
As you can see by breaking everything down it does make it look a lot easier so it may be worth spending some time on developing some of the examples.

A good idea is to work out what your strengths and weaknesses are and try to spend some time on balancing them out. It would be a good idea to buy a rudiments of music book (*musicians dictionary*) to understand notation values, rests and basic harmony, etc.

Fig 2: Fretboard positions



Fig 3: Tablature



Any chord which is played, whether a Cmaj or a Cmaj7b5 will have gone through a process of construction using intervals (*distance in pitch from one note to another*). For most of us the easy way of learning chords is through picture patterns (*ie identifying chord shapes on the guitar*) which in theory is a good way of setting yourself up with a good chord vocabulary.

When we decide to start learning the guitar, for most of us, chords in the first position are the ones we usually tackle, *ie. chords like C, E, G, Am, etc. with the odd barre chord thrown in for good measure*. These first 'position' chords are quite easy, mainly due to the fact that the 'picture pattern' shapes are easy to remember plus the fingering isn't too difficult. As your chord vocabulary progresses and the chords are sounding more weird and wonderful you may find trying to retain all these chord shapes/voicings quite a task unless you are using them regularly (*ie within a band or recording situation*).

The Major Chord Families

What I would suggest is, when you have a good grounding in chords (*for example, major chords, minor chords, minor 7th chords, dominant chords which include chords like C7, C9, C7b5, etc.*) is to start building your own chords. This method I'm sure you will find a lot easier than sitting down for hours on end trying to learn new chord shapes.

For example if you were to build a chord of Cmaj it would look like this C, E, G, C = Cmaj. If you were to build a chord of Cminor it would look like this C, Eb, G, C = Cminor. To get more of an idea the diagram below should make it more clear.

Fig 5 may look a little complex and yet with some study you will realise how easy it is. Above, are two octaves from C to C. As you can see the notes run in semi-tones, *ie. C, C#, D, etc.* Each note has a name (*interval name*) root, min2nd, maj2nd, etc. The example of chords I have given in the above diagram are Cmajor = C (*root*), E (*maj3rd*), G (*perfect 5th*) and C (*octave*) and then the chord of Cminor = C (*root*), Eb (*min3rd*), G (*perfect 5th*) and C (*octave*) and finally the chord of C7 = C (*root*), E (*maj3rd*), Bb (*dominant 7th*) and C (*octave*).

What I would suggest for the time being is to start with the root note and build your chord upwards, so that you can grasp the theory behind this method.

Major Chords

The chord families we will be looking at are Major, Minor, and Dominant – the three largest of the chord families.

Chords in the MAJOR family include:-

Cmaj = C (*root*), E (*maj3rd*), G (*perfect 5th*) and C (*octave*).

C6 = C (*root*), E (*maj3rd*), G (*perfect 5th*) and A (*6th*).

Cmaj7 = C (*root*), E (*maj3rd*), G (*perfect 5th*) and B (*maj7th*).

Cmaj9 = C (*root*), E (*maj3rd*), B (*maj7th*) and D (*9th*).

Fig 4 Crotchets, quavers and semi-quavers

(NB. All major chords must have a maj3rd within its construction).

Minor Chords

The MINOR family includes chords like:-

Cminor = C (root), Eb (min3rd), G (perfect 5th) and C (octave).

Cmin7th = C (root), Eb (min3rd), Bb (dominant 7th) and C (octave).

Cmin9 = C (root), Eb (min3rd), Bb (dominant 7th) and D (9th).

(NB. All minor chords must have a min3rd within its construction).

Dominant Chords

Finally the DOMINANT family:-

C7 = C (root), E (maj3rd), Bb (dom7th) and C (octave).

C9 = C (root), E (maj3rd), Bb (dom7th) and D (9th).

C13 = C(root), Bb (dom7th), E (maj3rd/10th) and A (13th).

The Dominant family has the largest selection of chords giving you more of a Jazzy/Bluesy sound. All dominant chords must

Fig 5: Chord Construction

have a dominant 7th within its construction.

Augmented and Diminished Chords

For Augmented chords all you have to do is take a Major or Dominant chord and add a sharp 5. For a Diminished chord use a minor 3rd and a flat 5 (ie C (root), F# (b5th), A (6th) and Eb (min3rd)).

All the above chord examples are for C related chords. If you wanted, for example, another chord like G you would use the same method of theory, (ie G, G#, A, Bb, B, C, C#, D, Eb, E, F, F# and G). Start with the first octave of notes and start with smaller chords to get used to this system.

Have fun and good luck.

Viw Lock

Riff Of The Month

This month's riff is a classic by THE POLICE, and is the opening and chorus riff from *Message In A Bottle*. The guitar riff is played over the chord structure of Cminor7, then A major followed by B7 and finally F#minor7. To give the chords an extra melodic sense the chords have added 9ths. The first staff contains the main riff and the second staff contains the studio overdub, ie second guitar. In reality it is adding thirds to give added harmony. Some ideas to recreate the sound would be to use a chorus effect, depth turned to 10 and rate to 1 or 2, maybe with a slight delay. For the guitar use the bridge and middle pick-up with a touch of distortion.

NEEDLE TIME

ALBUM REVIEWS



RAINBOW, *Live In Germany 1976* THE CONNOISSEUR COLLECTION

I know flares are back in fashion, but if you take a look at the inner sides of this gatefold album, you'll see flares like you just wouldn't believe! And not just flares, but platform boots the size of Waterloo station! These guys really knew how dress to impress. Based on the first tour by the, then, RITCHIE BLACKMORE'S RAINBOW, this double album contains a lot of previously unused material from the tour, and sees the old timers live in Germany. Featuring what many regard as the best Rainbow line up (Ronnie James Dio on vocals, Cozy Powell on drums, Jimmy Bain on bass, Tony Carey on keyboards, and, of course, The Man in Black on guitar) the collection features classic Rainbow tracks from the time of the *Rainbow Rising* album. There all here, classic stomps like *Kill The King*, ballads like *Catch The Rainbow*, pseudo-classical rock like *Sixteenth Century Greensleeves*, and the old DEEP PURPLE barnstormer *Mistreated*.

A great example of it's genre, it's a collectable album, but I think it will really only appeal to diehard Rainbow fans.

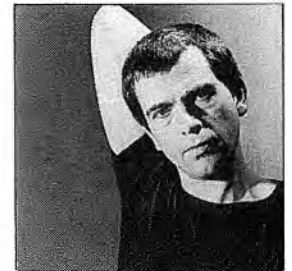
CS

PETER GABRIEL, *Shaking The Tree*, VIRGIN RECORDS

There's a bit too much of *So* (GABRIEL'S super-successful but so-so 1986 solo effort) about this compilation. After all *Sledgehammer* was always just a promo looking for a place to die and *Big Time* its pale imitation. *Don't Give Up* (in concert with the ethereal KATE BUSH) raised a few hairs on the back of my neck (remember the video, oh such passion!) but *Red Rain* is notable by its absence from *Shaking The Tree*.

Nevertheless, Gabriel's post-GENESIS canon shows a depth, intelligence and willingness to experiment wholly lacking from the work of RUTHERFORD and COLLINS in the intervening years. Opener *Solsbury Hill* is a marvelous pseudo-hippy ditty while the apocalyptic brilliance of *Here Comes The Flood* still has the power to make my jaw drop and my eyes look warily skyward. *Games Without Frontiers* makes for a raucous antidote to the slickness of recent efforts and the album climaxes with *Biko* to remind us, if nothing else, of just how crap the SIMPLE MINDS (*Simple Minded*?) version was. After his recent forays into yuppie-fodder 'World Music' its good to be reminded of the Peter Gabriel who cavorted across stage dressed as a sunflower and, rest assured, *Shaking The Tree* will be listened to long after the turkey bones have hit the bottom of the dust-bin and the decos have come down.

NC



STEVE WINWOOD, *Refugee Of The Heart*, VIRGIN RECORDS

WINWOOD'S first album for Virgin sees almost a return-to-the-roots approach by one of the music world's most distinguishable voices. Winwood himself describes his approach to this record as "jazzier, almost like *TRAFFIC*", and in many ways it is (even *ex-Traffic* drummer Jim Capaldi appears here, drumming and co-writing songs). The single release *One And Only Man* is, in my opinion, not the strongest track on the album, and should perhaps not have been released. More immediately commercial and appealing is *Dance With Me*, even if it does sound a little too much like PETER GABRIEL'S *Sledgehammer*.

The album consists of a mixed bag of song styles and lengths, and Winwood has pointed out that he has made no concessions to current trends or tastes in producing this offering (see last month's interview with Steve Winwood in *IM&RW*), and this has resulted in a number of 'mood' passages in some songs that extend their length beyond the normal. This does not detract from the songs themselves, but tends to draw the listener into the song more, by establishing a feel between the artist and the listener. Winwood has also pointed out that he feels the lyrics impart a number of social and moral message in their content, and as a result, careful and contemplative listening is recommended.

Overall, a worthwhile successor to his last album, *Roll With It*, and certainly worth a hearing.

CS

MADONNA, *The Immaculate Collection*, SIRE RECORDS

Along with the controversy surrounding MADONNA'S latest video, this timely compilation album arrived at our offices just in time for the Christmas hypes to begin. Featuring, as it does, some 17 previously released Madonna tracks, along with two new ones, it is reasonable to assume that this will be snapped up by all the 'Wannabees' out there in record buying land.

I must admit to preferring much of Madonna's earlier works, before she became caught up in her own publicity machine's image of herself, and tracks like *Borderline*, *Material Girl*, *Holiday*, and *Like A Virgin* still hold up now. The new tracks are not as promising as I would have liked, but whatever is said, this will be a million seller. Watch for it at the top of the pre- and post- Christmas charts.

CS

Guitar Clinic

This month's Clinic picks up where the last left off, with a look at open tunings from way back when...

PART OF IDENTIFYING OPEN TUNINGS IS knowing the preferences of particular guitarists. Once you know the tuning you're half way home. Many open tunings leave the guitar tuned to a chord, which can be played without using the left hand. When you want to change chord the equivalent of a standard bar chord is played by just simply laying one finger straight across all the frets.

ELMORE JAMES was probably the most direct influence on the British Blues boom. Born in Mississippi he knew ROBERT JOHNSON and along with SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON played the famous Blues shows on radio station KFFA out of Helena, Arkansas. Moving to Chicago in the early '50s he formed one of the first electric combos with his cousin HOMESICK JAMES and pianist JOHNNY JONES.

Elmore's high, intense voice match his piercing treble bottleneck tone, and bands like FLEETWOOD MAC did entire sets consisting of extremely literal covers (which quickly got tiresome). By far the most interesting examples of E-tuned slide guitar are found in the work of the first British group to combine Chicago Blues with what was still called Beat Music and get it into the Top Ten, THE ROLLING STONES.

When the teenage JAGGER and RICHARDS first met BRIAN JONES he was calling himself ELMO LEWIS! If you listen to early Stones singles like *Little Red Rooster* or *I Wanna Be Your Man* it's BRIAN JONES who's making all the running – compare THE BEATLES' *I Wanna Be Your Man* (a throwaway vocal outing for Ringo) with the Stones' version.

Remember that all the examples are in alternate tunings. Check with each artist using the main box for details. **Fig 1** shows Elmore James' best known slide guitar phrase, usually associated with the song *Dust My Broom* (or *I Believe My Time Ain't Long*). Alert readers may have spotted this phrase in last month's Clinic labelled *Shakin' All Over*.

No comment.

Try starting the slide at different places on the 2nd string, allowing time for longer *glissandos*.

Sevastopol??

Sometimes called Sevastopol tuning (named after Sevastopol in Mississippi; or brought to the states by Russian-Jewish immigrants from the Crimea? Anyone know?). Open G is the subtlest of the bottleneck options. With the root note on the 5th string (like *Keef*

you can take off the 6th if you want) and the 1st string tuned to the 5th note in the scale it's harder to use, but much better sounding than the more obvious open E.

Fig 2 shows a classic Blues phrase from *Rollin' and Tumblin'*, it also occurs in countless other Blues numbers and can be played with or without bottleneck. Running from the lowest available G to another G two octaves higher, this neatly defines the main playing area. From the later, post-Brian Jones period comes one of the great Rolling Stones intros *Tumbling Dice* played in open G with no 6th string. It's an aptly named song, the intro kind of staggers in, helped along by two perfectly placed snare beats from CHARLIE WATTS, fractionally behind the beat.

You can play this in standard tuning but you miss the sound of the open strings ringing out – they're audible even when not actually picked. Play it as shown in **Fig 3** then go straight into the song in G. If this doesn't fit with the record use a capo, for example B would need capo at the 4th.

The first British group to combine Chicago Blues with what was still called Beat Music and get it into the Top Ten, THE ROLLING STONES.

Wait A Minute Mr. Postman

ALBERT KING's playing has been the subject of recent clinics though we didn't mention what his tuning was. The best I can tell you is B E B E G# C# – that's a sort of 6th if we take E as the root. I do remember STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN telling me that Albert used a minor 6th, so perhaps that G# should be G natural.

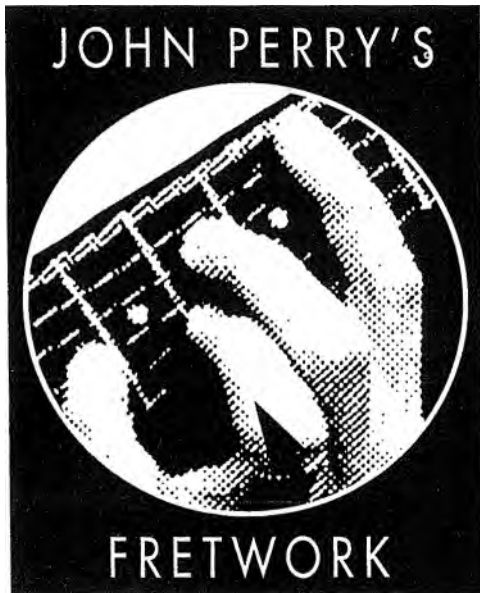
Who knows? Either way it's extraordinary; if you can do anything with it you have my congratulations. Equal doubt applies to the question, 'How did he settle on it?' though one story – probably apocryphal – is that this was how his first guitar arrived through the post from Sears and Roebuck and he never bothered to change it!

Have a word with your mailman.

The tuning DADGAD can be found in the work of the classic group of players who comprised the Great Folk Revival, namely BERT JANSCH, JOHN RENBOURNE and DAVY GRAHAM – it's principally an acoustic tuning.

JOHN MARTYN spent an evening showing me variations on this tuning which has a long history going back centuries into Scottish Folk music. The bottom strings give you a *Pedal* bass which is neither major nor minor, rather like the drones on bagpipes or the sympathetic strings on a sitar, making DADGAD perfect for all those swirling modal numbers straight from the Celtic twilight.

JIMMY PAGE was always an admirer of Bert Jansch, who's



HARMONIC UNDERSTANDING

It will help give your improvisations and soloing the certain something, rather than random nothing...



IT'S VERY EASY WHEN soloing to play a lot of notes. It's harder to play a lot of notes that have any reason to be played. In exactly the same way it's simple to produce a welter of random notes over a given chord sequence, but far harder to produce even a few notes which bear any harmonic relation to the chords.

So what? It all sounds pretty dry and abstract till you try and do it. Take the chord pattern shown here in Fig. 1. You are in the key of C major, running round a common enough progression I-VI-IIIm-V, using the cycle of fourths (A-D-

G), the sort of thing which might crop up in the turnaround section of a Blues.

If you don't know D minor 9 you can play a D minor 7, or take a look at Fig. 2.

| C | A7 | Dmin9 | G7 |

Fig. 1

So You've Got No Idea?

Go ahead and improvise some notes over the top. How many notes did you use? You probably have no idea - neither would I. So let's nick an idea from JOHN COLTRANE, the tenor saxophonist who succeeded BIRD and influenced the whole of Jazz and many Rock guitarists as well.

There are many obvious cops from Coltrane to be found in Rock, the descending intro phrase from THE BYRDS' *So You Wanna Be A Rock*

'n'Roll Star for instance, but just now we'll borrow an idea rather than an actual phrase.

This method has been used through Jazz history as far back as LOUIS ARMSTRONG or BUDDY BOLDEN, but as his improvisations got longer and longer, Coltrane made it his own.

At its simplest, the idea is to take a short phrase of four or five notes and fit it over a changing chord sequence, altering only one note at a time. Doesn't sound so hard does it?

in rudimentary form, we'll use the C major Pentatonic scale. Quick reminder: Penta means 5. Take the C major scale C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C and extract five notes, hence: -

C	D	E	G	A
1	2	3	5	6

The five notes we pick are the Root, the 2nd, the 3rd, the 5th and the 6th. In Country circles

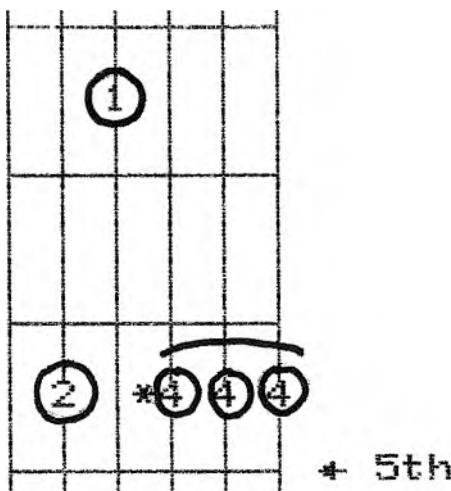


Fig. 2 D minor 9th



Fig. 3

Try it at high speed over a set of complicated changes like the CHARLIE PARKER favourite *Cherokee* and see what happens! (We'll have a bash next month.)

Remember The Pentatonic

Going back to the idea

this is often called the C6 scale.

We'll take the simplest possible phrase out of this scale and work with it, as shown in Fig. 3. If you don't sight-read at all, start on the 2nd string and play frets 1 3 and 5, ending on the 1st string 3rd fret. Count 1 2 3 4 and play one note on each beat. You're playing the



Fig. 4

notes C-D-E-G.

Now the object is to repeat this phrase over the chords shown in Fig. 1, adapting it to acknowledge each chord. If you're a competent player you can adjust this phrase into a respectable lick with a few bends; but for now we'll keep it rigidly simple. So play Fig. 3 phrase over the C chord. Next comes A7.

Accommodation

What are we going to change to accommodate this chord? Simplest would be to raise the C to a C# as shown in Fig. 4 which gives us C#-D-E-G.

So far so good, C and A7 are quite different sounding chords yet we've kept our basic phrase intact with only one of its four

notes changing.

The notes C-D-E-G which represent the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th degrees of the C major scale, have quite different values against the A7 chord (A dominant 7 scale). This runs: -

A	B	C#	D	E	F#	G	A
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

So our phrase in Fig. 4 (with its raised C#) uses the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 7th measures of the scale. Play the two phrases consecutively.

Demonstrating The Theory

A lot of theory to demonstrate so simple a proposition; what's

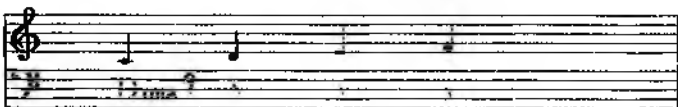


Fig. 5

the point? Once you expand the principle a bit further you can improvise over any sequence and USE THE CHORDS, as opposed to THEM USING YOU!

This represents real mastery of Harmony, and explains why Jazz musicians are so happy improvising over apparently banal show-tunes or Radio 2 fodder as some sceptics call it.

A quick listen to the COLTRANE QUARTET dismembering a number like My Favourite Things over 25 minutes might reduce the scepticism!

The alterations needed to fit the two remaining chords are

Remember these rules represent the framework, the skeleton from which you can improvise outwards.

Wherever you hear a melodic idea you can always stretch a point to include notes from outside any given chord.

Breaking All The Rules

If you ever manage to really master all the harmonic ideas implied, you can throw the rules away and play as atonally as you feel.

This Harmonic understanding is the real difference between



Fig. 6

obvious once you've grasped the idea.

We'll continue...

Next comes the D minor 9 (or D minor 7) which consists of the D minor triad D-F-A with the 7th note C, and the 9th E.

It's easy to alter our phrase to C-D-E-F, as in Fig. 5.

