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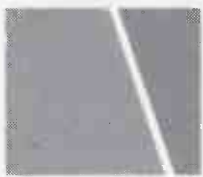
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# ELO<sub>~</sub> THE FACELESS SUPERSTARS

*Bev Bevan charts the rise of a multi-national corporation with Beat's Adam Sweeting.*

**N**o-one is ever going to write a baffling mystery story about ELO,' claims the band's biography from Jet Records. 'The industry is still adjusting to the new multi-platinum standards that "A New World Record" helped to establish.' Inevitability has become the name of the game for ELO, with sold-out world tours and albums virtually guaranteed gold record status on advance orders alone.

Drummer Bev Bevan was a founder-member of the Electric Light Orchestra, along with Jeff Lynne and Roy Wood. Wood's departure left Bevan as effective co-leader of the band, which he and Lynne built from scratch. Since Jeff Lynne writes all the band's material, Bevan found himself in an administrative role. "In the early days, I was looking after all the mundane things, like paying everybody's wages and taking care of tax and VAT." Nowadays, ELO can afford to employ people to take care of business. "I started doing the interviews", Bev continues, "and I virtually do all of them now. Last year I did a couple of promotional tours on my own, going to America or Japan or Europe and talking to people about the album and meeting people. Just generally being a PR man and spreading the gospel."

Not so much a rock and roll band, more a multi-national corporation. Bev Bevan likes success, but he's enough of a realist to be aware that certain things have been lost along the way. Intimacy, for example. ELO have been criticised for their lavish stage presentation, which has included a five-ton

space-ship and lasers. If you're playing to 20,000 people in a vast stadium, there's no getting away from the fact that most of the audience will be unable to see or hear properly.

"It started in the USA and it's spread everywhere now, this trend of playing in big 20,000 seater places. If you haven't got any sort of a stage show, the people in the bad seats - which is like three-quarters of the auditorium - can hardly see you and the sound is bad. So at least with this big stage set the further away from the stage you are, the better the visuals become." This may be true, but it ain't what I call rock and roll. Bevan agrees that it's a bit of a rip-off.

"It's the fans' decision of course, no-one's forcing them to go and buy the tickets. But I know what you mean. There are certainly bands that I'd like to see, and I look to see where they're playing and I think oh no, I'm not gonna go and see them there! I saw Elton John and Wings and Queen when they were playing in the smaller theatres, and it was really enjoyable to see them in that sort of venue. Then I saw them again in bigger venues, and of course you do lose so much of the rapport between an artist and the audience. But what's the answer? It's a problem for us and for all the major bands. It's very hard to overcome it now."

You could always do a week at Hammersmith, I suggest. "Well last year we did eight nights at Wembley Empire Pool, which holds about 8,000. We could have opted for somewhere like Wembley Stadium and done

it all in one night, but we felt that would be taking things a bit too far." Looks like ELO fans are stuck with the situation. The spaceship, incidentally, has been scrapped, so next time the boys take to the stage it will be with a brand new armoury of visual stimulation. I can hardly wait.

Along with other music biz behemoths, the Electric Light Orchestra have started to move into the burgeoning video market. Their latest album, 'Discovery', is likely to spawn a videotaped TV special. At any rate, the band have made a videotape to accompany the album, directed by Mike Mansfield, though it may just be used to promote singles culled from the LP. The use of video could ultimately see the end of extensive touring by many bands. Bevan: "It's really necessary now for a worldwide release to have accompanying videotapes. During the world tour last year we found that it was really important to have them in Europe, Japan and Australia, because it's very rare that a band is actually touring there when an album or single is released. It's not like England, because there are so many TV



*"Nobody in the band is all flash . . . they wouldn't stay if they were."*





shows in those countries where they can use videotapes. With the 'Discovery' album, there are quite a lot of songs on it that could be singles, and it's a bit hard to tell at this stage which ones we'll use. So we thought well, so there's no possible room for doubt we'll record each one, and whatever the single is they've got the tape to go with it."

Having finished a world tour in October 1978, ELO are taking a breather from touring at least until after this summer. Apart from the physical strains imposed by globe-trotting with several tons of gear and a road crew of about 40, the band need time to work new material into their live show. "We have done an awful lot of touring over the last few years", says Bev, who hopes to use this summer recess to work on a book he's had in the pipeline for the last year. "It's about life on the road and all the things that people don't generally read about", he explains.