Finally, the G7 chord (it could just as easily be a G13 or a G6 or plain G). There are a number of ways you can bend the phrase around to fit here, according to which chord you select, B-D-E-G for instance would go with G13 or G6, but we'll take the choice in Fig. 6 B-D-E-E

Jazz played by genuinely talented musicians and the Detestable Honking and Squawking which occurs when style-victims admire one too many moody Black & White fashion spreads in The Face and imagine that anything can be done if you get the suit right.

Good night...

John Perry

JAZZ IMPROVISATION – CREATIVE ARPEGGIOS PART IV –

THE HALF DIMINISHED CHORD (OR HOW I LEARNED TO LOVE ARPEGGIO AND FOUND MY PEACE WITH GOD)

Half a Mo, not more arpeggio madness from Jazz fetishist Nazam?



IT'S BEEN A LONG HARD JOURNEY FOR YOU, I'LL wager. How many sleepless nights have you spent pouring over the last three issues worth of mind-boggling musical ideas? How many hours have you spent locked in your bedroom in concentrated practice so intense that at times it seemed that your fingers were screaming, 'No more! We're only digits; give us a break. Do some weights instead. Pick on your biceps, they need toning up and what about that spare tyre around your belly? Do some sit ups. Come to think of it you're a bit of a lard guts all round, aren't you?'

Take no notice of itinerant bodily parts because in this, the final installment in our short series we're going to be looking at the last of the chord families mentioned in part one, to wit the good old half

diminished chord (*the symbol for which is 0*). This is a common chord in many Jazz tunes both new and old and is commonly found at the end of a tune just before it returns to the top (*this is termed a turnaround*). It's a very tense chord and one look at its formula will show why: 1 b3 b5 b7.

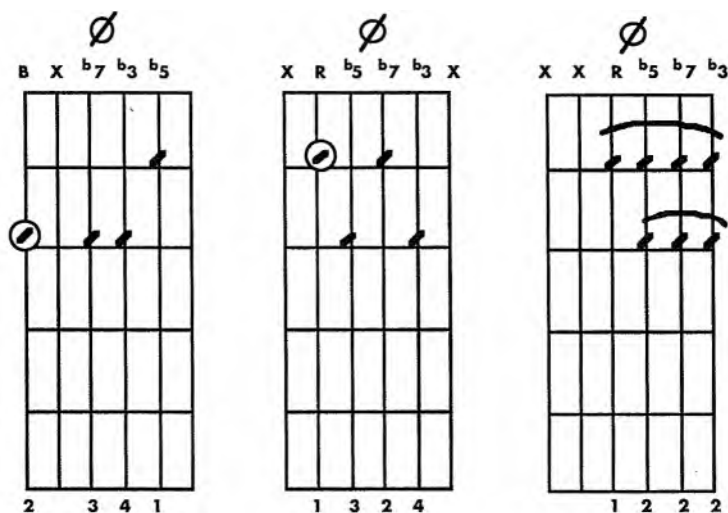
Flatliners

Golly, it's all flats. The b3 and b7 are tense enough but include a b5 and things are in danger of becoming seriously uncomfortable. As a tangential bit of information in the days when things of a religious nature actually made a difference in peoples lives the tritone (b5) was commonly called 'the Devil in music' (*or something equally Omen-esque*) and so was avoided like the plague, which was something else that was a bit on the worrying side back in the old days. Strange but true. So how then would a CO chord be made up? Lookee here:

**1 b3 b5 b7
C Eb Gb Bb**

Note that this chord is remarkably close to a Cm7 (1 b3 5 b7) but the alteration of a b5 makes all the difference. To make matters confusing you may sometimes see half diminished chords written as m7b5, e.g. Dm7b5. Don't be fooled; they are one and the same. In Ex.1 you'll find three voicings for this chord type. Play in with various root notes and acquaint yourselves with the notes in each position. Remember that it's essential you see the neck as a unified whole and analysing chord voicings is as good a way as analysing scale patterns.

Let's move onto some hip lines that can be played over these chords. In Ex.2 we have a CO arpeggio on the



Ex. 1

EX 2

EX 3

EX 4

EX 5

root of a C \emptyset chord. Tape a vamp using the chord and try this line over it. Note that there are a few chromatic notes added. How do they help the flow of the idea? Do they help the flow? If not how can you improve on the basic line? Can you extend it into a higher fret position? What about bends, hammers, slides? What I'm trying to get at is that you should experiment to the hilt. After all, what have you got to lose? The world is your oyster. Crass sayings are my speciality. In ex.3 we get an Ebm7 arpeggio played over C \emptyset , implying the extension of a b9. The concept of resolution is clear in this lick, as in many others that we looked at, so bear this in mind when improvising 'outside' sounding solos. Ex.4 is a Dominant arpeggio a major 3rd down from C \emptyset . This sounds well cool to my ears and you will marvel at the hip sound. Probably. As an

example of how all three arpeggios can be used in a line Ex.5 links them together in a nice flowing pattern.

The End.

Finally let's sum up. For a C chord play:

0 arpeggio on root

m7 arpeggio up a b3

Dom. arpeggio down a major 3rd

That, as they say, is that. I hope that you've enjoyed this series and found some uses for the concepts presented over the last few months. If you have any queries, comments, suggestions or jokes in very bad taste then drop me a line care of this mag and I'll do my best to avoid answering them. Only kidding. Ha, ha.

One thing that will help to consolidate your playing is to play with others, be it in a

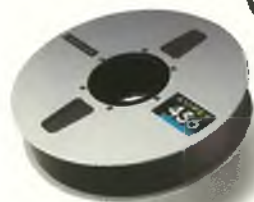
band or a jamming context, so seek out as many musical situations as you can find and don't be put off by other styles of music, as much can be learned in different genres and at the very least your awareness of music will increase. Seek out knowledge and don't be afraid to step outside of the boundaries of what is considered 'right' and 'wrong'. It's the only way you'll get better and develop your own style. So with this in mind I'll leave you with these words of wisdom from KHAN NOONAN SINGH, a famous bad guy in an episode of *Star Trek*: "Improve a mechanical device and you may double productivity. But improve a man and you gain a thousandfold."

Makes sense to me, but then I liked MEL AND KIM. Have fun Amigos!

Mo Nazam



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RECORDING
WORLD

MULTITRACKER MODEL 280 **FOSTEX**

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NEW STOCK
 Whilst we do not pretend to carry EVERY item from EVERY manufacturer, (as some shops seem to - ever tried putting it to the test?), all new equipment is tested in one of our three working studios, and if we like it, our buying power can usually ensure that we have it in stock at all times (even when your local dealer might have run dry). In addition, if we recommend an item, we will REFUND YOUR MONEY if you do not agree with us.
 In fact we are the largest pro audio dealers in Britain for Alesis, Korg, Drawner, Casio, Foster, Seck, Yamaha, TOA, Tascam, Studiomaster, Allen & Heath, C-Lab and a good many more! (Last year we sold nearly 700 new 8 & 16 track packages and around 300 sub machines!). It's always worth ringing us for a quote on new equipment and if you're still unconvinced, ask yourself why we became the biggest in such a short time (or better still ask the rest!).

If you are bewildered by the vast amount of multitrack recording products currently on offer, Thatched Cottage fax packs should make the job of choosing the right equipment that much easier. There are 6 in the series; P.A. - Portastudios - 8 Track - Financial advice, MIDI and information on our recording and MIDI school. To obtain any of our fax packs just phone or write.

WE SELL KEYBOARDS!
 Despite being the largest pro-audio retailer in Europe, every day we receive telephone calls saying "we didn't realise you sold keyboards!" Well, it's time to put the record straight; our dealerships include Yamaha, Akai, Roland pro-audio, Ensoniq, Korg, EMU, Waldorf and Casio, and we have one of the largest demo facilities in the UK (as well as some of the most experienced staff!) Next time you want a keyboard, you know where to call!

When it comes to new equipment you may have noticed that we don't say "phone for the best deal, POA, or "lowest price guarantee" (Ha! Ha! if the prices are so great why don't they just print them and amaze us all). Our bulk buying policy can usually guarantee that a telephone call to us will not be wasted and in any case we can throw in those "hidden" extras - cables with multitracks, patchbays with desks. (By the way, next time a dealer "guarantees" the lowest price and then can't deliver, try reporting them to the local Office of Fair Trading - it will teach them not to waste your time!) To be honest though, if you spend all afternoon on the telephone, the chances are you might find someone somewhere who will undercut us by a pound or two. The difference at THATCHED COTTAGE is it your E16 breaks down on a Sunday morning or your Drum Machine blows up on a Bank Holiday Monday you CAN ring us, we'll be here and we WILL do something about it - 365 days a year. Have you ever needed help and advice outside shop hours? If you are serious about your music you will know that it is quality of service that makes the difference and at THATCHED COTTAGE it's only a phone call away!



When it comes to new equipment you may have noticed that we don't say "phone for the best deal, POA, or "lowest price guarantee" (Ha! Ha! if the prices are so great why don't they just print them and amaze us all). Our bulk buying policy can usually guarantee that a telephone call to us will not be wasted and in any case we can throw in those "hidden" extras - cables with multitracks, patchbays with desks. (By the way, next time a dealer "guarantees" the lowest price and then can't deliver, try reporting them to the local Office of Fair Trading - it will teach them not to waste your time!) To be honest though, if you spend all afternoon on the telephone, the chances are you might find someone somewhere who will undercut us by a pound or two. The difference at THATCHED COTTAGE is it your E16 breaks down on a Sunday morning or your Drum Machine blows up on a Bank Holiday Monday you CAN ring us, we'll be here and we WILL do something about it - 365 days a year. Have you ever needed help and advice outside shop hours? If you are serious about your music you will know that it is quality of service that makes the difference and at THATCHED COTTAGE it's only a phone call away!

MULTITRACK DEALS

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Foster R8 + RSD Pro-line 16:4:8 Gold	£1750 + VAT
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Tascam MSR 24 plus Studiomaster trackmix 24 12 24	£8750 + VAT
Tascam MSR 24 plus Allen & Heath Saber	£13,500 + VAT
Tascam MSR16 plus Saber 18:16	£6499 + VAT
MSR16 + Spectrum 16:8:16	£5699 + VAT
MG14D + Spectrum 16:8:16	£4250 + VAT

★ ★ ★ THATCHED COTTAGE DIGITAL (T.C.D) ★ ★ ★
 In order to cater for the increased demand for advanced multitrack systems we have a separate division - Thatched Cottage Digital. Housed in a brand new purpose designed building, it handles 24-track analogue (including the new Tascam MSR24, Saber, Magnum, & Quartz desks) and all digital and loading edge installations (such as the new Yamaha digital Multitrack).
 If you are considering any kind of professional set-up and feel that the legendary T.C.A. service and value are of interest, contact us on (0223) 208110 or ring the normal T.C.A. number for full details.

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 In case you didn't know, our fully equipped, ABTA/IATA Thatched Cottage Travel Agency has been up & running for some time expanding our high standards of service and great value into the travel industry. Whether you are organising a tour, visiting a trade show or simply booking a holiday, just give us a call - what have you got to lose? Contact Gill Scott or Nicki Brazier on 0223 314577 or 0860 450499 - mobile - (ABTA no. 89156)

We always knew that we represented the best service & value in the industry but judging from last months crop of look-a-likes it seems that we also have the best ad! (copying advertisements is easy, copying 7 day a week availability can be a little more demanding). See how many copy-cat ads you can find - the same format is worth five points with similar colours counting double!

SOME SECONDHAND AND EX-DEMO BARGAINS

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Alesis Moverb III	£175
Tascam 103 (3-head mastering cassette) dem	£175
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EMU Proteus	£450
Yamaha T7 (DX7 module)	£150
Yamaha MT 100 MK II 4 track recorder	£769
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Foster E16 including 4656 autolocate/SMPTE	£2499
Foster 4050	£239
Tannoy little red monitors	£375
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Bel BDE 2400 (24 sec fully editible MIDI Sampler)	£299
Sansui MX12 12:6 mixer	£298
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PK OFFERS	
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DLI 0733 keyboard speaker (pair)	£350
Celestion 2:SR3 plus SFB3 system	£350
Ohm MR1601 speakers (pair)	£39

This list represents only a fraction of our current secondhand and demonstration stock. Call us for a full listing - All prices exclude VAT

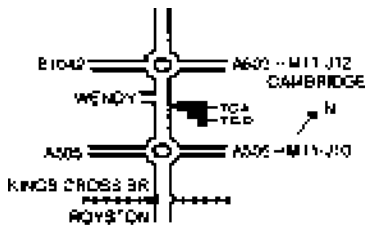
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ALLEN + HEATH Saber 16:16	£3989 + VAT
AKAI S950 1/2 meg memory expansion boards	£115 + VAT
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185 programs and full 20 bit Hall price	£149 + VAT
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SECK 18:8:2	£815 + VAT
CASIO DAT	£450 + VAT
APHEX STUDIO CLOCK SMPTE to MIDI plus lap factory (1/4 price)	£175 + VAT
TASCAM 488 cassette	£750 + VAT
ALESIS headphones amp 4 way	£99 + VAT
ROLAND M42 C monitors (pair) under 1/2 price	£75 + VAT

ALLEN + HEATH SPECTRUM - £2899 + VAT
 Ever fancied a Saber but felt your budget didn't quite stretch? Now you don't have to wait any longer! The brand new Spectrum 16: 8:16 (32 inputs, all with E.Q. and MIDI mixing) is crammed with nearly every Saber feature! And a few more besides! Including the full spectrum on board MIDI computer in a slightly smaller package! This stunning new console produced exclusively for Thatched Cottage in the U.K. looks like a Saber but in addition is expandable in units of eight inputs simply by bolting on a module. The most amazing thing about this desk? - The price - £2999 + VAT !! In addition we are packaging it with the Tascam MSR16 for only - £5899 + VAT or the Akai MG14D for only - £4250 + VAT. We have full details, just give us a call!

For those of you who are seriously considering starting a commercial studio we've come up with three packages, each containing everything you will need for your first paying session, from the Multi-track Machine right through to DI Boxes and Cables. The price of the 8 Track System is £4,250 + VAT, the 16 Track is £7,350 + VAT and the 24 Track is £13,500 + VAT. At Thatched Cottage we proved it could be done, and we have helped many new studios to open and start making money - our experience could help you. Give me a ring and have a chat - what have you got to lose? Plus: FREE Thatched Cottage Recording School Course to package buyers!

The third issue of FOLDBACK, our free magazine is now available. Write or telephone for your copy.



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SAMPLES



RECORDING
WORLD

Musicians, your Union have arranged a 10% increase in session fees for 1991 (*not bad, but still below the rampant rate of inflation*). A four hour session will now earn you £95.25, with a maximum of 20 minutes spent recording, while a three hour session brings in £71.50 to help keep the wolf from the door. For a two hour session, of which a mere 10 minutes is allotted as recording time, £56.05 should find its way into your bank account, but that's before tax, VAT, national insurance, union subs, cuddly toy, etc.

Big ARNIE SCHWARZENNEGER would be pleased with the proposed new National Recall Chart. Nothing to do with trips to Mars (*tee-hee*) it's a system that will allow the telephone polling of music buyers. Panelists will be given 15 excerpts from new releases and asked to rank them in order of preference, with the results compiled into a chart to rival the much-maligned singles chart. A popular move, independant radio has already shown an interest. But the question remains, how will the panelists be chosen? And who says that their tastes will accurately reflect what is being purchased?

Polygram have set up a new label WILD CARD RECORDS. Licensed to Polydor, releases will be few, but the label should allow further selective development of a small number of quality artists and bands in whom parent company Polygram Music Publishing have long-term faith. In this way it's hoped that projects that are successful will not go astray.



Bob

Penalty for those breaching copyright laws and thereby eating into the record companies unreasonable profits.

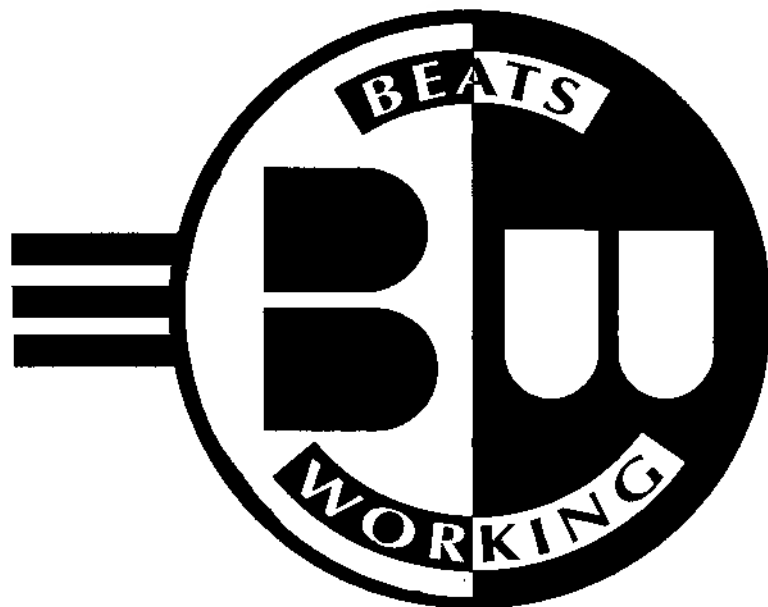
BSB's back-to-the-wall music channel THE POWER STATION, threatened with the axe since merger with Sky (*Monopolies Commission take note*), is vowing to survive well beyond it's six month winding-down period. Independent producers of the channel Palace Music are confident the market can support two all-music stations. But being in direct competition with Sky's own MTV channel and needing £15 million a year to keep aloft it could all be just pie in the sky.

The BPI are less than pleased with the Scottish courts after a Glasgow counterfeiter received a sentence of 240 hours community service for pirating. This follows the £5,000 fine given in March '90 to a counterfeiter whose operation had an estimated turnover of £1.5 million. Hardly a deterrent, so we here at IM are recommending the Death

What about that MILLI VANILLI shenanigans then! More disturbing than their success at pulling the wool over everybody's eyes – they're far from the first – are BPI spokesman JEREMY SILVER's comments on the affair. "Entertainment is a show and if that means combining the people who look the best with others who sound the best then what is wrong with that?" If that's the record industry's point of view there's precious little hope of genuine musicians reaping any just reward is there.

But 'not so' cry industry representatives, recently cleared of operating a price-fixing cartel by none other than the Office of Fair Trading. The investigation took place in response to allegations made in *Which?* and *Today* (mentioned last month) but fails to address the real issue – as the production costs for vinyl and CD formats are not dissimilar, why are CDs so much more expensive? Answers on a postcard....

Neil Cook



BEATS WORKING

TO BOLDLY GO WHERE NO WOMAN HAS GONE BEFORE... WELL ALMOST!
THERESA FOWLER TREKS NORTH TO THE LAND OF FLARE FOR ANOTHER
EXCITING INSTALLMENT OF HOMETAPING



ET AGAIN I FIND MYSELF approaching Manchester Piccadilly station for another spot of the IM punters' per, Homertaping. And guess what! It's raining again!

KEV BARRY, keyboardist of BEATS WORKING, met me at the station. "I'll be wearing a black jumper and brown leather jacket," he told me the day before

on the telephone. Sure enough he was and I found him straight away, but whatever happened to chivalry? Where was that white carnation?

"Have you heard the news today?" said Kev while driving to the Beats Working studio in a bedroom in Sale.

"What news?" I asked.

"Thatcher's resigned," he quipped jubilantly.

Forget the carnation, this interview has got off to a very good start indeed. It's a funny old world isn't it?

The Boot

"We started off about a year ago with just an 8-track, didn't we?" asked MARK COOPER, guitarist, to Kev as we're sitting in the studio with a nice cup of tea.

"Yeah," said Kev. "We were in a band together, basically as session musicians, using a 16-track. That's how we met.

"Because we were session musicians, after a while we started asking what kind of percentage we'd get for our work with the band with songs and things like that. I think it's because we asked too many questions that they kicked us out of the band."

They both chuckled.

"So I bought an 8-track from A1 Music and it all started from there," added Mark.

"We're going to try to set up a publishing company under the Beats Working name as well. We have people that come in already just to use the studio. All the money we make from

that gets poured right back into the studio.

"AI have been really good to us. We have an account there, JAMES have got one as well." They both laughed. "We just walked in one day and asked for one and I think the manageress was so baffled that she said alright. NEW ORDER and SIMPLY RED also have accounts there, so we're pretty lucky. We usually just go in after reading about a piece of gear and try it out. If we don't use it we can always take it back.

"We usually just go for the standard anyway, gear that most of the studios have that you know will always work."

Classic

Influenced by LED ZEPPELIN, KATE BUSH and PRINCE, Beats Working describe their music as 'Pop Orchestra'.

"We try to keep a Rock edge, although we're more Pop Orchestra you know because we use violins and things like that," Mark told me. This probably has a lot to do with the fact that Kev is classically trained on the piano. So where does the beginning of a Pop Orchestra smash hit come into being?

"When we start a song it usually starts with the drums on the drum machine (a Roland R5)," said Mark, the technical half.

"We all work together, so things work out differently with every song," adding that they've recently added a third member to the Beats Working network, GERRY MCSTRAVICK, the singer.

The Beats Working studio also consists of an Atari 1040 using Notator software, a Cheetah 7P keyboard ("which I don't understand yet, that's why it's unplugged," added Kev), the Roland D-50 keyboard, a Boss ME5 guitar effects unit, an Ibanez bass and electric guitar, an SPX90 reverb unit, a Multiverb used for reverb, the SMPTE XR300 machine, JBL Control 5 speakers, a Proline 16:4:8 mixing desk and a DA7 DAT machine which "we hire out at the moment 'cos we haven't paid for it yet".

But getting back to the recording of a song, Mark?

"Well first off we use the R5 and then program the set up of the songs using Notator for the intro, chorus, middle eight and that. Then all the music will be worked out on Notator before we even start recording. We'll use it as a rough format. So we'll put down the keyboards and bass and arrange it on Notator.

"Then we'll use the tape machine to put the vocals on and put all the harmonies and vocals on the SMPTE machine, so that we'll get like six or eight vocals down to one track. Then we'll start recording the instruments. But most of the time on a track is spent mixing, you know, getting the reverbs right and that."

"We will all sit together to mix it and then listen to it on different speakers, like in the car, to hear different balances. 'Cos we're just getting used to these speakers here," he said pointing to the Control 5s.

"Yeah, there's a lot of bass on these," added Kev.

Looking Ahead

And what does the future hold for this different sort of Manchester band?

"If we don't get a record deal, then we'll concentrate on setting up the Beats Working business," said Mark. "Because we're also going to set up the studio as a 24-track and then get the publishing side set up," added Kev. "When we set up our own record label who knows?"

Beats Keep Working.

Theresa Fowler

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"Have you heard the news today?"

said Kev.

"What news?"

I asked.

"Fletcher's resigned," he quipped

jubilantly.



Track Record



SYSTEM 7 Sunburst (Flutter Mix)

● Producers: Steve Hillage and Youth

FROM THE RECORD label that brought you SOUL II SOUL, TEUTONIC BEATS, INNER CITY and UNIQUE 3 comes STEVE HILLAGE.

For those of you who remember the mid-'70s and the strange environmentally-sound progressive Rock meanderings of albums like *Motivation Radio* and *Green* – or perhaps even the decidedly acid head ravings of *Gong* – this will almost certainly come as a shock. But then, although amply qualified in terms of virtuosity, Hillage always fitted into the Rock guitar hero mould rather awkwardly. In his later work, he employed a heavy duty black rhythm section, wrote groove-based Funk Rock fusion and professed a sincere admiration for the likes of PARLIAMENT and FUNKADELIC.

But a white guitarist had to be marketed in a certain way and in the end he refused to go along with the Rock star scenario and retired from public performance. That he should return to the studio as part of a fluid 'band', in the company of ALEX PATTERSON of THE ORB and keyboard player MIQUETTE GIRAUDY, is perhaps not quite so surprising after all: "In the '70s, I really had a foot in three different camps and some people had a lot of difficulty putting me into a bag, because it was quite an original blend. Obviously as a guitarist there was a Rock element but I was a really big fan of people like GEORGE CLINTON and there was a big element of Funk, as well as

what now we call ambient sounds. We used to do then what we call glissando guitar, stroking the strings with a metal rod, with lots of synthesizer bleeps and bleeps. So very little of what is happening now is alien to me. I tell you, Rock music, especially American Rock

listen to programmed drums without some kind of break behind it. Also it allows you to blend the live element and the programmed element in a way that no amount of fancy quantizing can achieve, no matter how much 'human feel' you put into the programme. If you

(SIMPLE MINDS, REAL LIFE, SKIN GAMES, IT BITES), which is what I've been doing virtually non stop since I stopped touring, the musical applications of computers were an obvious step. There was a combination of factors that brought me back to actually performing. I

found myself playing a lot more guitar on productions that I was doing and I like going out to clubs every so often and getting into really good sound systems. The guy who invented the Turbo Sound system is a very good friend. We were involved in its development and back in the '70s actually took the prototype on the road. Obviously one of the things that Turbo Sound is really good for is clubs – the sound system in Heaven is a good example. I was really enjoying a lot of the music I was hearing in these places around '89 and thought I would like to play some guitar.



Mr Hillage

music, is pretty alien to me!"

SYSTEM 7's debut *12"* is a slice of ambient House, hooked around decidedly Techno-sounding break beats that form the rhythm track.

"A lot of the sounds involved in what I'm doing now are not alien to me at all but other aspects of it are new. There's a whole new sound around now, which involves the use of sampled beats. I like that. There's a certain crunchiness in the sound when you have a break and I find it very difficult to

have four or five breaks going on at once, it sounds like you've got four or five drummers."

Turbo-Boosted

Not that Hillage has been hibernating since his glory days in the limelight: "I've been into computers since 1989, when I got an Apple and learned how to programme it. That was a little before all the dedicated musical software came around. As a producer

"The other thing that I wanted to do was collaborate very heavily with other people. It also brings my work as a producer and my previous work as an artist into the one thing. One of the first people I wanted to work with was Alex. I had started to get into what he was doing, he's an originator of what they call ambient House music and it really appealed to me. I used to go to Land Of Oz at Heaven, where he was DJ'ing and got quite inspired by what he was doing. It turned out he really liked

my approach to guitar sounds and so we gelled together and Miquette and myself did some work with Alex on his own album *The Orb*.

Caring, Sharing Co-op

"We're co-writers and performers. Some tracks I'm producing on my own and others are co-productions. I'm doing quite a lot of the programming, using C-Lab on an Atari and an S1000. On the album some of the tracks are harder than this, in fact one in particular is extremely hard and I'm really happy with it. Some are slower, more vocally based - we've got some good songs. I also did some stuff with DERRICK MAY which was a lot faster than *Sunburst*. I've done some work with Mick McNeil (*ex-SIMPLE MINDS*) and STEVE WADDINGTON from the *THE BELOVED*. This track was co-written with Alex and co-produced with YOUTH.

"Alex came round to my place with a load of records from which we took samples and fashioned them together into a groove which in turn inspired a tune. One of the original samples we had was of these doves fluttering which we turned into a rhythm. He has this vast collection of records, CDs and tapes of all kinds of things. He would just play stuff and if it inspired me I would sample it.

"All the initial writing and production was done at my place, on the Creator and the S1000 and a second S1000. What I generally do at home is work a lot on the track and do demos, where I play live guitar over the track down onto DAT. I try to avoid multi-tracking at that stage and just keep things fresh for the studio. I've got a Fostex 8-track but I try to avoid doing too much on that. What I end up with is a fairly precisely arranged piece with a rough version on DAT with guitar ideas."

Doctor Rhythm

The beats were in fact a combination of breaks and programmed rhythms with sounds accessed from the sample library - with one notable and rather odd exception.

"I've got one dedicated drum machine which I'm quite partial to, the little Doctor Rhythm DR550. I

really like to get it all in one box. I just wish that the S1000 had more voices. But I have found that the voice sometimes produces interesting effects, particularly on drums, where perhaps you have three snare samples playing and the voice robbing produces a very compressed snare sound.

"The bass was a Moog sample that I'm in love with and have used on quite a lot of the album, though half way through the album as a result of Derrick May's influence I acquired a new Korg Wavestation and I've been getting some nice bass sounds out of that."

Other keyboard work was carried out on Miquette's Korg M1 which was sync'ed up, as was the Akai ASQ10 sequencer, a personal favourite. Discs and hardware were then transferred to Marcus Studios and DDA desk and Studer 24 track.

"I tended to stay clear of SSL on this project. I've done most of my production work on SSL and I'm very au fait with the SSL computer from a mixing point of view. But with System 7 I find that, what with the DDA board and the cut and solo buttons being above one another, when you're doing a club-type mix with all these cuts and drops, it just seems to be easier on a DDA. We've used computer assisted mixing to give some accent on this track, using the Optifile automation on the DDA. A lot of it though we've mixed in various sections onto DAT and I've later edited it together on Sound Tools on the Mac 2, just using the digital interface. This whole thing that you can't edit DATs is nonsense, they are completely editable. Sound Tools is happening!

Live Jams

"Recently I've taken it all one stage further. I've been recording my live guitar jams, out of which I fashion guitar parts, onto DAT in solo, so that the guitar goes down but not the DAT. Then I transfer

the guitar into the Sound Tools and edit up the guitar parts. I use this new sequencer called Opcode Studio Vision on the Mac, which has an extra module allowing you to play Sound Tools back, along with the Creator. About half of the guitar on the album has been done in this way, at home, before even coming into the studio. You can look at this Studio Vision and you see a page with bars and beats, as in MIDI, but you realise then that SMPTE has got to go, SMPTE is not musical. I'd hate to be a studio owner in this decade, there is increasingly so much that you can do at home and it is so much better to do it there, without the pressure of red light fever."

Sunburst however was dispatched a good few months before Steve got his hands on Sound Tools and the guitar was recorded in the studio, but not as you might expect via the barrage of amps and stacks that someone of his pedigree might favour.

"I've got one basic guitar setup that I use all the time, it's simple

but effective. I have a Steinberger guitar which I love, I'm a total Steinberger fan because the neck is so true and my fingers just enjoy playing it. I run that into a Boss GL100, which I use as a kind of pre-driver and run it before my pedals, EQ'ing my sound before it goes to my wah-wah. I think that's quite important because the Steinberger is hot and my wah-wah dates from about 1970 and can break up quite readily.

"I've got a collection of wah-wahs but they're all really old and fairly temperamental. I select the one that I think will suit the particular mood. I'm especially attracted to the Maestro Fuzz-Phizzer. That goes into the compressor and out to a Roland GS6, another amp simulator and a more powerful unit than the GL100. It also has some good chorus, reverb and delay programs. So before I go into the studio I have a sound programmed into the GS6 memory. And from

the GS6 I go straight into the desk.

"Guitarwise, I laid down a lead track, where I played all the way through and then Youth used certain bits of it. I did a track of E-bow, a track where I played the melody hook line and another track where I played some wah-wah rhythm."

Youth-Quake

Youth's primary involvement was at the mix, though he did cast a critical eye across the track before entering the studio, making some fine tuning adjustments.

"The day before Youth came over and we trimmed and tidied up the arrangement, then went in and laid it down. The whole thing was virtually down to tape within six hours. The next six hours were spent recording guitar and adding some vocal live into the mix. He records a track of ambience, mixing various tapes and records, with which he does a performance. There were two mixes that were constructed from the edits. Some initial edits were done by THRASH, an up-and-coming mixing engineer. Thrash and Youth put together one edited cut pass with the computer for the whole length of the song and then they put down various versions without it.

"We used quite a lot of effects. The Cyclasonic panner was much in evidence and a whole variety of reverbs and flanges. Though nothing too complicated."

Steve very much believes in mixing in terms of performance, rather than just as the bit you do at the end. In fact it's a theory he's considering developing, perhaps as a means of taking System 7 out on the road and putting himself back under the stage lighting.

"I think there's going to be a point where people do mixes of multi-tracks live on stage. It's been muted in the past, I believe TODD RUNDGREN tried it once a very long time ago. But there's something exciting about a mix, with cuts and drops and things all happening spontaneously. My mind is increasingly preoccupied with developing the means for transferring this stuff into the live arena and maybe that's the way it could be done."

Keith Grant

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STUDIO OF THE MONTH

GDR

The Arts Centre, Vane Terrace,
Darlington, Co Durham
Tel: (0325) 48777/48383

GDR IS A 16-TRACK studio with digital mastering facilities and an added dimension. Alongside the usual control room and studio setup are lines into the Arts Centre's three main performance areas where MARTIN STEPHENSON and STAN TRACEY have had gigs captured for posterity.

Owner GRAEME ROBINSON'S background is as varied as the people using the studio. He started off as a drummer and nearly achieved fame with VERBA VERBA (a poster in the corridor records the band's appearance with support band FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD). From there he went on to session work with artists including TEARS FOR FEARS and PAUL MCCARTNEY. Having picked up the recording bug, Graeme returned to Darlington to start his studio project.

"I started with a portastudio at home. After a year I thought

that some effects would be nice and just built it up. I then approached the Arts Centre for space as I'd been asked to compose some music for Tyne Tees Television and they let me have this room (the current control room). I used to set up the kit on one side and the portastudio on the other. It became a commercial proposition when someone came in and said, 'hey, can you do that for me?'

"So from humble beginnings I've spread out to the current set up. I'd been using an F1 for digital mastering with the portastudio, bouncing four track recordings onto stereo digital master and then bouncing them back onto two tracks of the four and adding to them with surprising results. That was the basis for the business, a cheeky portastudio meeting digital mastering.

"I upgraded to a sixteen track machine and this desk and added things as I went

along. It took another two years to get the wiring in for the performance areas and the place sorted out. It's a case of walking before you run. The temptation is to listen to the people offering money to buy in but I managed to resist that. I'm sure we would have lived fast and died young if I'd taken people's money.

Size Isn't Everything

"24-track? I'm quite happy to wait my turn as business can build up to the stage where you can buy things for cash rather than mortgaging your soul. I'm pleased with the results we're getting as a 16-track, even some of the record companies can't tell the difference.

"The rooms are funny shapes to start with so the expense of designing oddly shaped rooms has been spared. With only the most basic of acoustic treatments they've turned into a splendid set of recording rooms. The control room has enough space to get stuck in if people are DI'ing. I'd rather spend the money on gear to overcome problems than putting bass traps in the ceiling. I think I was lucky to get a place like this that I could expand. It's also unusual to have a commercial studio in a public building.

"I don't do overnights as I've done them from both sides. I find that they are the lowest common denominator in terms of results. You can come out with something that sounds good at 5am but the following day you can decide that you need to do it again. It may be a sweeping generalisation

but I'm sure it can apply. The building also closes at 11.30pm so I get a good night's sleep and don't come back in totally wrecked. I tend to take Sundays off for the same reason. The studio is at a stage where I can go out, play drums and I know it's still here. I'm not into turning into a studio vegetable."

The Spice Of Life

GDR's output ranges from local bands to Jazz, brass bands to choirs, French languages tapes for GCSE exams and relaxation tapes with some of the district clinical psychologists. A new direction for the studio is the production of white label dance 12" singles and the two I've heard so far could hold their own without any problems. The best known names recorded live include Martin Stephenson, Stan Tracey and Mike Westbrook.

"The Arts Centre won several awards after we made the recording of Stan Tracey at the Jazz Festival. Apparently the recording was the instigation for The National Music Council Of Great Britain Award for the best regional music facilities which went to the Council. It's nice to say that we played a part. We've also helped with the local Duke Of Edinburgh's Award Scheme Centre's Pop course.

"There's a band called ZOOM (ex-FLAMING MUSSOLINI's) who've just signed to Warner Chappell on the strength of a live to digital session they did here.

"I try to encourage bands



GDR: a right rivetin' studio

to do a live to digital session if they're in a hurry. The studio has five different live rooms which can all be used simultaneously to give separation but also a live feel. Once a band warms to the idea, they can whack down everything they know in a four hour session. That's something that occurred to me, a way for bands to record on a tight budget. Zoom had never tried it but they're talking about doing an album in the same way."

By Mouth

GDR don't advertise as most of the studio's work comes by word of mouth. It's

an airy environment with a lot of natural light in the main studio areas. There's also a roster of musicians to call on for session work. The Arts Centre itself has residential accomodation plus cafeteria, bars and separate media and video facilities. The three performance areas wired to the studio are the Garden Bar, the Dance Studio and the main theatre. There are also video links from these areas to the Studio.

Within easy walking distance of the Arts Centre are other facilities including two sports centres, one of the cheapest cinemas in the country and a variety of eat-

ing establishments. Besides running the studio and drumming, Graeme is also a qualified curry buff and will be

happy to point you in the right direction.

Keith Rickaby

AT A GLANCE

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PRODUCERS



Jesus Jones: just one of Craig Leon's recent collaboration

CRAIG LEON

FROM NEW WAVE NEW YORKERS TO NEW AGE RAVERS, CRAIG LEON HAS PRODUCED THEM ALL



“ONE OF MY COMPLAINTS ABOUT WHAT IS happening nowadays is that people are playing safe with technology when they could be getting into things which are new and exciting. I like bands, artists and producers who are trying to push back the boundaries rather than simply make a glossy-sounding modern record. People seem to have forgotten that non-glossy records also sound wonderful.”

Craig Leon was born in Florida, but you'd never guess it to hear him speak. Years in New York have taken their toll on what may once have been a Southern drawl. Now his words tumble excitably off his tongue almost quicker than he can think. He may have already passed 40, but CRAIG LEON's enthusiasm for Rock'n'Roll is as infectious as ever it was.

Now That's What I Call Music

“A band has to sound like they're coming from NOW. They can have the energy and musical values of a bygone era, but it's the producer's duty to make them sound as current as possible. How much technology is used and the sources of the sounds is immaterial compared to the feel you get in the end. You need different things for different songs and different bands. So please don't paint me as a purist who goes for Seventies guitar sounds and can't stand sequencers, because it's not true. If you're making records these days then you're crazy not to take advantage of the technology. You think that if we'd had sequencers when we recorded the first RAMONES album that we wouldn't have used them? Of course we would. And if they'd been around in 1956

ELVIS PRESLEY and BUDDY HOLLY would have used them too!”

Craig Leon carved his name in the Rock'n'Roll history books in 1976, when he produced the first Ramones album. As A&R man for SEYMOUR STEIN'S Sire Records in the Seventies he concentrated on licensing obscure European records which the majors were unwilling to release in the United States. But he kept a shrewd eye on what was happening in The Big Apple.

Muso Consciousness

“As far as the charts go, music was as trite 15 years ago as it is now. There was a state of 'Muso Consciousness' on American radio and bands like EMERSON, LAKE AND PALMER – with players who swung from trapezes in the middle of solos – were happening. The New York scene began to evolve in 1973 as an alternative to all that stuff. Bands like The Ramones, TALKING HEADS, BLONDIE and TELEVISION started out at that time. Don't ask me why I was attracted to them. I've always gone for artists who have concepts that are different to the mainstream. People with a keen sense of their own artistic identity, who want to make records on their own terms rather than cower to some mythical idea of what is commercial.”

JOEY, JOHNNY, TOMMY and DEE DEE RAMONE fitted that description as they married-up tracks of rapid fire dum dum guitar with a Pop sensibility which set them apart from the majority of Punk bands. “The Ramones knew exactly what they wanted. Because they've always adhered to a strict concept people think of them as cynical and calculating. Back then they were simply a lot of fun. They really believed that they were going to be the new

Hard Day's Night BEATLES. Or at least HERMAN'S HERMITS!

Typecasting

Craig Leon was always reluctant to be typecast as a Punk producer. After producing the seminal *Live At CBGBs* collection for Atlantic - featuring MINK DEVILLE, THE SHIRTS and the TUFF DARTS - he set up Instant Records with RICHARD GOTTENHRER and MARTY THAU. While Gottenhrer concentrated on nurturing DEBBY HARRY and CHRIS STEIN'S fledgling band Blondie, Leon and Thau set to work on SUICIDE, an outfit who would help rewrite the Rock rulebook. "That Suicide album must have been one of the first all-machine albums ever. We started recording in 1976 although it didn't come out for a couple of years. What took the time was finding the right echo for ALAN VEGA'S voice, which needed to sound as different as the music on the record. In retrospect, it was very rudimentary. The drum machine was a cocktail Tango and Cha-Cha-type rhythm box put through guitar amplifiers to give the sound more weight. Marty Thau and Alan Vega couldn't afford a synthesier so all the sounds on that record were made by one Farfisa organ through a radio preamplifier and Fuzztone pedal. To the best of my knowledge nobody's ever duplicated that, but then I'm not sure they'd want to!"