"Just sort of adventures and escapades that we get up to on the road. Obviously a lot of funny incidents have happened over the years, good gossip stuff that perhaps the Daily Mirror would like to serialise."

ELO have conspicuously avoided the sort of lurid publicity that follows people like Rod Stewart around - no affairs with politicians' wives, coke busts or showbiz romances. "We're a pretty faceless band really", says Bev modestly. "I think there's a lot of bands that are. Any one of the Eagles could pass me in the street and I wouldn't recognise him. Or Chicago. The glitter-star image thing doesn't seem to apply much anymore, the very successful bands aren't always in the limelight. It's quite nice in one way, because you don't get hassled very much. I don't get recognised very often."

Bev Bevan claims that he had no trouble in handling the vast success of the band. "It was quite easy really. Obviously it gave us more money, and I always find that easy to spend. It was very gradual actually, not one of these overnight success jobs where you're broke one day, then the next day you've got loads of money and everybody recognises you." Nobody in the band is at all flash, says Bev. "They wouldn't stay if they were."

But where do the quiet men of ELO find their excitement? It must get awfully dull being so successful, with albums and tours guaranteed to succeed long in advance. Bev Bevan feels this himself. "I know what you mean. We tend to take it for granted now. We used to get really excited, it was a real thrill once upon a time. We've become a bit blasé about it. If for some reason an album wasn't a hit we'd be complaining about it and blaming other people, but because of these advance orders we know it's gonna be a hit from the start."

The studio is the place where all that pent-up energy finds some sort of release. "We're

not blasé in the studio. That's where the excitement is really I suppose, the creativity in the studio. We always strive to make each album better than the one before. I think the new one's the best we've ever done", he adds loyally. "I don't think we've become complacent about the music itself."

But as far as Bev himself is concerned, the studio is actually restricting. Jeff Lynne, as we know, does all the writing, so Bev is only involved in playing his own drum parts. Since he double-tracks his drums when recording, he has to keep his parts fairly simple so that he can play over them again. "I go into the studio knowing that whatever I play, I've got to play exactly the same again, which is not as easy as it sounds. If you start fooling around and playing flashy stuff, it's very difficult to get it exactly the same again. You get a very big drum sound if you can double track everything - sort of a Phil Spector-ish sound, probably a little more sophisticated." Quite a lot more sophisticated one would hope, after all this time.

Onstage, at least, Bev gets a chance to stretch out a bit - "as long as it's kept within the arrangement of the song, of course. Even so I find I can put loads more fills in or whatever. I can play something different every night really, and get away with it, whereas in the studio of course it's very strict. I think most drummers would say that, actually."

The question is, do any of the audience notice the extra drum fills when they're stuck at the back of some football stadium?

Bev's double-track recording technique only involves part of the drum kit. He doesn't double up on the bass drum, but concentrates mainly on the snare and tom-toms. On the first track, the kit is recorded using about nine Neumann mikes. On the second, a couple of mikes are placed on the other side of the studio to capture a little ambience, and then the two tracks are mixed together. On the latest album, Bev has worked particularly closely with bass-player Kelly Groucutt. "We've always worked pretty closely together, but this time it was, like, stroke for stroke and note for note really. It's given a very hard edge to the basic rhythm track."

I suppose it's inevitable that ELO should have succumbed to the current passion for disco-with-everything (yawn), and two or three songs on 'Discovery' feature a disco flavour. This, indeed, was where the new bass/drum sound originated, since disco depends on extreme tightness in the rhythm section. "It sounded so good that we did it on almost every track", Bev comments. Still, even the Beach Boys can be heard to hobble round the disco these days, and Bev admits that they're a prime influence on ELO. You only have to listen to 'Big Wheels' or 'It's

Over' from 'Out of the Blue' to prove it.