Then there was cult Los Angeles singer/songwriter MOON MARTIN who wrote *Cadillac Walk* for Mink DeVille and *Bad Case Of Loving You* for ROBERT PALMER. Both tracks turned up on the Leon-produced *Shots From A Cold Nightmare* album. Craig is swift to scotch the impression of Moon Martin as a Beat-group fundamentalist to match his BRIAN JONES haircut and JOHN LENNON glasses.

"Moon Martin was trying to do things which were ahead of his time. He wanted a robotic, psychopathic rhythm with everything perfectly in time. We had to do it with a live drummer because they hadn't invented the programmable drum machine yet. I spent about seven weeks editing multi-track takes between kick drum and snare in order to get a rhythm track spot-on. If we'd had a sequencer it would have taken about seven minutes! It was important to Moon that he sounded like a wildman. But we had to virtually kill the drummer to do it!"

Ex-patriots

In 1986 Craig and his girlfriend (Virgin recording artist CASSELL WEBB) moved to England at the invitation of the now-defunct Statik Records. There was a promise of solo albums and better career opportunities for a producer who wished to stay out of the mainstream. Paradoxically Craig Leon hit the Number One spot with virtually his very first project.

"DR AND THE MEDICS were one of the first bands I worked with after we moved to the UK. People looked down on them but I thought they were a hysterical send-up of that late Sixties

psychedelic thing. Whether they could play didn't matter to me. Their record company saw them as a Pop group and after we'd finished the album, the head of the record company came down and yelled at the band that they'd never get rich and famous and have houses in LA unless they had a single on Radio One. He also promised to dance naked in the window of Harrods if they could do it. Now THAT was a challenge the band were happy to accept! We researched the situation and realised that what was needed was a cover that suited their personality. Then I told them the story of NORMAN GREENBAUM which fitted their aspirations perfectly.

"Dr and The Medics thought this was a fantastic story and they covered *Spirit In The Sky*, had a big hit with it, bought a small farm in Wales and then fulfilled their destiny by turning in a real turkey for their follow up.

The last five years have seen Leon's name linked with a veritable Who's Who of credible British talent from THE PRIMITIVES to THE MEN THEY COULDN'T HANG, FLESH FOR LULU to THE POGUES and the GO-BETWEENS. When we met he was halfway through an LP by new Liverpoolian band TWO WAY STREET - "all verses and choruses and harmonies. Quite radical by today's standards!!" - and was still glowing with the success of albums by THE FALL and JESUS JONES.

"The beauty of working with different artists is that you can set yourself a different set of ground rules for each project. A major part of pre-production for me is sitting down and discussing with the artists what they want artistically. MARK SMITH wanted *Extricate* to be cool and detached while MIKE EDWARDS wanted Jesus Jones to sound like they were riding into hell on a wild guitar sample. Jesus Jones' record company EMI were openly encouraging me to make the album sound as wild as possible. Once you've

got that sort of picture it becomes a matter of filling in the details as you go along."

Chas de Whalley

"I like bands, artists and producers who are pushing back the boundries."

● LPS

THE FALL	<i>Extricate (Phonogram)</i>
JESUS JONES	<i>Liquidizer (EMI)</i>
THE RAMONES	<i>1st album (Sire)</i>
DR & THE MEDICS	<i>Laughing At The Pieces (IRS)</i>
MOON MARTIN	<i>Shots From A Cold Nightmare (Capitol)</i>
ADULT NET	<i>Honey Tangle (Phonogram)</i>
JEFFREY LEE PIERCE	<i>Wildweed (Statik)</i>
RICHARD HELL & THE VOIDOIDS	<i>Blank Generation (Stiff)</i>

STUDIO TEST

ALESIS DATADISK SQ ● RRP: £349

AFTER ABOUT A YEAR IN THE SADDLE THE DataDisk has been replaced by this, the new DataDisk SQ. The original model could be seen basically as a rackmount, stand alone, floppy disk drive designed to store all forms of MIDI system exclusive data. It was intended for off-line storage of programs/patches for synths, drum machines, sequencers and MIDI-controllable effects units that lacked drives of their own – the entire Alesis range, for an instance or two. A nice idea and a 'steady seller', but not destined to be the musical household name that other Alesis products have become. The successor to the DataDisk monicker, however, has a little extra something that promises to give it a whole new lease of usefulness...

The SP On The SQ

SQ stands for sequencer and relates to the new model's ability to record and playback MIDI sequences in realtime, whereas the old model could only receive and send sequences (or anything else for that matter) as system exclusive packages. Theoretically, this allowed you to rapidly dump sequences from your sequencer onto the DataDisk's floppy and retrieve it at a later date. The only problem is that not all sequencers can send sequences in sysex form (my thanks to Korg for lending me an M1 which can).

With the new facility you can simply play your sequence into the DataDisk SQ in realtime. But

more than that, you can subsequently replay it directly to the instrument(s) involved, with the DataDisk SQ taking the place of the sequencer. Very handy for those who construct arrangements in the studio/bedroom using an Atari and then need to replay them live, but who would rather not cart their delicate and bulky computers with them to gigs.

So that's what new on the DDSQ and of course it's still capable of all its old routines. It can receive a single file from an instrument (that could be just one sequence/program/FX set up, or its entire memory contents), or it can store a series of files from any number of instruments and store them all in one Multi file. This is useful and faster if you want to store an

entire set-up. In the opposite direction, when sending data back from the DDSQ, you can either send single files or use the All File command to send the entire contents of the disk; useful for quickly resetting a large system with a single button push.

One significant feature of the unit is that data is stored and retrieved directly from disk, as opposed to being shifted a chunk at a time via some buffer RAM. This means that there's no limit to the size of a single file that can be sent in one lot; except the overall disk ceiling of 800 kilobytes, of course.

The DDSQ also has a number of handy housekeeping facilities which rely on the particular nature of system exclusive codes.

Exclusive Intelligence

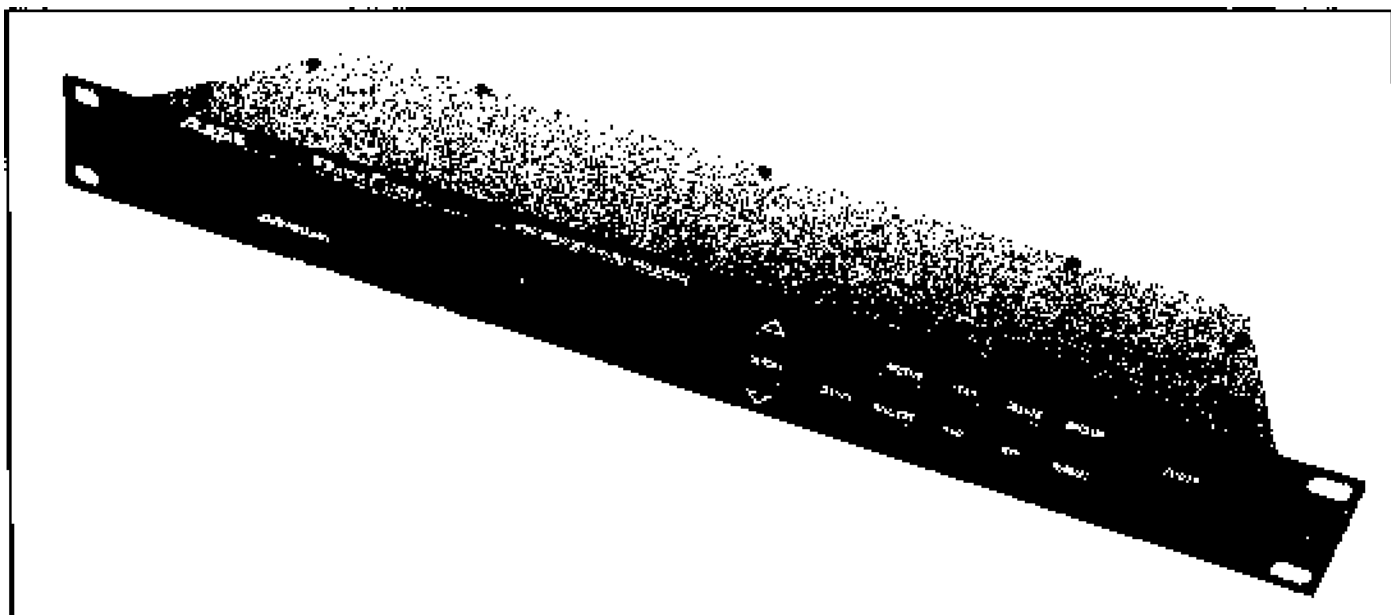
At the risk of repeating myself (I told you this in the original DataDisk review), the fundamental point about the MIDI specification is that it is (theoretically) standard for all instruments. For instance, when you press the sustain pedal that's plugged into your M1, the Ensoniq SQR module that it's controlling via MIDI will also recognise it as a sustain pedal.

Likewise, the MIDI volume and the pitch and mod wheels, etc. are all given a specific code. But equally important, the MIDI spec has space within it for individuality in the form of system exclusive data (SYSEX). Part of this provides a unique identification code for each manufacturer and, beyond that, for each instrument. The DDSQ has been programmed to recognise most of the current manufacturers and products so that when you store a patch or sequence from your D50, it will file it under a three-part name: Manufacturer, Model, File Name. For example, 'Roland - D50 - File 01'. If desired, the third part (called the file name) can be edited and replaced with up to eight new characters.

Not being entirely psychic, the Alesis programmers are not able to include the names of future manufacturers or products. In the case of an unknown manufacturer the allotted hexadecimal sysex code is given (at least it's some form of unique ID and the DDSQ recognises it without problem) and for an unknown instrument the space is left blank, but you are left with the eight-character file name with which to log a meaningful name for yourself. The files are stored alphabetically which is very handy if you have a large number of short files on a disk; and you can have up to 53.

Physically, the DataDisk is very similar to the Quadraverb; a lightweight, 1-U rackmount unit, only six inches deep and with the standard Alesis adaptor-type power supply. It has the same two-line, backlit LCD display, two rows of grey buttons and blue and grey inscriptions. Then there's the disc drive, a standard 3 1/2", double sided, double density with a formatted capacity of 800 kilobytes. This represents considerable amount of storage for voice and general system data, but is clearly a bit limited for samples. I imagine, though, that anyone serious about

"The idea
of the
DataDisk SQ
is a
good one."



If you can't get a date, DataDisk!

their sampling will have a hard disc and so in practice the DataDisk would not be involved. It's probably theoretically possible to write a SYSEX command to store as part of a sequence on the DDSQ which, when sent to the sampler, would get it to load the 'next' sample, but it would be very involved.

As far as sequences go, 800K is about the same as the floppy disk found on the average sequencer, so it should at least replace them roughly disk for disk.

Easy To Use

Operationally, the DataDisk SQ bears Ensoniq's marks of directness and simplicity. The nine main parameter buttons have largely self-explanatory legends: Name, Receive, Send, Request, Delete, Backup, Format, Info and MIDI. Each button has its own LED. If there's more than one page under a heading you simply repeatedly press the button cycle around them. Then there's a pair of nudge buttons to change values where necessary and a Do/Yes button to confirm and operation. You

hardly need to look at the manual and when you do it's very clear and quick.

The rear panel of the DataDisk SQ has but three sockets, one is for the power supply, the other two are MIDI IN and OUT/THRU. Nothing overly complicated there. A very straightforward way of using the thing would be with a single synth/sequencer workstation. You'd simply connect up the MIDI ports, In and OUT and vice versa and bingo - you'd have added a disk drive. In this case, the workstation's MIDI ports would be solely for communications with the DDSQ.

As soon as you add one or more other devices, complications arise. In the case of a complex system, switching between Receive and Send functions on the DDSQ would require substantial repatching unless each of the units involved had a combined THRU/OUT port, in which case it would be possible to get by with swapping just a couple of cables. Although this would be theoretically feasible, not all devices can combine MIDI THRU and OUT in one port and anyway I'd be a lit-

tle dubious about its reliability.

In practical terms, some form of patch bay is necessary if you're going to use the DataDisk SQ with more than one or two devices and preferably a programmable patchbay. With such a device onboard, one patch can be set up for dumping and another for up loading - simple. Without it I think things would actually be untenable.

Conclusion

The idea of the DataDisk SQ is a good one, although I'm not sure how many people will find it £349 worth of goodness. Clearly, if you have a synth and a drum machine with no disk drive, it's a quick and simple remedy. If you're a successful, gigging band who use a Mac or Atari-based sequencer and want a means of using your sequencers live without lugging the computer around, this machine will do the trick.

If you have a fairly complex MIDI system which includes a programmable patchbay, it is possible that you could have the DataDisk SQ as your central storage medium, even for devices that have

their own onboard floppies. In this way when you return to a project, you would simply put the project disk in the DDSQ and send out the Multi file, thus resetting everything in one fell swoop.

The possibilities are manifold and, once again, it's a matter of weighing up just how useful it would be in your own set up.

Jim Betteridge

AT A GLANCE

1-U rackmount unit

DEPTH: six inches

Standard Alesis power supply

2-line backlit LCD display

DISC DRIVE: standard 3 1/2" double-sided, double density

CAPACITY: 800 kilobytes

Info: Sound Technology
Tel: (0462) 480000

STUDIO TEST

FOSTEX

280 ●

RRP: £599.95

THE ORIGINAL PORTASTUDIO WAS BROUGHT OUT by Teac some years ago, and it was followed shortly afterwards by the Model 250 'Personal Multitracker' from Fostex. Both of these featured 4-track cassette recording at 3 3/4" per second and a 4-channel mixer all in one compact unit, although the Teac model used DBX noise reduction as opposed to the (then new) Dolby C type on the Fostex unit. Since that time there have been many newer models from both of these companies, as well as competing models from other manufacturers. Some models are more portable, usually running at the lower tape speed of 1 7/8" per second, whereas others have more input channels and more comprehensive mixing facilities.

I used to own one of the original Model 250 units, which I found to be very versatile, and which gave me several years of excellent service. The Model 280 is Fostex's replacement for their original 250 model, and sticks with the basic 4-track/4-channel format, but adds an extra 4 input channels without EQ, as well as various other facilities.

Description

The Model 280 has an attractive new styling, mostly in dark grey with light grey controls, and a black front-edge panel. The unit is wedge-shaped, such that the back end is higher than the front end, so the control surface slopes towards the user. The knobs have colour-coded centre-

position indicators, with those of like controls being the same colour. Metering is now via LED bargraphs, rather than the original VUs, and these are mounted more or less centrally, at the top of the unit. Almost all the left part of the front face is occupied by the four main mixer channels, so let's have a look at these first:

Channel Strips

At the top of each channel 'strip' is a button to select the signal coming back from one of the tape tracks, or to route the input from the corresponding jack socket on the front edge, via the two Aux send pots post fader to the EQ, Pan and Mute controls, and, via another selector button, out to the stereo buss or to the associ-

ated track on tape. One difference here is that you can only assign effects 'post-fader' rather than 'pre-fader', as you had the option to do on the original unit. However, the inclusion of Mute buttons on each channel is very welcome. Previously there was a three-position switch which let you select tape return, input, and 'off' in the centre position, and this was much less easy to use for muting. The input level 'trim' controls are now on mini-sliders next to the channel faders at the bottom of each channel strip. This is a more logical position, rather than on rotary pots at the top of the channel strips (as on the original model), because you can see the settings and adjust them much more conveniently.

Extra Inputs

The first major difference is that there are now four extra input channels located in the centre of the front panel. These are connected via Mute buttons and pan controls directly to the stereo buss, and just have one aux send control per channel - via Aux 2. These allow you to add other instruments to your mix along with the tracks coming back off tape.

Effects (Aux) Controls

Directly above these are the aux send and return master controls, just underneath the bargraph meters. There is an Aux Send Master level control for both Aux 1 and Aux 2, with associated 1/4" jack outputs on the back edge of the unit. There are just two Aux Return jacks, however, so you may wish to use these to return signals from two separate effects units, or from one stereo effects unit. There is just one Aux Return Gain control which affects both return paths equally, and there is a Pan control which lets you position a mono

return signal to left, centre, or right on the stereo buss. If you are using two mono effects, or a stereo effect, this pan acts as a balance control between the two mono effect return signals, or between the left and right stereo effect return signals. If you are using two stereo effects, then you will have to use up two of your precious channel inputs to bring the effects return signals into your mix, which is a bit of a pain - it would have been much better to have two stereo effects returns!

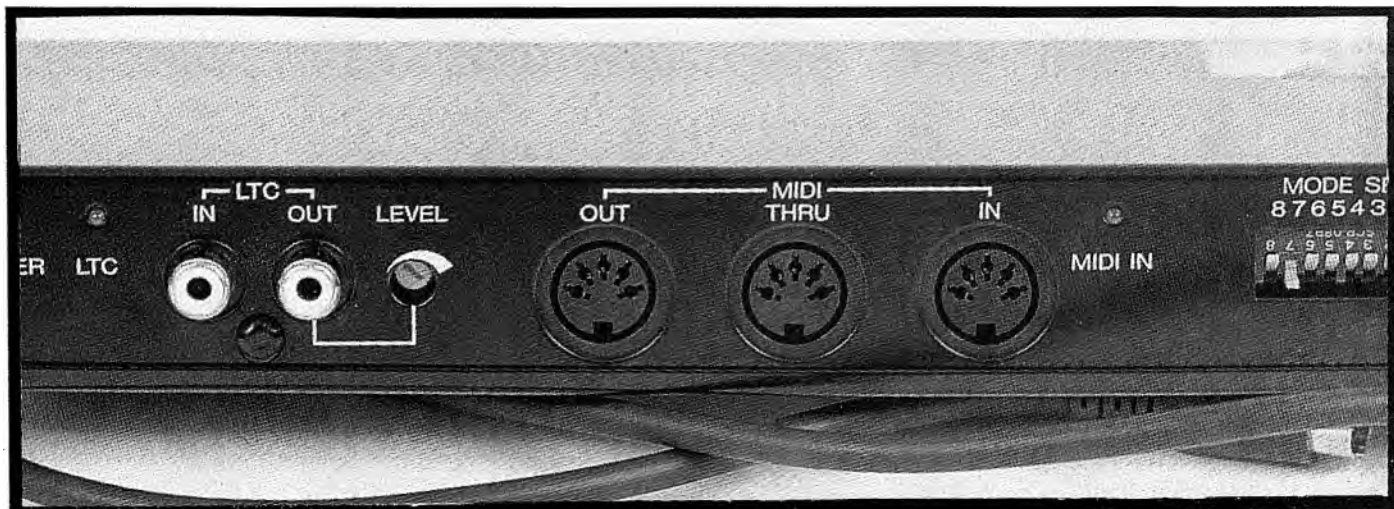
Master Control Strip

To the right of these controls is the Master control strip which contains the Stereo Master fader to set the output level from the stereo buss to your 2-track recorder via the Stereo Out jacks on the back edge of the unit. Above this, there are three Monitor Select buttons which let you select which signals to send to the Monitor Out jacks and the Headphone jacks. You would normally choose to listen to the stereo buss, but you can also monitor the mono mixes present at the Aux 1 or Aux 2 output jacks. Above these selector buttons is a Monitor control to set the level you wish to send to your monitor amplifier via the associated Monitor Output jacks on the back edge - to control your listening levels. Finally, at the top of the Master strip there is a level control for the Headphone output jacks, which are located on the front edge of the unit.

Tape Transport Controls

At the right hand side of the front panel, underneath the cassette housing, are the transport controls and an LED display. At the top of this 'controls' section there is a 'varispeed' or pitch control which is adjustable from +12% to -12%, and there is also a Dolby C On/Off button. The off position is for calibration and alignment

"I would personally choose the Fostex 280 rather than anything the competition has to offer at this point in time."



Unit MTC-1: a brilliant idea

only, and Fostex recommend that you switch the Dolby C noise reduction on when recording SMPTE or other sync signals to tape. Beneath these controls there is quite a large numerical display, which has five functions chosen according to the Display switch lower down in this section. Normally the display shows the tape counter, but you can also display the positions of the two memory locations, and of the auto punch-in and punch-out points (*more on these later*).

Beneath the display are three rows of four buttons. The first row contains the four track record selector buttons, which have LED indicators to show when they are active. The next row has the tape counter reset button, the Memory 1 and Memory 2 buttons (*which you just press at the counter locations you want to remember*), and the Display selector button. The bottom row contains the four auto-locate controls.

There is a return to zero button, and a locate to Memory 1 button. Then the first of the other two buttons lets you select whether to shuttle between memories 1 and 2 (*or not*), and if you choose the Auto button, the machine will remain in Play, and

cycle between these two points — this is a great new feature! If Auto is off, but shuttle is on, then the machine will rewind the tape to memory 1 after it has reached memory 2, and then stop.

Underneath these controls are the usual Rewind and Fast Forward buttons. To the left of these there are two indicator LEDs for the punch-in and punch-out points, and a button to select Automatic Record between these punch points. To enter the punch points you press Auto Record, then press play, and then press the Record button at the punch-in position, and again at the punch out position. Once this is done, you will probably want to set up Memory locations a few bars before and after the punch points so that you can cycle between these to rehearse the drop-in.

When you are ready to make the actual recording, you just roll back to your Memory 1 location (*before the punch-in point*), and press Record and Play simultaneously. When the tape reaches the punch-in point the record LED on the Record button will blink to indicate that it is recording, and this will go off when you pass the punch-out point to indicate that you have dropped out of

record — hopefully with your drop-in perfectly executed! This all worked beautifully on the review model, and this facility certainly makes life a lot easier than manual punch-ins/outs, although you can still do them manually if you prefer. Finally, the Record, Play, and Stop buttons are located at the bottom of this 'controls' section.

Inputs/Outputs

There are eight instrument input jacks, two headphone output jacks, and a punch-in/out footswitch jack on the front edge. On the back edge, at top left, are Stereo Out left and right jacks, Monitor Out left and right jacks, Aux Send 1 and 2 output jacks, and Aux Return left and right input jacks. Further down on the back panel are direct phono output jacks providing direct outputs from the tape tracks. Unlike on the original Model 250, there are no channel inserts for patching external effects into the channels, unfortunately.

There are just two items left to mention on the back panel — the power on/off switch, and the serial port which allows you to connect a Fostex MTC-1 unit. And this is where things start to

get really interesting!

MTC-1

This is a SMPTE reader/generator, a SMPTE/MTC/Direct Time Lock converter, and allows remote control of the Model 280 transport functions via MIDI.

The MTC-1 was actually designed to work specifically with the Fostex R8 multitrack recorder, and will bolt on to the back of this unit. However, it will also work with the Model 280, via a serial port connector, although there is no way to attach it physically to the Model 280. It is contained in a black-painted metal casing about the size of a cigar box. It has two phono connectors for LTC (*longitudinal time code*) in and out, and there is a level control for the output which you may adjust using a screwdriver. There are the three standard Midi In, Out, and Thru sockets, using 5-pin DIN sockets, and an 8-way DIP switch to let you manually select the MIDI channel/SYSEX Device Number, Omni On/Off, MIDI Channel Message Receive On/Off, and the SMPTE Time Code frame rate.

You need to 'stripe' one track of your multitracker with SMPTE

code, say on track 4, first. This will leave just three audio tracks free for recording on your multitracker, but the idea is that most of your instruments will be synchronized via MIDI, and will be mixed through input channels 4 to 8 on your multitracker. Once the code is on tape, you connect the direct output of track 4 to the LTC input of the MTC-1, and connect the MIDI In and Out cables from this to your MIDI equipment.

Your MIDI sequencer must be able to read MIDI Time Code (MTC), or Direct Time Lock (DTL). DTL is very similar to MIDI Time Code, but was actually developed first by Southworth in America for use with their Mac MIDI Interfaces and sequencing software. Southworth are no longer in business, but Mark of the Unicorn also adopted this system for use with their popular Performer sequencer and their MIDI Time Piece interface for the Mac. DTL is claimed to provide more accurate sync than MTC, so some users may prefer this.

The MTC-1 works best with sequencing software which provides a tempo map, as does Performer on the Mac, for instance. Using a tempo map, the sequencer will read the incoming code, and translate this into a map of tempo variations which will match any speed variations on the tape.

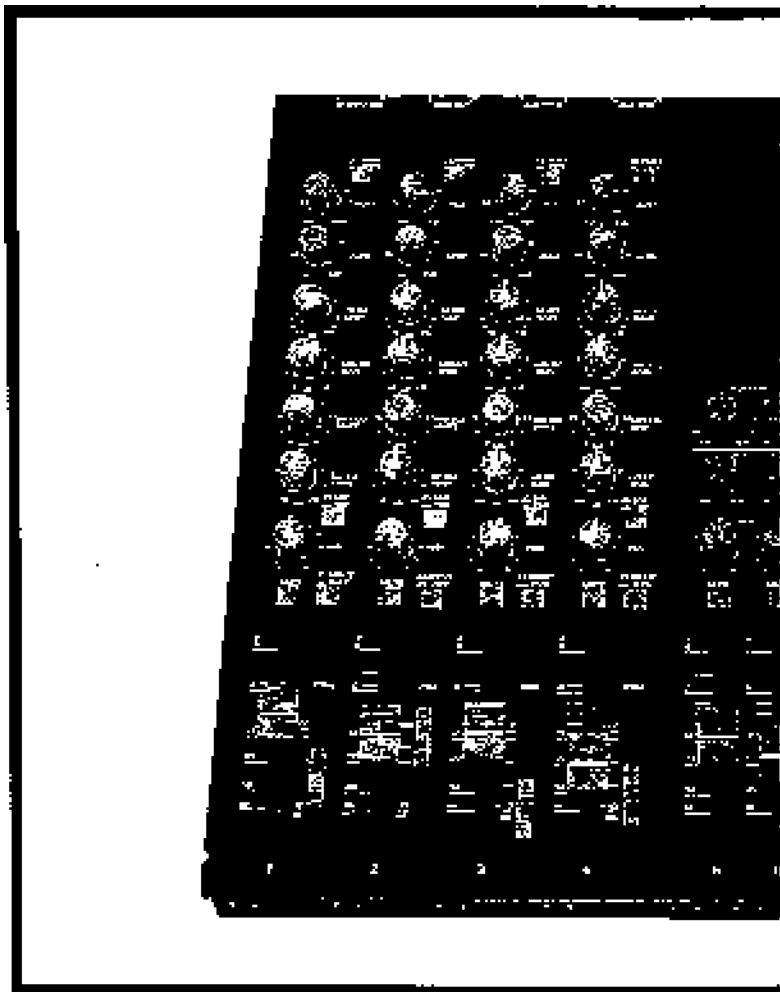
Many of the Model 280 functions can be controlled from a MIDI keyboard using MIDI Note On/Off messages. You can Play, Record, Rewind, Fast Forward, Stop, and so on. The R8 allows extra features such as Locate, Review, and Loop. More comprehensive control of the Model 280 is possible using a 'Shift Key' system. Here you press and hold a specified key, and then press another specific key for the operation you want. You can use shift key commands to run or stop the

SMPTE generator in the MTC-1, and to choose whether to sync the MTC-1 to incoming MTC from your MIDI sequencer, or whether to sync the MTC-1 to incoming SMPTE code and/or to Tach and Direction information coming from the multitracker. You may choose to sync to Tach and Direction information when in fast wind modes, as LTC cannot be read at more than about twice normal speed. You can also set up the Model 280 to record onto particular tracks, to output MTC or Direct Time Lock, set up punch in/out points, and so on. Again, not all the functions available with the R8 are available with the Model 280.

I decided to control StudioVision sequencer on the Mac via MTC from the MTC-1, synchronized to a 25 frames per second SMPTE time code on track 4 of the multitracker. Setting the frame rate and stripping the tape proved to be a very straightforward operation using the shift key commands from a MIDI keyboard connected to the MTC-1. Once this was done, I routed the code back into the MTC-1, and connected the MIDI cables to my Mac MIDI Interface - a Mark of the Unicorn MIDI Time Piece. I booted up a piece of music I was working on in StudioVision, set up the MIDI and SMPTE options to sync Studio-Vision to incoming MTC, and pressed play on the Fostex 280. And there it was - I was controlling the Mac from the multitracker! So I went to record a guitar track onto the Fostex straight away. Everything worked fine, until half-way through the track, StudioVision lost sync and stopped, then a few bars later it regained sync, and carried on! I could only assume that this was a tape drop-out, or perhaps that the level of the SMPTE wasn't exactly right on tape. Still, it proved that the equipment can be used

to drive a MIDI sequencer on the Mac. I figured that it would be an easy matter to drive the multitracker from StudioVision next, but here I was to be disappointed.

prehensible text. But, worse still, it would be a pretty useless manual even if it were a perfect translation, because the overall structure is extremely bad anyway.



Fostex 280: Attractive, no?

Try as I did, there just did not seem to be any way to do this, even though there was a shift key command available for the MTC-1 to synchronize to incoming MTC.

This brings me to another matter - the MTC-1 manual has to be just about the worst I have ever come across! It is obviously a translation from another language (presumably Japanese), and a bad one at that, with plenty of incom-

There is no proper overview of what the MTC-1 does, and how you go about controlling it. Everything is presented in an extremely unfriendly way, with just MIDI note numbers to identify the shift keys for instance, and no look-up table provided to let you see which note names these are on your MIDI keyboard. There are several differences between the R8 and the Model 280, and there is the very briefest

reference to these on the back page – certainly not enough to make things clear.

The most advanced control of the MTC-1/Model 280 is via

tion of syncing a MIDI sequencer to SMPTE/MTC.

I am quite sure that everything would have worked wonderfully well if I had had more

autolocate and automatic punch-in/out features are real winners. I did miss one or two features of the older machine, such as channel inserts and the additional choice of pre-fade aux sends, but these are just small points.

Although the manual for the 280 is not very good, I did manage to more or less completely familiarise myself with the machine in about two days of use. Of course I had the advantage of having used the previous model extensively, so it was really just the new features which I had to learn.

The MTC-1 is a brilliant idea, and I think that many people would wish to use this with the multitracker to synchronize everything to their MIDI sequencer. The idea of controlling everything from the computer is also very appealing, but I do feel that the average user may be badly put off by the MTC-1 manual!

This really did make life difficult for me, and I am sure that many people would simply give up and use something else! So this is something which Fostex should sort out right away! And why not build these features in to the Model 280 anyway, or supply a unit which would bolt on directly to the 280 as the MTC-1 does to the R8?

In the meantime, you can control your sequencer from the MTC-1 quite effectively without too much trouble, and that may be enough to justify the purchase of an MTC-1 if you do not already own a SMPTE/MIDI converter for your sequencer. If you already have one of these, the only reason you would want to use the MTC-1 is to provide more sophisticated control of the Model 280 via System Exclusive through the MTC-1 – and this is just what is not explained properly at all in the MTC-1 manual!

To Buy Or Not To Buy

If you are looking for a basic 4-track 'portastudio' or 'personal multitracker' to record demos, then the Model 280 should be very high on your list of possible purchases.

It has everything going for it – good looks, good feel to the controls, good sound quality via the mixer and off tape. If you are working with MIDI gear, then you should strongly consider buying the MTC-1 unit as well, subject to my comments above.

Having looked at all the competition and compared prices with facilities offered, I would personally choose the Fostex 280 rather than anything the competition has to offer at this point in time!

Mike Collins



MIDI System Exclusive messages from your computer. The manual refers to MTC User Bits, Event Lists, Cue Points, Identity Messages, and so forth, but without any clear explanation of what is going on and how you are supposed to use this stuff! I am very experienced with MIDI and time code, and I found it to be a complete 'pain in the butt' to try to sort out how to operate the MTC-1 past the most basic func-

tion available to 'suss it all out'. But with just a couple of days in which to look at the machine over a weekend, there was no chance!

Impressions

I liked the Model 280 a lot. The styling was neat, and the sound quality was excellent for this type of machine. The extra input channels and the new

AT A GLANCE

Personal Multitracker = 'Portastudio'

4-track cassette recorder running at 3 3/4 ips.

8-channel mixer with two aux sends.

Sophisticated autolocate and punch-in/out facilities.

MIDI control via optional MTC-1 unit.

Further info: Fostex UK
Tel: 081-893 5111

So, you want to know what is selling in their local shops this month? Just take a glance at the new improved **Sharp End**. These pages are updated every month and contain the very latest product prices together with a brief outline of each piece of gear.

Having surveyed over 100 shops nationwide, we feel sure the charts provide *the* most accurate guide to Britain's music retail business*. If you're searching for a new guitar or just looking for a simple fx box, **Sharp End** is the guide you can't do without.

*probably

ELECTRIC GUITARS

① SQUIER STRAT	② FENDER SPECIAL STRAT	③ CHARVELTE	④ MARLIN SIDEWAY DEE	⑤ FENDER US STRAT
£218 - Korean made, Vintage style trem, 3 single coil pickups, Plywood body, the latest in the line of legendary strats	£295 - Japanese made. Standard Strat. 3 single coil pickups and vintage style tremolo	£275 - Charvel pickups, Floyd Rose style trem, solid wood bodies, Maple neck, Rosewood fingerboard. Made in Japan.	£119.50 - Budget strat copy, made in Korea, Plywood body, Maple neck, Locking trem. Rev: Mar '88	£599 - Three single coil pickups, tremolo with redesigned bridge, TDX tone controls Rev: Sep '87

BASS GUITARS

① ARIA SLB II	② SQUIER PRECISION	③ ARIA MAB 20	④ FENDER PRECISION	⑤ HOHNER JACK
£189 - Hardwood body, Maple neck with Rosewood fingerboard, Split and bar pickups, Chrome fittings	£232 - Korean made, 20 fret Rosewood fingerboard, one split pickup	£259 - 22 fret Rosewood fingerboard, Alder body, two pickups, passive (active and 5-string models available)	£347 - Japanese standard model, Maple or Rosewood fingerboard, One pickup, 34" neck	£275 - Headless, two octave neck in Rosewood or Maple, Active Pickups, Maple body. Rev: Aug '87

KEYBOARDS

① ROLAND U20	② KORG M1	③ CASIO 470	④ YAMAHA SY22	⑤ ROLAND D5
£1050 - 5 octave keyboard, 24 bit, 30 voice polyphonic, 64 keyboard patches. Onboard reverb, chorus and pan. Rev: Oct '89	£1575 - 16 bit PCM preset samples, 8-track sequencer, 2 stereo effects. 5 octave keyboard	£199.95 - Four octave keyboard, 220 presets, 110 rhythms, editing and recording facilities. MIDI	£799 - 5 octave keyboard, Joystick vector control, aftertouch sensitive keys, 64 pre-set samples. Rev: May '90	£599 - LA synth with built in drum samples, five octave velocity sensitive keyboard, multitimbral operation, 128 memories

DRUMS

① PEARL EXPORT	② HOHNER LE	③ PREMIER APK	④ TAMA ROCKSTAR	⑤ YAMAHA POWER V
£586 - Deep shell 5 piece kit, chain hi-hat and bass pedals, 6" metal snare, cross-grain Mahogany shells. Rev: Aug '89	£299 - 5 piece budget kit, stands and cymbals included. Rev: Late April '90	£588 - 5 piece advanced power kit, mounted power toms and all hardware, new updated 6" snare drum. Rev: Aug '90	£575 - Japanese made five piece kit, 6" metal snare, Evans heads. Rev: Mar '90	£575 - Five piece power kit, 6" steel snare, 9 ply mahogany shells, one cymbal stand + all other hardware included

SHARP END

Edited by Tom Spencer

MULTIEFFECTS AND SIGNAL PROCESSING

<p>① ZOOM 9002 £349 – Miniature multieffects unit that fits onto your guitar strap. Comp, dist, EQ, pitchshift, etc. Rev: June '90</p>	<p>② BOSS BE5 £245 – Cheap version of ME5. Overdrive/distortion, 12 bit digital delay, chorus and noise suppression.</p>	<p>③ YAMAHA FX500 £389 – Programmable multiFX, comp, distortion, EQ, modulation, reverb, 60 presets, 30 RAM locations. Rev: Aug '89</p>	<p>④ ALESIS QUADRAVERB £439 – Rackmount, 16-bit multi-FX, 3-band EQ, reverb, delay, chorus, flange, pitch shift and phasing. Rev: March '89</p>	<p>⑤ ALESIS MIDIVERB III £399 – Four simultaneous effects with simple editing, 15kHz bandwidth, delay, chorus, reverb and EQ. Rev: Feb '90</p>
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EFFECT PEDALS

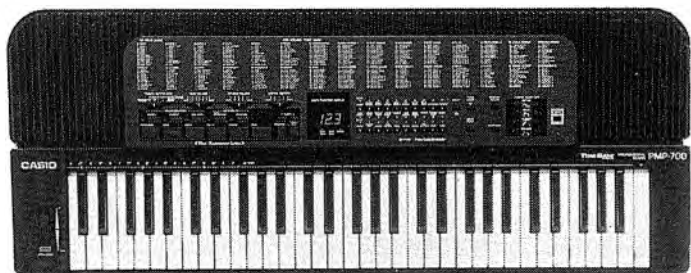
<p>① BOSS CE2 £55 – Mono chorus, rate and depth controls, now made in Taiwan</p>	<p>② BOSS CH1 £72 – Upgraded stereo chorus. Rate, depth, EQ and effect level controls, now made in Taiwan</p>	<p>③ BOSS DS2 £69 – Turbo distortion. Level, tone and distortion controls, plus turbo boost on/off facility</p>	<p>④ DOD FX56 £49 – American metal, level, presence and distortion controls.</p>	<p>⑤ BOSS MZ2 £99 – Digital distortion. Volume, tone, distortion and mode selector controls, five modes with short chorus and delay</p>
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GUITAR AMPS

<p>① PEAVEY BANDIT 112 £299 – 85 watt, 1x12" speaker switchable dual channel combo, low and high gain, overdrive, 4 band EQ.</p>	<p>② MARSHALL JCM 900 £522 – 100W combo, 2x12" Celestion speakers, two footswitchable channels with separate gain and reverb controls</p>	<p>③ LANEY 30 REV £155 – One of the Linebacker series. 30W, 1x10" combo. Single channel, footswitchable gain. Reverb.</p>	<p>④ FENDER DELUX 85 £332 – 65 watt combo, 1x12" combo, solid state, 2 channels, reverb, FX loop, and footswitch. Rev: Sep '88</p>	<p>⑤ SUN MUSTANG £69 – 15 watt practice amp, 1 input, master and two overdrive volumes, treble, mid and bass controls, phones socket</p>
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RECORDING EQUIPMENT

<p>① YAMAHA MT 100 II £389 – 4-track, 4 input channels, 4 bar LEDs, twin speed, DBX, no EQ. Rev: Jul '90</p>	<p>② FOSTEX X26 £329 – 6 input, normal speed 4-track, Dolby B, stereo EQ, 4 Bar LEDs, sync inputs and mains adaptor. Rev: Frank '89</p>	<p>③ TASCAM 05 HS £345 – High speed 4-track, 2 channel record, stereo EQ, DBX, LED bar graphs and power unit. Mk 1 rev: Jan '88</p>	<p>④ TASCAM 01 £499 – Four input, normal speed 4-track, 2-band EQ, varispeed, dbx noise reduction, VU meters. Rev: Dec '86</p>	<p>⑤ FOSTEX 280 £589 – High speed 4-track, eight inputs, auto-location, onboard mixing, LED bar graphs, digital tape counter, Dolby</p>
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● **MANC BANK**

At the Manchester Music Fair, Casio launched their new top-of-the-range Tone Bank keyboard. The PMP-700 is a 5-octave 12-note polyphonic keyboard incorporating Digital Reverb with a 220-sound Tone Bank and 110-pattern Beat Bank. Available right now, the PMP-700 will set you back about £330.

For more information tel. (0533) 559711

● **DAMN FINE GUITARS**

The Puzzle and Quill Top are two new guitars from Vandenberg. The Puzzle features unique puzzle graphics by Adrian Vandenberg and comes in ultra high gloss black with white outline, or alternatively white with black outline. The Quill Top meanwhile has a quilted, bookmatched maple top and mahogany body. The fingerboard is rosewood and the hardware gold finish. Luxury stuff.

Distributed by Peavey Electronics, tel. (0536) 205520

● **EXHIBITIONISTS**

More exhibitors displaying their wares at the 16-Bit Computer Fair, to be held in London on 4th, 5th and 6th of January 1991, include Adamssoft, Amiga, CMV Computers and Compulink. Bytes and Pieces will be premiering the longest piece of animation ever, which should end up in the Guinness Book of Records! Be still, my beating heart.