ELO do occasionally find themselves a little musical relaxation outside the pressures imposed by the studio or playing a complex show before an audience. "After a gig we often go back to a little club or the hotel bar and jam", reveals Bev. "I like to get up and have a go. I find it really enjoyable, because there are no pressures, you don't have to think about what's coming next, you can just play as you feel and enjoy it. I wish I could





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*"After 'Eldorado' I thought 'Where are we going from here?' But Jeff just seems to keep coming up with good songs."*

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*"It seems that two of the requirements of a successful punk band are that you don't play in time or in tune."*

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do more really, but my environment now makes it difficult."

Bev confesses that he does indeed have the urge to play a spot of rock and roll in a place like the Marquee from time to time. "The trouble is, I bought a house way out in the country in the middle of nowhere. I don't like night-clubs very much, and there's nowhere in the Midlands that I know of where you can just get up and jam with anybody, so it's pretty impossible. I see quite a lot of Robert Plant who also lives in the Midlands, and I'd like to jam with him. He feels the same way.

It's just very hard physically to do it now."

It's a bit like being a first division football team. You can't expect Arsenal to play in the third division, and you can't expect ELO or Wings or Abba to play at the Nashville. Bev thinks the analogy is appropriate. "Well, obviously the band couldn't do that – it would be very frowned upon by the management if we did! I know a lot of first division footballers, and I play a lot of these charity games, silly fifth division stuff. I love playing drums and footballers love playing football, but they're not allowed to play in a friendly game in case they get injured or something. It is similar actually, you can draw a parallel."

ELO's first division status depends largely on Jeff Lynne's ability to crank out new material. So far, he's carried the burden admirably. But is there a possibility of the band reaching a creative limit? Bev: "I certainly used to think so. After 'Eldorado' I thought, where are we gonna go from here? But Jeff just seems to keep coming up with good songs. If you've got a good songwriter in the band, that takes care of the hardest

part. Once you've got the good song, you can always change the arrangement or make the band sound a bit different. As long as you've got a good song at the basis of it all, you can keep going."

Jeff Lynne's remarkable capacity for writing was strikingly demonstrated when he holed up in a mountain chalet in Switzerland for three weeks, emerging with all the material for the double album, 'Out Of The Blue'. Lynne, it seems, carries most of his music in his head, sometimes playing new songs to the band on a demo tape or sometimes just on a guitar. The basic Electric Light Orchestra in the studio consists of Bev and Jeff, along with Kelly Groucutt and multi-keyboardist Richard Tandy. Stringmen Mik Kaminski, Hugh McDowell and Melvyn Gale are added for live work, as full-scale orchestras are used for recording.

Lynne isn't very keen on touring. He'll cringe if someone whispers "world tour", but always relishes the prospect of studio work. "He's a songwriter first, producer second and performer third", Bev reckons. The retiring Lynne also moves in mysterious ways in





the studio. "He often tells us to do things, and we think, that's a bit weird, can't imagine what he wants that for. Then we'll do it, and when we put a backing track down it'll sound really odd to us. But Jeff can hear what else is gonna go on there in his head — it always comes together in the end. Jeff never ceases to amaze me, because I always think he's going to dry up and run out of ideas, but he never does."

But all is not dormant in the minds of the other members of ELO. Mik Kaminski has been scoring strongly in the charts with his *Violinski* project. Melvyn Gale has just about finished an album of his own, while Hugh McDowell has one in the pipeline. So has Kelly Groucutt. Richard Tandy, who now lives in Los Angeles with his American wife, is working as a producer/arranger. All of them have individual recording deals with Jet Records.

But before the various members of ELO can take over the world with their recorded product, the notorious new wave will have to be taken care of. Bev Bevan still adheres to the medieval notion that new wave bands

can't play. (You can't teach these old chaps anything). And this is despite the fact that he admits he's hardly listened to any of them. "I've never seen any really, to be honest, and I don't like the sound of them. Well, that's not fair, there's a couple of things I like. This will make me sound really old, but I've been brought up to think that the only way you can tell if a band is any good is to see if they play in time or in tune.

"And of course it seems that two of the requirements of a successful punk band are that you don't play in time or in tune. It's very hard for anyone who's been learning how to play an instrument well for years to accept punk as viable music because a lot of it is just a noise. It sounds to me like most things are played far too quickly. I'm just an old fogey, you know."

But don't you feel that there's a whole audience out there who you're completely cut off from?

"Yeah". And that doesn't worry you at all?