Contact Jenny Pope on (0726) 69442



● **HOT TUNER**

Why not treat yourself to the Revox H-6 FM tuner, offering ease of use unparalleled. Once connected to the mains and an aerial just push two buttons and wait while the H-6 scans the FM band and logs all available signals, before loading them in alphabetical order. Of the 35 pre-sets available only those with stations loaded are accessible. It comes in black, titanium or champagne gold and will cost you £911.00.

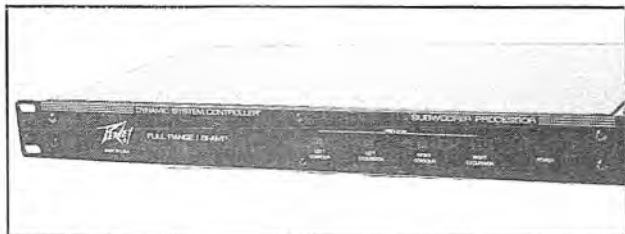
Distributed by F.W.O. Bauch Ltd.
Tel: 081-953 0091



● **VICTOR VECTOR**

Yamaha's TG33 combines advanced AWM sample playback technology with high-performance FM tone generation through an innovative vector synthesis system that lets you create synthesized sound very intimately. 32-note polyphony and Yamaha's Dynamic Voice Allocation system ensure enough notes are available for all instruments in complex arrangements. The Vector Tone Generator retails for £499.

Speak to Martin Tennant on (0908) 371771 ext: 299



● PROCESSED WOOFES

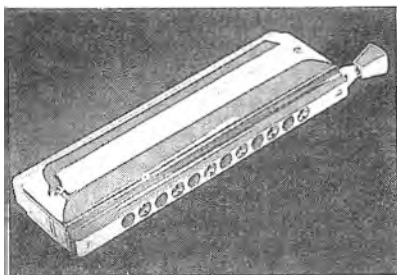
From Peavey, the Dynamic System Controller Subwoofer Processor is designed to be used with a wide variety of enclosure makes, models and configurations. The unit provides low frequency loudness compensation and shiftable subsonic filtering. The subwoofer can be added to an existing, two-way passive sound system. The system also allows each side in the stereo mode to be biamped and totally crossover controlled.

Tel: (0536) 205520

● GUIDE BOOKS

From C-Lab comes the version 3.0 of Notator and Creator. The main feature of the update is a 400 page manual/guide to using the package, including diagrams, pictures and screen dumps and a cross-referenced index. Adaptive Groove recognises rhythmical structures and automatically corrects the position of note values, while Page Preview lets the user correct a page of score before a hardcopy is made. With many other features, the version for Creator retails at £39 and for Notator at £49.

Contact Sound Technology plc. on (0462) 480000



● OSCAR WINNER

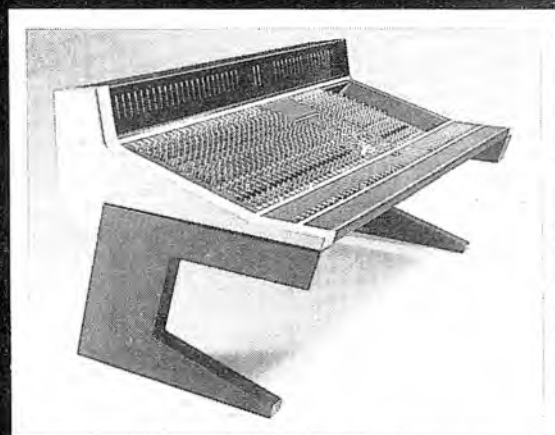
The Amadeus is a new hand-made harmonica from M. Hohner Ltd., designed in association with soloist Will Burger. It has a solid plexiglass body and chrome finish coverplate, with a gold-plated mouthpiece and a slide capped with a gold-plated button. The reeds employed are thicker than is usual, improving response and volume. Mozart would have been proud I'm sure to have such an instrument given his monicker.

Tel: (0222) 887333

● GOING DUTCH

D&R Electronica of The Netherlands have extended their range of mixing consoles with the Marilon series and the Styline in-line mixer. Fully compatible with the Stylyx, the Styline has split EQ and 6 aux sends. The Marilon is an improved version of the Dayner, with 24 busses, extended EQ, higher resolution meters and slide fader in the monitor section. Also, the Avalon series which gives maximum features for the minimum budget. These include 32 buss, full four band parametric EQ, 8 aux sends per module and extensive master section and communications system.

Contact D&R in Holland on 31-2940-18014



● SWEDISH SOUNDS

Swedish microphone manufacturer Milab boast their LSR-2000 mike will bring studio sound to the stage. The wide dynamics ensure a maximum SPL of 133dB, suitable for almost any live application and it will operate at 12-52V phantom. Robustly designed to withstand the rigours of touring, the LSR-2000 is distributed in the UK by Klark-Teknik.

Tel: (0562) 741515



● ERRATA

A couple of apologies are due for mistakes in last month's magazine. Firstly, in Jim Betteridge's review of the Kawai KC-10 Spectra synth, the unfortunate Jim had a bad day, and lost his ability to count! The KC-10 does in fact have 61 keys not the 49 Jim counted, so those of you considering purchasing one get the added bonus of an extra octave, making this synth even better value for money. Secondly, apologies to Stirling Audio Systems, for a mistake in the December issue. Those of you trying to find out more about the BBE Sound range of Sonic Maximisers will no doubt have had little luck in using the phone number supplied. That's because it's wrong! Red faces and sore bottoms for all concerned! The correct number is 071-624 6000, and the chaps are just waiting for your calls.

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● FREE THE SPIRIT

Soundcraft, manufacturers of mega mixing consoles for mega studios, has announced the launch of a range of products aimed at the musicians' market. The range consists of five models - three live consoles (8:3, 16:3 and 24:3) and two studio models (16:8:2 and 24:8:2).

The Spirit Live mixers are finished in a smooth looking grey finish with subtle, yet functional graphics, and they all feature the same high quality electronics and equipment as their bigger brothers, including the awesome Bigfoot studio console. All the desks feature Soundcraft quality mic amp circuitry, high pass filters for live vocals (an almost unique feature), 3-band sweepable EQ, four aux sends (pre or post fader), and four stereo effects send and returns.

Monitoring and metering are taken care of by a stereo 16 segment LED meter, assignable to the stereo output bus or the mono, and both output buses can be monitored either PFL or AFL. The desk features three buses (hence 8:3, etc) - a mono bus and stereo left and right. The Spirit Studio mixers share many of the same features as the Live desks, plus HF/LF shelving EQ including sweepable High Mid and Low Mid controls, FB1 foldback send with pre-fade and pre-cut facility, assignable groups with insert returns with 100mm faders, four aux sends, channel and monitor pan, and ALPS faders. The Master section features 16 segment LED metering, master aux controls, Trim control, HF and LF EQ, two Foldback Monitor controls, and each group is arranged as a stereo subgroup. A built-in oscillator can be switched in at one of four frequencies, and all desks come complete with their own Soundcraft power supply unit.

Further details from Soundcraft: 081-207 5050.

He could be scoring a soundtrack, writing a jingle or arranging a song. When he's done, the result will be much more than a demo.

It's the signature of his talent.

He demands the very best. From both himself and from the tools of his trade.

At Fostex, we have consistently designed recording products which give maximum potential for the money.

And our 280 Multitracker, is no exception to this rule.

Four tracks on cassette with all that's proven best in recorder, noise reduction and mixer technology.

THE FASTEST FOUR TRACK

He demands rapid, responsive, instinctive control at his fingertips.

Rewind to zero is simply not enough. Fumbling for a point on tape will surely dampen the most creative genius.

The 280's autolocator offers the mastery of major studio recorders. Capture up to three separate tape locations into memory for rapid access to the music. Or rehearse that evasive overdub, over and over in cycle mode. Then auto-punch in to record with a footswitch. The big, bright counter shows tape position at all times. What's more, a rear panel socket accepts our optional MTC interface allowing full control of all transport functions via MIDI - from a keyboard or a computer.

The solenoid transport responds swiftly and smoothly to the many demands of creating music.

SUPERIOR AUDIO

It's fact. A rough recording can kill the best of songs. No-one listens past the first few bars. So minimum noise and distortions, flexible EQ and effects capability, are all major considerations when you choose.



FEATURED MIXER

Mixer operation is evident at first sight. Clear layout, positive switching and sensible control knobs that you can grip. With up to eight input channels and two auxiliaries the 280 offers extensive capacity to bring the techniques and effects of bigger studios to the desktop.

Main channel equalisers are the step beyond basic bass and treble. An additional sweep mid control lets you tune instinctively to the subtleties of a sound, and boost or cut them in a mix. Fish out a vocal or brighten up a bass guitar. The result is far greater clarity. And more colourful recordings.

Monitoring is better too. Channel mutes let you set up a stereo mix with greater precision and six peak holding LED meters give clear indications of levels, coming and going.

Chances for error are minimised. It's easier to achieve high standards of recording.

COMPETITIVE EDGE

Painstakingly engineered music and advertising music, have influenced and raised the standards that everyone aims for. Now, the music industry demands that even a basic demo is a production.

The Fostex 280 is totally practical and never exotic. Hands on, it is a serious production tool which helps to achieve the competitive edge in sound. Try it hands on for yourself at your local Fostex dealer, or write to the address below for full details.

THE EDGE

It's here that the Dolby noise reduction systems employed exclusively by Fostex, deliver such an appreciable advantage.

Dolby is the only system specifically designed for use with narrow gauge tape. It doesn't generate 'pumping' side effects which become exaggerated as more tracks are overdubbed. So you can get the full ten layers of sound that four track technique allows, without producing the sonic equivalent of mushy peas.

To deliver the tightest sound, the 280 runs at double standard cassette speed (increasing high end response) and uses the latest Dolby C components.

Above all else, the importance of this 'transparent' noise reduction must not be underestimated. Don't even take our word for it. Prove with your own ears which noise reduction system truly delivers the cleanest, tightest sound, for your money.

Fostex

© Fostex (UK) Ltd. Unit 1, Jackson Way,
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Southall, Middx UB2 4SA.

Telephone 081-893 5111. Fax 081-893 5237



t a l k b a c k

Welcome to your letters page. Each month, the best letter or patch we receive will win a year's subscription to this wonderfully fab gear and right on rag, so get writing

*Talkback,
International Musician and
Recording World,
P.O. Box 381, Mill Harbour,
London E14 9TW.*

P.S. Don't forget to include a return address

★LETTER OF THE MONTH★

DEAR IM&RW,

We sent a tape to you for the IM Competition of the Year to be there on 1st November 'at the latest'. By no means was it finished, but as the comp was so soon we gave it a shot hoping you'd understand, doing the best we could with numerous microphones, a PA system and a couple of hours on a Sunday. Hearing nothing we decided to see the finals to get a taste of what's needed. Arriving on Sunday 11th November as stated at the Marquee Club we found the place totally deserted. Confused, we checked numerous times if we had the right place then went home with our tails between our legs. To top it all, yesterday I bought a copy of IM and found that the competition had been put forward to the 16th with the finals on December 9th. With the extra fortnight we may have been able to send you a better tape but the real complaint is that there were no signs or anything at the Marquee to suggest the competition had ever existed.

We all dig the mag, but we think we've got a point,
Yours, John Griffin, Rochester, Kent

IM&RW replies: Indeed you have a very good point. All of us here at IM can't apologise enough for the competition cock-

up. We kept on putting the final date for entries back in order to give more time to readers unable to record their music at such short notice, but then neglected to inform you all of the change until it was too late. As numerous phone calls to the office and letters of complaint have shown it was a major omission on our part. Lets hope the subscription will go some way toward making amends John.

To those of you who are concerned that a tape rushed out to meet the first deadline will get a raw deal, I can only assure you that originality, musicianship and raw talent were the deciding factors when choosing finalists.

DEAR IM&RW,

With regard to the article on third party sample disk libraries written by one of your freelance consultants, Chris Jenkins. The article was, I felt, poorly researched and insubstantial, amounting to nothing more than a reworking of information that could be found in each sample library's advertising and/or catalogue. Worse still his coverage of Fluffy Banana Music's sample library, of which he is a proprietor, was an abuse of his privileged position as a reviewer. The fact that he ran his own sample library was certainly not explained to me when he originally telephoned on 5th September to ask Four Minute Warning to take part in the article. In fact, one might suggest that his entire motive for writing the article was not, as he put it to me, that the "music software field had dried up" but in fact merely as a means of promoting his own business venture!

I only discovered Mr. Jenkins' duplicity by accident when looking through the classified sections of Melody Maker and Loot and noting that the contact telephone number of an unnamed sample library advertised therein was the same as that which he had given me to contact him with regard to the article. I certainly would not have supplied him with free disks and a catalogue had I realised he was one of our competitors! His questions regarding which of the disks in our library sold particularly well also take on a new resonance.

He mentions that the disks given to him for review were 'not very well prepared'. This is hardly surprising as he asked them to be supplied in a format (S900) that we were not at that time supporting. We had to convert our S1000 disks to the S900 format and as such the disks supplied, as explained to Mr. Jenkins, were intended to give mainly an idea of the sound quality of our samples.

The provision of disks for Mr. Jenkins was achieved within 24 hours of his original phone call by way of helping him, since he claimed that his deadline for the article was imminent. Imagine our pique when the article appeared not in the issue he told us, but the one following. Mr. Jenkins should at the very least have come clean and let your readers know of his involvement and interest in this field. By not doing so he has laid himself open to allegations of bias and duplicity that render the article redundant. I trust you will be able to publish this letter by way of our right to reply to what we think is a very unsavoury article.

Yours faithfully,
Damien Haigh, Four Minute Warning
Music Software, Edgware, Middx

Chris Jenkins replies: I'm sorry you were unhappy with some aspects of my survey, which continues in the following issue and should be judged in its complete form. The first part of the survey was completed immediately after receiving your products; IM's long lead-time explains the unavoidable delay in publication. Having received samples from every sample library currently advertised, I can't agree that the survey was poorly researched.

You'll find most music journalists have some interest in the field they cover - they run studios, work as musicians or buy equipment. I thought it counterproductive to emphasise my interest in Fluffy Banana Music. Obviously I went out of my way to be entirely objective in my assessment of the products reviewed; since your disks are advertised as being S900/950/1000 compatible, surely it was reasonable to judge them as supplied. Finally, as I have been writing for music magazines for many years and Fluffy Banana Music has been running longer than most other sample libraries, I have had ample time to plug FBM products in the past, had that been the aim of the survey!

This month's patch - Pianoflute - is a James Brommage special again



IM REFERENCE GUIDE

Record companies

After you have checked out the venue and the booking has been confirmed, who are you going to invite? Your band may be lucky enough to have a loyal following of fans, but fans alone won't help your band get a record deal. Work out a hit list of record companies from the IM&RW Reference Guide, invite them to see your band perform live. Try to see the record company representative after the gig and ask him/her what they thought of the performance. They might not offer you a multi million deal there and then but most of them will be more than pleased to give you sound advice. Playing live is also a good way of getting that all-important press coverage, invite the local papers and the music papers. Stand out from the hundreds of tapes and requests that pour in to the record companies and papers by making up a small press package which should include a demo tape of no more than three titles, a good picture of the band, not one a mate took on his Instamatic just after you've finished a pub crawl, and a brief biography of the band. Good luck...

A&M Records: 136/144 Kings Rd, London SW6 4LZ. Tel: 071-736 3311.

ABC Records: 1-2 Munro Terrace, London SW10 0DL. Tel: 071-351 3355.

Abbey Recording: 1 Abbey St, Eynsham, Oxford OX8 1PP. Tel: (0865) 880240.

American Activities: 29 St Michaels Rd, Leeds LS6 3BG. Tel: (0532) 742106.

Ariola/Arista: Cavendish House, 423 New Kings Rd, London SW6. Tel: 071-973 8040.

Arrival Records: 39 Leyton Rd, Harpenden, Herts AL5 2JB. Tel: (05827) 5090.

Ark Records: PO Box 45 Liverpool, Merseyside L69 2LE. Tel: (051) 728 8400.

Backs Recording Company: St Mary's Works, St Mary's Plain, Norwich NR3 3AF. Tel: (0603) 624290.

BBC Records: 2114 Woodlands, 80 Wood Lane, London W12 0TT. Tel: 081-576 2602.

Beggars Banquet Records: 17/19 Alma Rd, London SW18. Tel: 081-870 9912.

Big Life Records: 4 New Burlington Place, London W1. Tel: 071-734 3864.

Blanco Y Negro Records: 61 Collier St, London N1. Tel: 071-833 2133.

BMG Records (UK) Ltd: Bedford House, 69-79 Fulham High St, Fulham, London. Tel: 071-973 001.

Castle Communications: 15-16 Northfield Prospect, Putney Bridge Road, London SW18 1PE. Tel: 081-877 0922.

CBS Records: 17/19 Soho Square, London W1. Tel: 071-734 8181.

Chapter 22: 6 New St, Warwick, Warks CV34 4RX. Tel: (0926) 497731.

Cherry Red Records: 25-29 Fulham High St, London SW6 3JH. Tel: 071-371 5844.

China Records: 27 Queensdale Place, London, W11. Tel: 071-602 5031.

Chrysalis Records: 12 Stratford Place, London W1N 9AF. Tel: 071-408 2355.

Circa Records: National House, 60-66 Wardour Street, London W1V 3HP. Tel:

071-491 8527.

Circle In The Square Records: 49 Derby St, Kelvingrove, Glasgow G3 7TU. Tel: (041) 334 5099.

Cold Harbour: The Sunday School, Rotary Street, London SE1 6LG. Tel: 071-620 1383.

Cooking Vinyl: PO Box 1741, London W9 3LA. Tel: 081-960 6000.

Crammed: 1 Clarence House, Rushcroft Rd, London SW2 1JS. Tel: 071-274 2025.

Crazy Horse Records: 56 Fulham Rd, London SW13 6HH. Tel: 071-823 9070.

Creation Records: 83 Clerkenwell Rd, London EC1. Tel: 071-831 7132.

Creole Records: Riva, 216 Promenade, Blackpool FY1 1RU. Tel: (0253) 751019.

Decca International: 1 Rockley Rd, London W14 0DL. Tel: 081-743 9111.

DeConstruction Records: 132 Liverpool Rd, London N1 1LA. Tel: 071-609 8978.

DMC Records: PO Box 89, Slough, Berks SL1 8NA. Tel: (06286) 67276.

EG Music Group: 180 Kings Rd, London SW3. Tel: 071-352 1010.

EMI Records: EMI House, 20 Manchester Square, London W1A 1ES. Tel: 071-486 4188.

Ensign Records: 3 Monmouth Place, London W2 5SH. Tel: 071-727 0527.

Factory Records: 86 Palatine Rd, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 9JW. Tel: (061) 434 3876.

Fellside Recordings: 15 Banklands, Workington, Cumbria CA14 3EW. Tel: (0900) 61556.

Flickknife Records: 2nd Floor, The Metro Store, 5-10 Eastman Rd, 231 The Vale, London W3. Tel: 081-993 6524.

4AD: 17/19 Alma Rd, London SW18 1AB. Tel: 081-870 9724.

Future Earth Music: 59 Fitzwilliam St, Wath-upon-Derne, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S63 7HG. Tel: (0709) 872875.

The Ghetto Recording Company: 1 Star St, London W2 1QD. Tel: 071-258 0093.

GO! Discs Ltd: Son of Go! Mansions, 322 King St, London W6. Tel: 081-748 7973.

Greensleeves: Unit 7 Goldhawk Industrial Estate, Brackbury Rd, London W6. Tel: 081-749 7360.

GWR Records: PRT House, Bennett St, Chiswick, London W4 2AH. Tel: 081-995 3031.

Heavy Metal Records: 28 Talbot Rd, London W2 5LS. Tel: 071-243 0992.

ID Records: 1-2 Munro Terrace, London SW10 0DL. Tel: 071-351 3355.

IRS Records: Bugle Hse, 21a Noel St, London W1 3PD. Tel: 071-439 2282.

Island Records: 22 St Peters Square London W6 9NW. Tel: 081-741 1511.

Intape: Unit 3, 104 Northenden Rd, Sale, Cheshire M33 3HB. Tel: (061) 962 8628.

In Touch: PO Box 358, London W5 1TY. Tel: 081-998 5976.

Jammy Records: 244 Annesland Rd, Glasgow G13 1XA. Tel: (041) 954 1873.

Jazz Cafe Records: 44 Ickburgh Rd, London E5 8AD. Tel: 081-806 9831.

Jive Records: Zomba Hse, 165/167 Willesdon High Rd, London NW10 3SG. Tel: 081-459 8899.

Jungle: Old Dairy Mcws, 62 Chalk Farm Road, London NW1 8AN. Tel: 071-267 0171.

Karbon: 19 All Saint's Rd, London W11 1HE. Tel: 071-229 7105.

Kitchenware Records: The Stables, St Thomas St, Workshops, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE1 4LE. Tel: (091) 232 4895.

Klub: 9 Watt Rd, Hillingdon Industrial Estate, Glasgow G52. Tel: (041) 882 9060.

K-Tel International (UK) Ltd: K-Tel House, 620 Western Avenue, Acton, London W3 0TU. Tel: 081-992 8000.

Legend Music Group Ltd: Symal House, Edgware Rd, London NW9. Tel: 081-905 9191.

London Records (UK): Chancellors House, 72 Chancellors Road, London W6 9RS. Tel: 081-741 1234.

IM REFERENCE GUIDE

Record companies

MCA Records: 72-74 Brewer St, London W1. Tel: 071-437 9797.

Metalworks: The Studio, 28 Durham Rd, London SW20 0TW. Tel: 081-947 8084.

Moles Records: 14 George St, Bath, Avon BA1 2EN. Tel: (0225) 333448.

Motown Records: BMG Records, Bedford House, 69-79 Fulham High Street, London SW6 3JW. Tel: 071-973 0011.

Music For Nations: 102 Belsize Lane, London NW3 5BB. Tel: 071-437 4688.

Mute Records: Lawford House, 429 Harrow Rd, London W10 4RE. Tel: 081-969 8866.

MWM Records: Midgy Hill, Sharperton, Morpeth, Northumberland NE65 7AS. Tel: (0669) 40252.

Nation Records: 19 All Saints Rd, Notting Hill, London W11 1HE. Tel: 071-229 4604.

NBTM Ltd: Suite 304, Royal Liver Building, Liverpool L3 1HT. Tel: (051) 424 2189.

Neat: 71 High St East, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear NE28 7RJ. Tel: (091) 262 4999.

New Music Enterprises: Meredale, The Dell, Reach Lane, Nr Leighton Buzzard, Beds LLU7 0AL. Tel: (0525) 237700.

New Stars Records: Foxhollow, West End, Nailsea, Bristol BS19 2DB. Tel: (0272) 853170.

Oi! Records: 3 Machen St, Grangetown, Cardiff CF1. Tel: (0222) 221825.

One Little Indian: 250 York Rd, London SW11 3SJ. Tel: 071-924 1661.

ON-U Sound Records Ltd: 8 St Bernard's Rd, London E6. Tel: 081-884 3344.

Orange Records: Egerton House, 13 Egerton St, Stockton Heath, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 6DT. Tel: (0925) 62206.

Phonogram Records: Chancellors House, Chancellors Rd, London W6 9RS. Tel: 081-741 1234.

Pickwick Group PLC: The Hyde Industrial Estate, The Hyde, London NW9 6JU. Tel: 081-200 7000.

Polydor Records: 1 Sussex Place, London W6. Tel: 081-846 8090.

Powerstation Records: Cromwell Hse, 13 Ogleforth, York YO1. Tel: (0904) 642451.

PWL: The Borough, 4/7 The Vineyard, Sanctuary St, London SE1 1QL. Tel: 071-403 0007.

RCA Records: Bedford House, 69-79 Fulham High St, London SW6 3JW. Tel: 071-371 9298.

Red Bus Records (International): Red Bus Hse, 45 Broadley Terrace, London NW1.

Tel: 071-258 0324.

Red Flame: PO Box 927, London W3. Tel: 081-993 8634.

Red Lightnin' Ltd: The White House, The Street, North Lopham, Diss, Norfolk IP22. Tel: (0379) 88693.

REL: 40 Sciennes, Edinburgh EH9 1NH. Tel: (031) 668 3366.

Rhythm King Records: 429 Harrow Rd, London W10. Tel: 081-969 8866.

Rough Trade Records: 61 Collier St, London N10. Tel: 071-837 6747.

Sain (Recordiau): Canolfan Sain, Llandwrog, Caernarfon, Gwynedd LL54. Tel: (0286) 831111.

Saydisc Records: Chipping Manor, The Chipping, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos GL12 7AD. Tel: (0453) 845036.

Siren Records: 61/63 Portabelle Road, London W11. Tel: 071-221 7535.

Stern's African Record Centre: 116 Whitfield St, London W1. Tel: 071-387 5550.

Stiff Records: 42-46 St Lukes Mews, London W11 1DG. Tel: 071-221 5101.

Supreme Records: 1A Waterlow Rd, London N19 5JN. Tel: 071-281 6292.

Survival Records: 10 Radbourne Ave, Ealing, London W5. Tel: 081-847 2625.

10 Records: 61/63 Portobello Rd, London W11 3DD. Tel: 071-221 7535.

Temple Records: Shillinghill, Temple, By Gorebridge, Midlothian EH23 4SH. Tel: (087) 530328.

Trashcan Records: 17 Pits Avenue, Leicester LE3 2XL. Tel: (0533) 895547.

Treatment Records: 10A Clifton Rise, New Cross, London SE14 6JP. Tel: 081-692 8935.

Triple Earth Records: 1-8 Whitfield St, London W1P 5RW. Tel: 071-380 0098.

UnAmerican Activities: 29 St Michaels Rd, Leeds LS6 3BG. Tel: (0532) 742106.

Unicorn Records: 191 Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park, London N4 3NG. Tel: 071-281 2821.

Upbeat Recordings: Sutton Business Centre, Restmor Way, Hackbridge Rd, Wallington, Surrey SM6 7AH. Tel: 081-773 1223.

Virgin Records: Kensal House, 553-579 Harrow Rd, London W10. Tel: 081-968 6688.

Vision Discs: PO Box 92, Gloucester GL4 8HW. Tel: (0452) 812442.

Waiting In Vain Rewards: 42 Park View Rd, Neasden, London NW10 1AL. Tel:

081-450 5987.

Warrior Records: PO Box 798, London W14 9NT. Tel: 071-385 3860.

Waterfront Records: 8 Queens Rd, Leigh-On-Sea, Essex S59 1BA. Tel: (0702) 714025.

WEA Records: The Electric Lighting Station, 46 Kensington Court, London W8. Tel: 071-938 2181.

West 4 Tapes & Records: 105 Stocks Lane, Bracklesham Bay, W Sussex PO20 8NU. Tel: (0243) 671238.

Westwood Recordings: Montgomery, Powys SY15 6LU. Tel: (0686) 81427.

Wire Records: 363-365 Harrow Rd, London W9 3NA. Tel: 081-969 9522.

WOMAD: 85 Park St, Bristol BS1 5JN. Tel: (0272) 290242.

Wood Wharf Records: Wood Wharf Studios, 28-30 Wood Wharf, Horseferry Pl, Greenwich, London SE10 9BT. Tel: 081-853 4766.

Words and Music Ltd: 58-62 High St, Billingham, W Sussex RH14 0EB. Tel: (0403) 785131.

World Artist Records (WAR): 10 Manning House, The Drive, Walthamstow, London E17. Tel: 071-734 9827.

World Circuit Ltd: Interchange Studios, 15 Wilkin St, London NW5 3NG. Tel: 071-485 8262.

Zebra International Records: PO Box 32, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire SK8 6DT. Tel: (061) 477 0787.

Zodiac Records: 1099a Finchley Rd, London NW11 0BD. Tel: 081-455 6620.

Zomba Productions: Zomba 1 House, 165-167 Willesdon High Rd, London NW10. Tel: 081-459 8899.

ZTT: 42-46 St Lukes Mews, London W11 1DG. Tel: 071-221 5101.

310 Productions & Publishing: The Cottage, Reading Rd, Lower Basildon, Reading RG8 9NL. Tel: (0491) 671789.

4-D Light Records: 108 Paul St, London E15 4OA. Tel: 081-519 7549.

42nd Street Records: Bauk House, 115 Station Rd, Amersham, Bucks HP7 0AH. Tel: (0494) 725676.

Please send any additions or suggestions to
IM Reference Guide
PO Box 381
London E14 9TW

IM REFERENCE GUIDE

Venues

For musicians and fans alike the IM&RW Venue Guide provides an at-your-fingertips reference to numerous concert venues around the country, from dodgy dives to vast arenas. So whether your trying to push your own band or just checking up on ticket prices and availability, dates or times you need look no further.

ABERDEEN

Capital: (0224) 583141.

Ritz: (0224) 581135.

AYR

Pavilion: (0292) 265489.

BATH

Moles Club: (0225)333448 Contact: Philip Andrews.

BELFAST

Ulster University: (0232) 230939 Contact: Ents Off.

Antrim Forum: (0232) 64131.

BIRMINGHAM

Alexandra Theatre: (021) 643 1231.

Aston University: (021)359 3611 Contact: Ents Off.

Aston Villa Centre: (021) 327 6604.

Dome: (021)622 2233 Contact: Chris Sharples.

Burberrys: (021)643 1500 Contact: Dave Travis.

Kaleidoscope: (021) 550 8601.

Irish Centre: (021) 622 2314.

Irish Centre (Diamond Suite): (021) 622 2314.

Hippodrome: (021) 622 7437.

Hummingbird: (021) 236 4236.

Powerhouse: (021) 643 4715.

Portland: (021) 454 8960.

Moseley Dance Centre: (021) 449 0779.

NEC: (021) 780 4141.

Tower Ballroom: (021) 454.0107.

Town Hall: (021) 236 2392.

BRADFORD

Bradford University: (0274) 33466.

The Palace: (0274) 724982.

St George's Hall: (0274) 752000.

BRENTFORD

Red Lion : 081-560 6181.

Watermans Arts Centre: 081-568 1176.

Monkey Club: (0277) 217084 Contact:

John Maynard.

BRIGHTON

Dome: (0273) 674357.

Old Vic: (0273)24744.

Pink Coconut: (0273) 21628 Contact:

Perry Gaze.

Top Rank: (0273) 732627.

Zap Club: (0273) 775987.

The Richmond: (0273) 603974.

BRISTOL

Bridge Inn: (0272) 298467.

Bristol Poly: (0272) 656251 Contact: Nigel

Gainsborough.

The Studio: (0272) 276193 Contact: Mr Miles

The Thekla: (0272) 293301.

Colston Hall: (0272) 223682.

Hippodrome: (0272) 265524.

Moon Club: (0272) 47147.

CAMBRIDGE

Corn Exchange : (0223) 358977.

Cambridge College of Art: (0223) 460008

Contact: Adrian Blundell.

CARDIFF

University: (0222) 396421 Contact: Ents Off.

St David's Hall: (0222) 371236.

Bogeys: (0222) 591852 Contact: Kevin Kane.

Chapter Arts Centre: (0222)819141

Contact: Franz Conkol.

COVENTRY

General Wolfe: (0203) 688402 Contact:

Bernard Cooke.

Warwick University: (0203) 417220

Contact: Ents Off.

Coventry Polytechnic: (0203) 26140

Contact:Ents Off.

CROYDON

Fairfield Hall: 01-688 9291.

DERBY

Assembly Rooms : (0332) 31111.

Rock House :(0332) 41154.

Confetti's :(0332) 41441.

College of Further Education: (0332) 48846

Contact: Steve Pace.

DUBLIN

University: (0001) 693244 Contact: David

Kilroy.

Baggot Inn:(0001) 766430

Contact: Charlie.

Backstage Bar: (0001) 795723.

SFX: (0001) 826399.

The Point Depot: (0001) 366777/366422.

McGonigals: (0001) 774402

DUNDEE

Dance Factory: (031) 6670214 Contact:

George Duffin (Promoter).

Caird Hall: (0382) 23141.

EASTBOURNE

Congress Theatre: (0323) 411888.

EDINBURGH

Edinburgh University: (031) 667 0214

Contact: Craig McDonald or Paul Ryan (Ents Reps).

Oddfellows: (031) 220 1816.

Playhouse (V1): (031) 557 6631.

Usher Hall: (031) 228 1155.

Negocijon: (031) 225 6313 Contact:

Graham Allison.

Napier College: (031) 453 6799 Contact:

Mick McTurner.

Coasters : (031) 228 3252.

Queens Hall : (031) 668 2019.

Venue: (031) 226 4527 Contact: George Duffin (Promoter).

EXETER

University: (0392) 263263.

GLASGOW

Barrowlands: (041) 552 4601.

Cotton Club: (041)332 0712 Contact:

Michael Caulder.

Mayfair: (041) 332 3872.

Henry Africas: (041) 221 6111 Contact:

Ricky Brown.

Glasgow University: (041) 339 8697

Contact: Ents Off.

Pavilion: (041) 332 1846.

SECC: (041) 221 1769.

GUILDFORD

Civic Hall: (0483) 444555.

HUDDERSFIELD

Town Hall: (0484) 430808.

HULL

Adelphi Club: (0482) 48216 Contact: Paul Jackson.

City Hall: (0482) 226655.

Tower : (0482) 224535.

University: (0482) 445361 Contact: Ents Officer.

INVERNESS

Eden Court: (0463) 221718.

LEEDS

Warehouse: (0532) 430432 Contact: DNA

IM REFERENCE GUIDE

Venues

Entertainments (0532) 310221.
Duchess of York: (0532) 453929 Contact:
Ruth Thompson.
University: (0532) 439071 Contact: Ents Off.
Polytechnic: (0532) 752796 Contact: Ents
Off.

LEICESTER

DeMontfort Hall: (0533) 544444.
Leicester University: (0533) 556282
Contact: Dave Howard.
Leicester Poly: (0533) 555576 Contact:
Julian Hickman.
Princess Charlotte: (0533) 553956
Contact: Andrew Wright.
O Jays: (0533) 513240
Royal Mail: (0533) 22813.

LIVERPOOL

Mardi Gras: (051) 647 6544 Contact: Dave
Griggs.
Empire: (051) 709 1555.
Everyman: (051) 708 9545 Contact: Alan
Peters (*Suns only*).
Royal Court (V2): (051) 709 4321.
Cumberland: (051) 236 0236.
World: (051) 709 4321

LONDON

Albany Empire: 081-691 3333 Contact:
Penny Bond.
Astoria: 071-434 0403.
Borderline: 071-437 8595.
Brixton Academy: 071-274 1525.
Camden Palace: 081-340 4964.
Canarvon Castle: 071-485 1858.
Central London Poly: 071-636 6271
Contact: Ents Off.
Cricketers: 071-735 3059 Contact: Jim
Driver.
Dingwalls: 071-267 4967.
Dominion: 071-580 9562.
The Flag: 081-450 4506 Contact: Frank
Drake.
Fridge: 071-326 5100.
Goldsmiths College: 081-692 1406
Contact: Ents Off.
Hackney Empire: 081-985 2424/986 9666.
Half Moon, Putney: 081-788 2387.
Hare and Hounds: 071-226 2992 Contact:
Robin McKidd (*Thurs only*).
Hammersmith Odeon: 081-748 4081.
Hippodrome: 071-437 4311

Kilburn National Ballroom: 071-328 3141.
London Arena: 071-538 1212.
Marquee: 071-437 6601.
Mean Fiddler: 081-961 5490 Contact:
David Phillips.
New Merlins Cave: 071-837 2097.
100 Club: 071-636 0933.
Powerhaus: 071-837 3218.
Rio Cinema: 071-254 6677 Contact:
Ramsey Cameron.
Rock Garden: 071-836 1929
Contact: Sean McDonald.
Sir George Robey: 071-263 4581.
Sir Walter Scott: 071-272 5601.
Town & Country Club: 071-284 0303.
University of London Union: 071-580 9551
Contact: Ents Off.
Underground: 081-760 0833 Contact:
Christine Craig.
Venue New Cross: 081-692 4077.
Wembley Arena/Stadium: 081-900 1234.
Woolwich Coronet: 071-221 0123 Contact:
Mr Linga.
Zeetas: 081-785 2101 Contact: Mark Fuller.

MANCHESTER

Band on the Wall: (061) 832 6625
Contact: Ian Crow.
Boardwalk: (061) 228 3555
Free Trade Hall: (061) 834 0943.
G-Mex: (061) 832 9000.
Hacienda: (061) 236 5051 Contact: Mike
Pickering.
International: (061) 224 5050
Ritz: (061) 236 7515.
University: (061) 236 9114 Contact: Ents Sec.

MARGATE

Winter Gardens: (0843) 292795.

MILTON KEYNES

Woughton Centre: (0908) 660392.

NEWCASTLE

City Hall: (091) 261 2606.
Mayfair: (091) 232 3109.
Newcastle Poly: (091) 232 8761 Contact:
Ents Off.
Riverside: (091) 261 4386
Pigsty: (091) 258 7914
University: (091) 232 8402 Contact: Ents
Off.

NORWICH

University East Anglia: (0603) 259656.

NOTTINGHAM

Rock City: (0602) 412544 Contact: Mark
Spivey.
Royal Centre: (0602) 482626.
Mardi Gras: (0602) 862368
Garage: (0602) 501251
Kool Kat: (0602) 474290.
Eden: (0602) 474290

OXFORD

Oxford Poly: (0865) 819165 Contact: Tim
Knock.

PORTSMOUTH

Guildhall: (0705) 824355.
Basins: (0705) 824728 Contact: Chris
Abbot.

READING

Majestic: (0734) 586093.
Hexagon: (0734) 591591.
Reading University: (0734) 860222
Contact: Jim Grice.

SHEFFIELD

University Octagon: (0742) 768555.
City Hall: (0742) 734550.
Leadmill: (0742) 754500 Contact: Ents Off.
Limit: (0742) 730940 Contact: George
Webster or Steve Bolderstone.

SOUTHAMPTON

Joiners Arms: (0703) 225612
Mayflower: (0703) 229771.
West Indian Centre: (0908) 660392.
University: (0703) 586122 Contact: Ents
Off.

SOUTHEND

Pavilion: (0702) 351135.

STIRLING

Albert Hall: (0786) 79000.

SWANSEA

University: (0792) 205678 Contact: Ents
Off.

Coach House: (0792) 49228

TRENT

Polytechnic: (0602) 418418.

WARRINGTON

Legends: (0925) 36658
Parr Hall: (0925) 34958

WHITLEY

Whitley Bay Ice Rink: (091) 253 0121.

WOLVERHAMPTON

Civic Hall: (0902) 312030.

IM REFERENCE GUIDE

Promoters

So you're a band, with all the gear, all the songs and all the experience of playing back rooms in local pubs that you could ever want. What's the next step? Well even in this age of studio wizardry the majority of bands are still picked up by the major record labels on the strength of their live performances. This means you need a good promoter to ensure a decent venue, make sure that your music is heard on local radio and that the band appears in every publication possible. If posters advertising your imminent stage appearances don't materialise on every available space then something is badly wrong.

Even after the all-important first tracks are cut the promoter will be working behind the scenes on your behalf, pushing your music and bullying, cajoling or using whatever tactics necessary to get you airplay. It's a dog eat dog world and especially in the music business it isn't a case of pure talent winning through in the end, or not without as much help as a band can muster. So pick up the phone and try to impress one of this little lot that your band is worth their investment of time and money.