"No, because there's such a huge audience that doesn't want to know about

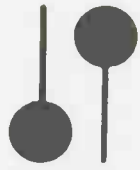
the punk thing. There's room for everybody, and there's good and bad everything — there's bas classical music, bad jazz, bad country and western and bad punk. And there's good too. There's got to be good things coming out of the new wave, but the majority I've heard is not good. People don't play well."

## GEAR GUIDE

### Bev Bevan's drum kit

26in Slingerland Bass Drum  
 13in, 14in, 15in, 16in, 18in nest of Slingerland floor tom toms  
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 36in gong  
 Slingerland snare drum  
 Remo Pin Stripe drum heads  
 Slingerland "Bev Bevan" drumsticks





# SONOR

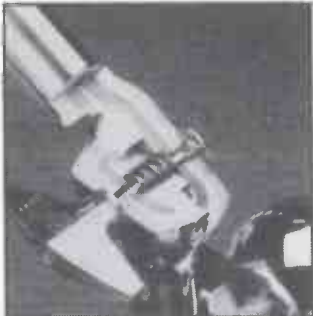
## PERCUSSION

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- \* Mike Grigg \* Eddie Clayton \* Louis Moholo \* John Stevens \* Geof Cox \* Harold Fisher
- \* Gregg Thomas \* Jim McCarty \* Nigel Morris \* Tony McVey

Here are 8 good reasons why they all agree on Sonor



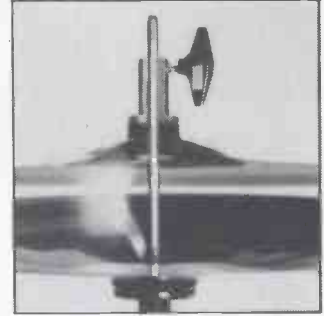
All filters on cymbal stands, bongo stands, tom tom holders and boom arms have a steel skeleton over which a strong alloy is cast.



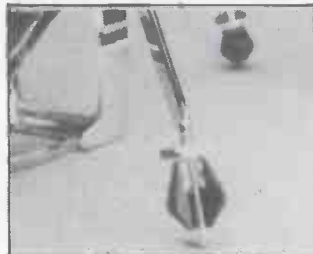
Wedge-shaped locking device with steel plate ensures reliable positioning of shell mounted tom tom.



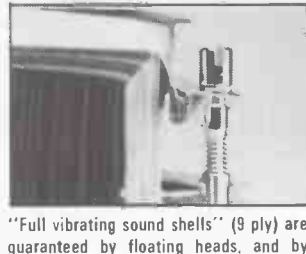
Prism clamping device ensures reliable positioning of tom-tom legs.



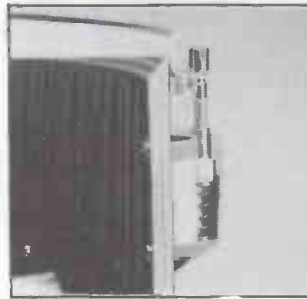
Hexagonal rod and guide ensures firm positioning of upper cymbal holder.



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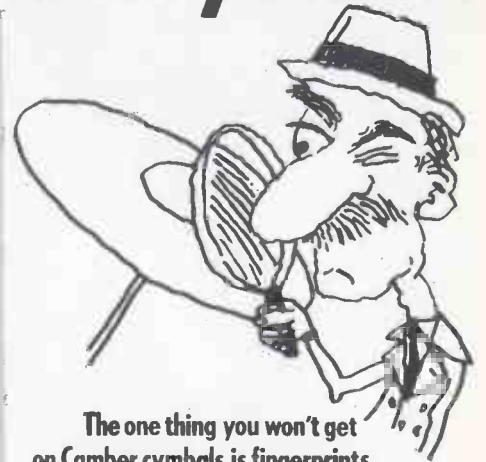
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# BLACK ECHOES

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# Maurice Rotheroe catches one of Canada's

# RUSHing

**A** more souped-up version of *RUSH* than has ever been seen on the road in these isles before, — that's what rock audiences have been seeing on this tour.

Pursuing the automotive mataphor, their design is not only more dynamic, their metalwork heavier, but the engine is also more finely tuned this time around. They themselves feel that they have now reached their most sophisticated level yet.

Birmingham, where I caught them on the first of a two-nighter gig, is fairly typical in the way that provincial fans over here have followed the *RUSH* flights of fantasy with increasing ardour. For this, their third booking at the

Odeon, the tickets were snapped up faster and the people who got them displayed a greater familiarity and affinity for the band's albums than has been apparent on previous tours.

The three quiet, aesthetic (off-stage) Canadians reward this devotion with virtuoso manipulation of the new instrumental hardware they have with them on this occasion.

Cracking a can of lager, I talked to bassman and vocalist Geddy Lee about the way they had up-dated their range of equipment since the last tour. "Last time, I was learning how to play this gigantic Oberheim polyphonic, but I hadn't brought it into the show. Oberheims are one of the more up and

coming synthesizers I think, in America anyway, but my set-up is unique.

"I have incorporated it into a giant of a beast with a mini-moog built in. There's two keyboards and I also have a set of taurus pedals on the floor that are interfaced with the Oberheim which gives me the flexibility to be able to programme 16 sounds into the memory bank of the Oberheim and to control these sounds with my feet.

"Or I have the option to use both the moog taurus sound or the Oberheim sound as desired.

"At the beginning of the tour I programmed my sounds into the Oberheim and the batteries that retain the memory are good for three years.



*Lead guitarist Alex Liferon (left) feels no pain; bassist Geddy Lee's rapt while Neil Peart provides the power.*

# finest as they take a break from...

# around...

Where maybe the Oberheim is travelling in a situation where it's very cold and the temperature drops below a certain point, the battery can't put out the five volts necessary to keep the memory charged, so sometimes memories are erased."

A hazardous business, clearly, and Geddy is not sure how cold it has to get before the Oberheim forgets what he's programmed in.

"It depends, you never really know. When I brought it over to England, just coming over in the hold of the plane was enough. Sometimes you put it in the back of a truck and you get to the next gig and the memories'll be gone.

"But I've got something that sorta saves my life — a cassette interface unit. It feeds the memories back in by way of binary codes and there are a series of bleeps and clicks and buzzes and all that takes place in 45 seconds flat.

"It goes 'frruup tick tick' and it's on the tape. So whenever I lose any of the programmes all I have to do is hook up the interface and play this cassette into the memory bank and . . ." he snapped his fingers . . . "Magic! It's back in the Oberheim.

"Sure there are a lot of Oberheims around but my interface set-up is one of a kind. It took me six months to find somebody who could do it properly and this held me up. I couldn't use it on the last album 'Hemispheres' last year although it was supposed to be ready in time. But when I got it to the studio it just wouldn't work so I had to pass on it.

"The Oberheim and the pedals are all there individually on the album but not in the way that I had originally intended and not in the way that I'm using them on stage."

So Geddy's "beast" is one of the reasons why audiences have been getting vaster expanse of sound from *RUSH* on this tour.

It not only adds to the richness of material from "Hemispheres", in which the Oberheim was used for the first time, but it also enables the band to reproduce, authentically, older stuff such as "Passage To Bangkok" from the "2112" album, which could not be done before.

Geddy admits that he's not using it to



Neil: professor of the drum kit.

the full in composition, though.

"I use it as a secondary method of writing because I don't feel that I'm astute enough or adept enough as a keyboardist to actually start composing songs around the instrument. I use it strictly as an over-dub instrument and I write melody lines and bass lines to go in among the music and around the main themes of the songs.

"This is because of my limited knowledge at this point of keyboard

playing. It has the potential and right now the only thing I need to make that the ultimate instrument is my knowledge, and as that grows the more I can use it. There are aspects of its uniqueness (ouch!) that will allow me and our three-piece band to go way beyond the limits of a three-piece band."

Lead guitarist Alex Lifeson, meanwhile, makes much more use of acoustic guitars on stage now. A 12-string comes to the fore in "Closer To



# RUSHing around...

The Heart", for example, and he features classical in "Trees" and "A Farewell To Kings".

And he's been using a Roland guitar synthesizer on the current tour.

"I think it's an instrument that might feature more in the future because it has an incredibly broad sound," says Geddy. "Guitar synthesizers are still in the early stages and there are a lot of problems that we have to work on yet. Alex is just getting to know his, so as his knowledge of the instrument expands so will the sounds that he adds to the band."