Aberdeen Rock Ltd: 10 Belmont St,
Aberdeen A.B.1.1.J.E Tel: (0224) 641931
Adrian Hopkins Promotions Ltd: 126
Wigmore St, London W1 HOJJ
Tel: 071-486 9691

ADT Enterprises: 154a Halton Moor
Rd, Leeds LS15 OAW Tel: (0532)
326080

Aiken Promotions: 147 Stranmillis Rd,
Belfast 9, Nothem Ireland Tel: (0232)
662047

Air Ltd: Air Hse, 17 Clyde Terrace,
Spennymoor, Co Durham DL 16 7SE Tel:
(0388) 814632

Alec Leslie Enterprises: 134 Lotts Rd,
London SW10 O RJ Tel: 071-351 4333

Allied Agency & Management: 76
Tottenham Court Rd, London W1P 9PA
Tel: 071-636 1174

Alma Music Ltd: 8 Swift St, Fulham,
London SW6 5AG Tel: 071-736 1772

AMFM London Ltd: 188 Brixton Rd,
London SW9 6AR Tel: 071-735 5719

Andy Green Promotions: 9 Bridge St,
Musselburgh, Midlothian Tel: (031) 665
5477

Authur Howes(London)Ltd: 8 Bridford
Mews, London W1N 1LQ Tel: 071-637
7754

Asgard: 125 Parkway, London NW1 7PS
Tel: 071-387 5090

Barry Clayman Concerts Ltd:
144 Wigmore St, London W1H 9FF Tel:
071-935 6276

Barry McKay International Music Ltd:
14 Vane Close, Rosslyn Hill London
NW3 5UN Tel: 071-794 5193

Barrucci Leisure Services Ltd:
8 Relton Mews, Cheval Place, London
SW7 1ET Tel: 071-225 2255

Basil Douglas Ltd: 8 Georges Terrace,
London NW1 8XJ Tel: 071-722 7142

BKO Productions: 81 Harley Hse,
Marylebone Rd, London NW1 5HN Tel:
071-486 8794

Brian Shaw Management Ltd:
225-227 High St, Epping, Essex Tel:
(0378) 78533

Bruno Peek Ltd: Amma Sewell Hse, 26
Church Plain, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk
NR30 1NE Tel: (0493) 843692

Chance Promotions: 110 Market St,
West Houghton, Bolton BL5 3AZ Tel:
(0924) 813033

Cosmos Agency & Promotions:
57 St. Stephens St, Edinburgh EH3 5AH
Tel: (031) 226 4527

Cromwell Management: The Coach Hse,
9a The Broadway, St. Ives, Huntingdon,
Cambs PE17 4BX Tel: (0480) 65695

Dance Factory: 9 Blackness Rd, Dundee
DD2 1ET Tel: (0382) 68293

Davenport Concert Promotions:
Davenport Theatre, Buxton Rd,
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 7AH Tel: (061)
483 3801

David Hull Entertainments: 102 Great
Victoria St, Belfast BT2 7BE Tel: (0232)
240360

David Jones Associates: Arts Theatre,
Great Newport St, London WC2 H7JA
Tel: 071-836 4119

Derek Block Promotions: Richmond
Hse, 12-13 Richmond Buildings, Dean
St, London W1V 5AF Tel: 071-434 2100

Derek Rawden: P.O. Box 487,
Manchester M60 2DR Tel: (061) 773
9071

Dolphin Concert Productions:
The Splendlove Centre, Charlesbury,

Oxford OX7 3PQ Tel: (0608) 811311

Drew Taylor Holdings Ltd: Suite 1, 29
High St, Biggar, Lanarkshire ML12 6DA
Tel: (0899) 2066

Entertainment Promotions Ltd:
73 Laugherae Rd, St Johns, Worcester
WR2 5LY Tel: (0905) 421412

Fame Promotions: 106 Wilsden Ave,
Luton, Beds LU1 5HR Tel: (0582)
456213

The Flying Music Co Ltd: 11 Rushton
Mews, London W11 1RB Tel: 071-221
7799

Geoff Davey Organisation:
Ramper Farm, Wragby Rd, East Lincoln
LN2 4QY Tel: (0522) 750621

Greenwich Festival: 25 Woolwich New
Rd, Woolwich, London SE18 6EU Tel:
081-854 8888

Harvey Goldsmith Entertainments:
2nd Floor, Avon Hse, 360 Oxford St,
London W1N 9HA Tel: 071-409 1984

Head Music:
1/2 Munro Terrace, London SW10 1DL
Tel: 071-351 3355

Hedley Enterprises: 71 Rutland Rd,
Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 1ND Tel:
(9246) 79976

Iietherington Seelig: 3rd Floor, Queens
Theatre, 51 Shaftesbury Ave, London
W1 Tel: 071-434 3531

Iain Hill Promotions:
Suite 9, 89 Great Portland St, London
W1 Tel: 071-631 1783

International Leisure & Arts:
8 Relton Mews, Cheval Place, London
SW1 Tel: 071-225 2255

John Boddy Management Services:
10 Southfield Gardens, Twickenham
TW1 4SZ Tel: 081-892 0133

IM REFERENCE GUIDE

Promoters

John Highham International Artists:
16 Lauriston Rd, London SW19 4TQ
Tel: 081-946 0467

John Martin Productions: Wilbledon
Theatre, 93 The Broadway, London
SW19 1QG Tel: 081-543 4457

John Miles Organisation: Cadbury
Camp Lane, Clapton in-Gordano, Bristol
BS20 9SB Tel: (0272) 854675

Kennedy Street Enterprises Ltd:
31 Stamford St, Altrincham, Cheshire
WA14 1ES Tel: (061) 941 5151

Kent Soul Festival Promotions:
45 Essella Rd, Ashford, Kent TN24 8AJ
Tel: (0233) 33652

The Kruger Organisation: P.O. Box 130,
Hove, East Sussex, BN3 6QU Tel: (0273)
550088

Limelight Promotions Ltd: 98 North St,
Scarborough, Yorks YO11 1DE
Tel: (0723) 371255

Lindsay Music Entertainments:
23 Hitchin St, Biggleswade, Beds
Tel: (0767) 316521

Line-Up Promotions: 9a Tankerville
Place, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE2 3AT
Tel: (091) 281 6449

Livewire Events Ltd: P.O. Box 244,
Barnet, Herts EN4 0EW Tel: 081-364
1212

The Loveday Partnership: 15 Manfred
Court, Manfred Rd, Putney, London
SW15 2RT Tel: 081-870 7374

Macpherson Associates: Cloud Hse,
Downs Rd, Studal, Dover CT15 5DP Tel:
(0304) 372960

Magna Grecia Agency:
6 Palace St, London SW1E 5HY Tel:
071-630 5184

Mam Agency Ltd: Mam Hse, 24-25 New
Bond St, London W1Y 9HD Tel: 071-
629 9255

Manchester Festival: Central Library,
St. Peters Sq, Manchester M2 5DP Tel:
(061) 228 1658

Marshall Arts: Leeder Hse, 6 Erskine
Rd, London NW3 3AJ
Tel: 071-586 1422

Mel Bush Organisation Ltd: Zibeon

6HX Tel: (0202) 34261

Mervyn Conn Organisation: Mervyn
Conn Hse, 14 Orange St, London
WC2H 7ED Tel: 071-930 7502

Midas International Sports: 8 Hotham
Rd, Putney, London SW15 1QB Tel:
081-785 6356

Midland Concert Promotions:
James Hse, Northgate, Aldridge, Walsall,
West Midlands WS9 8TH Tel: (0922)
58355

Mike Lloyd Artistes: 23 High St,
Newcastle Under Lyme, Staffs ST5 1QZ
Tel: (0782) 625331

Mrs Casey Music: Glorishers, Thame,
Oxon OX9 3LP Tel: (084) 421 2231

Nicholas Promotions:
30 Cleaver Park, Belfast BT9 5HY Tel:
(0232) 381420

Nicholas Rubenstein Organisation:
26 Pine Rd, Winton, Bournemouth,
Dorset BH9 1NA Tel: (0202) 530627

NJF/Marquee: Shepperton Studio
Centre, Studios Rd, Shepperton, Middx
Tel: (0932) 566777

Outlaw: 38 West St, London WC2H
9NH Tel: 071-379 3212

Oxford Pro Musica:
40 George St, Oxford OX1 2AQ Tel:
(0865) 240358

Phil McIntyre Promotions:
212-218 Miller Hse, Lancaster Rd,
Preston PR1 2RY Tel: (0772) 201344
Prelude: 36 Searchwood Rd,
Warlingham, Surrey CR3 9BA Tel:
(08832) 3118

Pure Organisation Ltd: 40 Craven St,
London WC2 Tel: 071-839 5458

Raymon Gubbay Ltd: 125 Tottenham
Court Rd, London W1P 9HN Tel: 071-
387 4206

Robert Luff Ltd: 294 Earls Court Rd,
Kensington, London SW5 9BB Tel: 071-
373 7003

Rock Trade: 5 Lefroy Rd, London W12
9HN Tel: 081-749 2757

Ross Bowie Organisation: 'Mayfair' 490
Sauchie

hall St, Glasgow G2 3LW Tel: (041) 332
3872

Serious Productions: 42 Old Compton
St, London W1V 5PB Tel: 071-437 4967

Sherman Productions:
3 Homer St, London W1H 1HN Tel:
071-723 2018

Shoot Promotions: 31 Silver Spot Close,
Rainham, Medway, Kent Tel: (0643)
31626

Skinners Bottom Festival: Glebe Hse,
Probus, Truro, Cornwall TR2 4JX Tel:
(0726) 883456

Sound Advice: 2 Royal Parade, 245
Dawes Rd, London SW6 7RE Tel: 071-
385 2030

Spotlight Promotions:
51 Acton Lane, London NW10 8UX Tel:
081-961 6093

Stanley Sher Enterprises Ltd:
28 Oakhampton Court, Park Ave, Leeds
LS8 2JF Tel: (0532) 731348

Templar Concert Promotions: 40 Triton
Sq, London NW1 3HG Tel: 071-387
4599

Tito Burns: 23 Hamilton Hse, Hall Rd,
London NW8 9PN Tel: 071-286 2533

TMC Group:
5-9 Grey St, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1
6EE Tel: (091) 232 2803

Tryclops Ltd: 115 New Barn Lane,
Cheltenham, Gloucester GL52 3LG Tel:
(0242) 234045

Western Concert Promotions:
1 Parliament St, Exeter, Devon EX4 3DZ
Tel: (0392) 31307

Wilcox Organisation:
Zodiac Hse, 1099a Finchley Rd, Golders
Green, London NW11 Tel: 081-455
6620

Womad Productions:
85 Park St, Bristol, Avon BS1 5JN Tel:
(0272) 290244

World Earthbeat:
61a Bold St, Liverpool L15AG Tel:
(051) 708 7885

Yellow Ballon Productions: 'Micadam'
21 Fairmile Ave, Cobham, Surrey KT11
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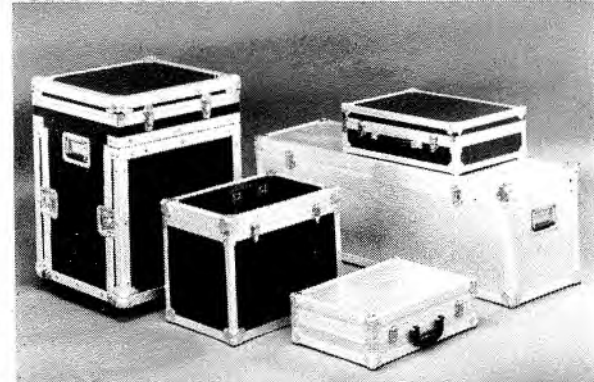
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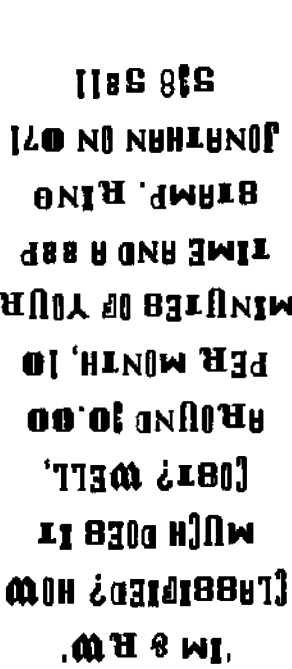
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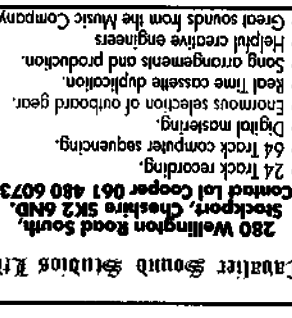


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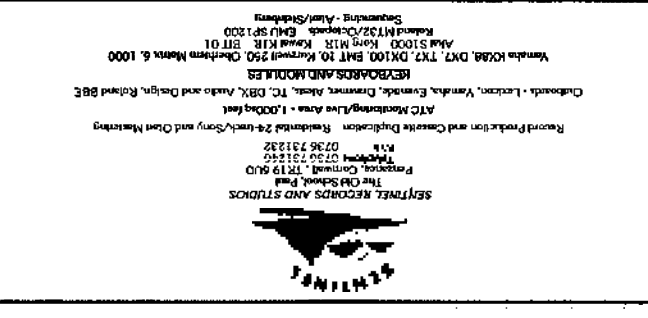
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IM&RW requires an editor and an assistant editor for a 64-page guitar section. Applicants should have journalistic experience, a thorough knowledge of guitars, guitar accessories, and the industry, a resonance with currently popular trends in music, ability to meet deadlines in a small team, and strong production values and visual awareness. Salary negotiable to experience.

Write in confidence with C.V. to:

Steve Newbolt
Personnel Manager
PO Box 381 Mill Harbour
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or phone 071 987 5090

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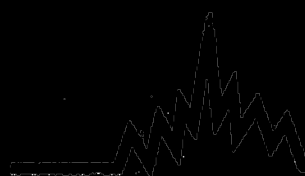
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RICKENBACKER made 1964 full size 3 pickup & tremelo fireglow Lennon-type excellent condition inc. original silver case £750 Tel: 0656 654789.

EKO semi-acoustic violin bass (Beatle type) £180. Yamaha PSS 580 keyboard, as new £90. Tel: 0273 493659.

WASHBURN KCL TD white solid guitar plus Peavey 60W amp. As brand new, unwanted gift. £180 ono. Phone Steve on 0332 670868.

CASIO V210 rack synth, Aria rack reverb, Ibanez guitar to midi converter compatible with Roland G series guitars, £400/swap for Roland GR700 floor synth - Tel: 0934 636977 Bristol area.

ROCK GUITAR LESSONS for beginners, full lead guitar course on cassettes, no need to read music, no jargon used, easy to follow jazz £10.95 to M. Harrison, 9 St Johns, Queens Rd, Ilkley, Yorks.

WANTED: beginner needs cheapish left hand Les Paul Custom or standard electric guitar. Also need amp & extras. Contact Mark, 119 Croydon Road, Keston, Kent with price & details.

CLASSICAL SPANISH guitar by Vicente Sanchis Badia. Really as new, superb mellow sound. Bargain £350. Tel: 0305 854177.

YAMAHA G100 combo twin channels & reverb. Pristine condition £120 ono. 0483/763225 (Steve).

GUILD D35SL acoustic original case & receipts offers over £600. Gibson Hummingbird custom case & pick up £600. Tel: Keith 0527 25812

WANTED: Non-working/broken Marshall Gear required by amateur repairman. Anything considered. Phone Andy (0260) 279657 evenings.

EFFECTS

BOSS RDD20 Delay £130, Columbus compressor & tube driver £15 each. Also Hohner B2AFI fretless, black, 2H/B £150 ono. Phone Mark 0947 880 564, North Yorkshire.

WANTED: Roland GP8 guitar processor. Clive, 0273 307353

THIRD GENERATION GA3 three way stereo active crossover. 19" Rack-mounting, IU, variable frequency control. Inputs and outputs XLR. Excellent condition and boxed. £130.00. Phone: Francis (0905) 840400.

DRUMS & ELECTRONIC PERCUSSION

ALESIS HR16 stereo samples drum machine £200 Bristol 0272 681102.

LUDWIG 400 snare £110. Pearl 14" x 5" snare £60. PSL Wood snare £30. All excellent condition Tel: (0403) 52418.

YAMAHA DX7 with super-mas expander. Immaculate £475 ono. Yamaha RX8 drum machine. Immaculate £195. Tel: 0227-730723.

ROLAND R5 human rhythm composer, £380; Yamaha DD5 4 x MIDI pads, £60; Yamaha MT100 Hi-speed 4-track, £250; Tel: Kevin (0270) 872558 (Cheshire).

SIMMONS Portakit wanted for use as a spare only, must be cheap! Tel: (0926) 400512.

MISCELLANEOUS

I AM A SONGWRITER in the Nottingham area, looking to team up with an enthusiastic vocalist (preferably male). Contact Steve on 0636 830779.

FRONTLINE 8 into 2 stereo keyboard mixer - rack mount 2U - £75 Ibanez stereo chorus pedal £35. Bristol 0272 681102.

'ANG ON A SEC' don't sell it, ring me. 081-390-7324.

'FUTILE MASS' 'Gothic Rock' band require support gigs in and around Yorkshire area. Ring us, you'll be surprised..... Rob on 0947-603 154 Ex 43.

NEED EXTRA MONEY? - work from home part time. Details from Dept M2, 43 Iver Lane, Cowley Uxbridge, Middx UB8 2JD.

VOCALIST WANTED: 23ish. No beginners, Chillii Peppers, Zeppelin, Suicidal Tendencies, Queensryche, Living Colour Ambition, Talent, Humour, essential. East London based band. Dave: 081-529-2497.

"BACK AGAIN" Sammy Mitchell on steel guitar, ex star guitarist with Felix Mendelssohn's Hawaiian Serenaders. Strec & plectrum guitar multitrack cassette. £6.50 + sup P&P. Tel: 0782 614356.

NORWEGIAN POP-ARTIST looks for a manager in England. Karamanski, L. Hervigsv. 37C, 3035 Drammen, Norway. Tel: 010 47 3 810963.

MUSIC & SOFTWARE unused £140 ono. Roland S10 sampler flightcased with discs £360 ono. Ram 10 mixer 10-4-2 channels £200 ono. Ring Andy 081-677-6793.

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR PEN PALS WORLDWIDE? Then write to The International Pen Friends Association, PB19, B.-3080 Tervuren, Belgium. People who are interested to represent the Association in their country or area are invited to apply.

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YAMAHA TX7 FM expander real CX7 sounds for just £200. Bristol 0272 681102.

YAMAHA CP80 Electric grand piano, good condition £850 ono. Tel: 081-961 2794 contact: Francis.

EMU Proteus/1 Expander, mint condition, boxed. Cost £899.00. Will accept £775.00 o.n.o. Tel: 0272 572881.

RECORDING & COMPUTERS

KORG T3EX c/w Memory Expander Kit 1 month old. Full flight case £1999. Tel: Steve, 0224 646298 day, 0467 32999 night.

C1 YAMAHA music computer with software £2000 o.n.o. Write to: L. Valbom, Bridges Hall, University of Reading, Berkshire RG6 2BE.

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ROLAND TR62-6, immaculate & boxed, plus Yamaha DX100, boxed, £270 The pair Will split - £160 each. Ask for Lee - Tel: 0784 401795.

YAMAHA DX7 with super-mas expander. Immaculate £475 ono. Yamaha RX8 drum machine. Immaculate £195. Tel: 0227-730723.

ROLAND R5 human rhythm composer, £380; Yamaha DD5 4 x MIDI pads, £60; Yamaha MT100 Hi-speed 4-track, £250; Tel: Kevin (0270) 872558 (Cheshire).

We have introduced a free service for readers looking to sell second-hand equipment through the pages of International Musician. Just fill in the form and send it back to Jonathan MacDonald, International Musician Classifieds, Northern & Shell Building, PO Box 381, Mill Harbour, London E14 9TW.

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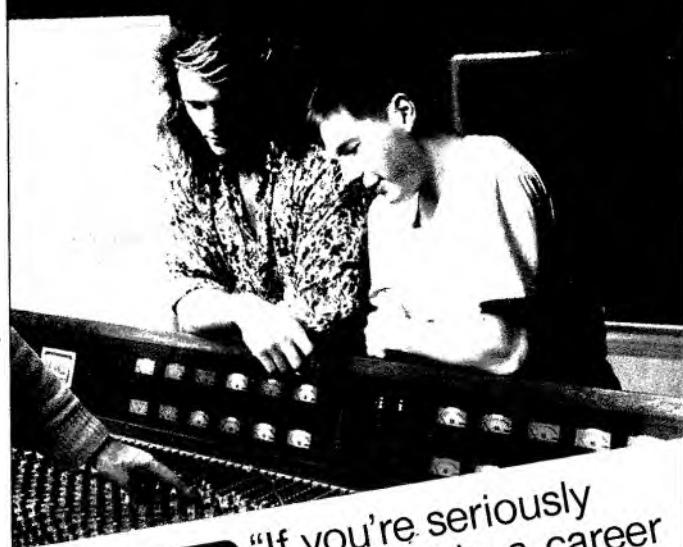
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