All this additional equipment makes it increasingly difficult for audiences to identify the source of any particular sound, of course. This is perhaps demonstrated most dramatically during a gentle, melodic, outer-space section that has an almost ecclesiastical quality in the 'Hemispheres' suite. The lights were on Alex, and Geddy was at his keyboards putting vocals on top. It looked as if Geddy was playing along with Alex, with several different instruments creating a tapestry of sound.

In fact, it was all Alex and his Roland.

As for percussionist Neil Peart, well, I had an off-beat inquiry to make of him. After the show a budding young drummer in the audience had asked me what sort of stool Neil was using.

"I've tried them all and I just can't get one that pivots the way his does," he said. I promised to find out.

Well, son, the news is bad. Neil sits on a regular Tama drum stool and there's nothing special about it. He's just a very agile guy, that's all.

There is nothing in Neil's kit, in fact, that can't be bought at any percussion store, but he does have rather more bits and pieces than average mounted on his immense tent-like riser.

"The wonderful professor of the drum kit", as Geddy calls him, is now using a gong, more bells and a whole new range of woodblocks.

"The audience never see half the things he's hitting. He also uses those really neat percussive bell things like pancakes, crotales. He's using a tympany on this tour which he wasn't using before, and timbales, with their Caribbean reggae sort of sound. And his technique has really progressed since the last tour."

A few of the sound effects that RUSH use on stage are taped, including the waterfull effect during one of Alex's quiet solos from "2112" and the intro to "Cygnus X-1".

"We also have on tape a couple of spots in the show once-in-a-lifetime sounds that happen in the studio that we just could not possibly reproduce".

In America and bigger halls, the band



Rush — "complacency in a band is death".

use film to go with the tapes, with 15-minute clips to illustrate sections of track in both "Hemispheres" and "2112". Intriguing, but that might just prove counter-productive since they are the first to agree that interpretation of their music is an intensely personal process between audience and band.

"That's why so few critics accept or understand our music because they try to put all sorts of interpretations on it," says Geddy. "I don't think you can summarise or put into words what we're putting over, because of this personal

inter-reaction between us and our fans."

Although RUSH have fewer lights than many comparable groups, Howard Ungerleider's creative use of lighting is an integral part of the show. With a rather simple set-up he sets the atmosphere, builds shapes, points up the drama and adds an extra dimension to the sound, rather than merely keeping in time with the music.

Starting with "2112", RUSH have carried their fans via four albums on an epic journey of sci-fi fantasy, through

black holes in space and beyond. It has been a closer than ever encounter with an infinite variety of experiences. Are they going to stay with this mystical image?

"On the last album, we sort of developed our science fiction conceptual thing to its ultimate, I think, and at this stage for us to continue exactly in that vein would be a little redundant," says Geddy.

"We have more instruments than most and we are trying to develop our total musicianship round these instruments. We are all learning from each other and trying to expand in such a way that we become better musicians — period. By achieving that we achieve the obvious goal which is to become a better band, writing and playing better music.

"The more instruments we have the more we can add to the variety of our

work because one thing we don't want to be is a typical three-piece band. Once we were that — and it was fine. A chugging rhythm section and the guitar player playing lead solos — and you just go for it. But we were too ambitious to stay like that.

"We say okay, there's no reason why the percussion can't be doing a melodic thing within a percussive arrangement and there's no reason that with me working with the percussionist I cannot play melodic bass lines intertwining with the rhythm section of the band. And there's no reason that Alex can't totally ignore what we're doing and play a third melody or a third type of melodic structure on top of those two layers that Neil and I are putting in.

"When we start writing we see where there's holes and think what instrument could fill them basically to make sure that something is happening all the time.

"Vocals in our band are just another instrument.

"The last album was more instrumental than any before and I think we'll continue in that. We had our first purely instrumental piece, "La Villa Strangiata" on our last album and I think that is a sort of jumping off point for the band. We learned a lot from that tune about what we can do without using lyrics. So I think on our next album that will be developed.

"But to get back to that mystical fantasy thing you originally asked me about. I can't tell you at this point how far that will actually continue because the next album isn't written yet. We've just begun to write and discuss where we're going to go.

"I can give you hints as to the structure but not really much about the content. What we're going for on the next album is perhaps a couple of 10-minute tunes, say, and then maybe four or five shorter tunes, because it has been a while since we've concentrated our efforts on writing shorter songs.

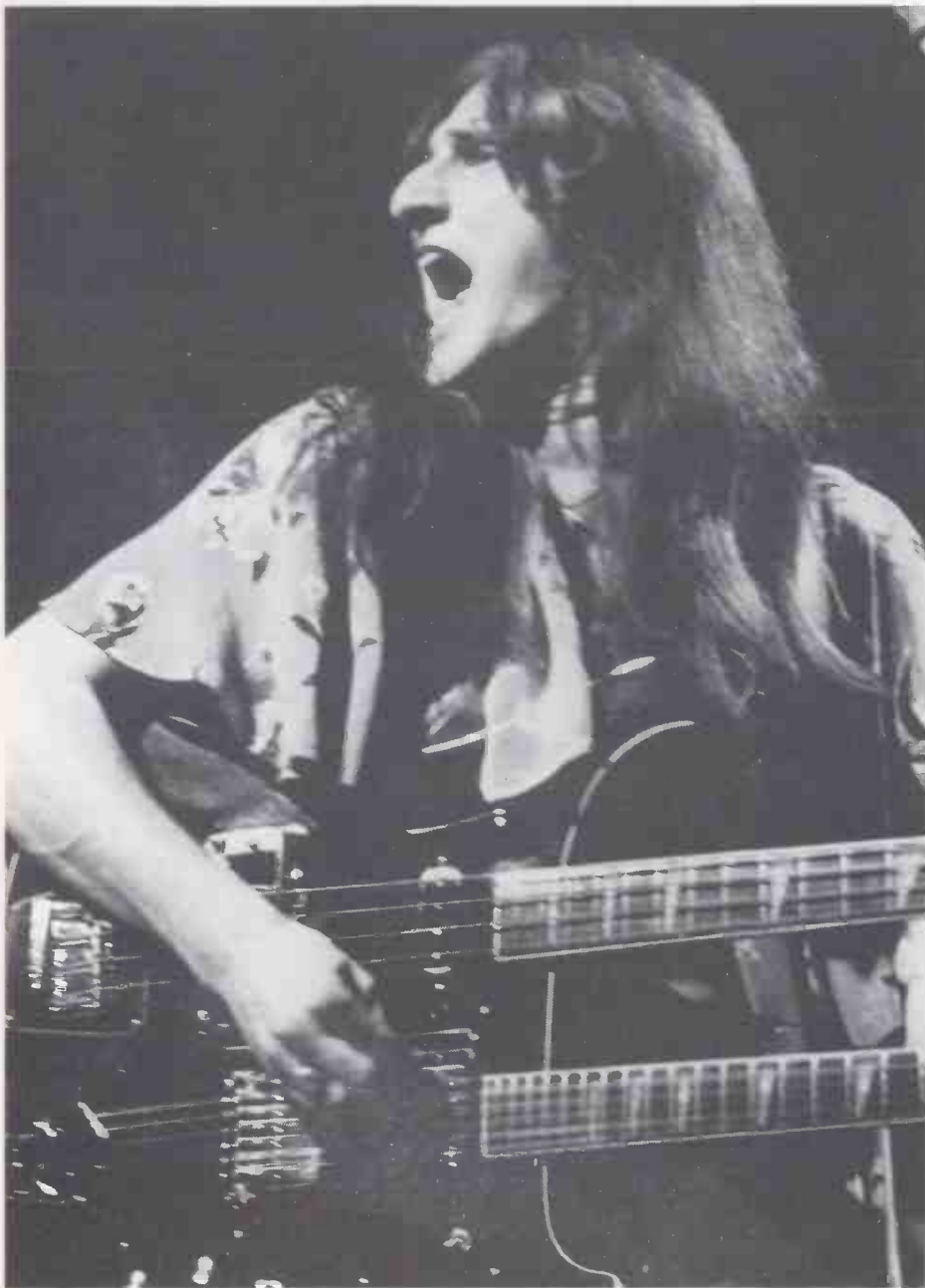
"On the last four albums, we've been working at doing 20-minute epic tunes and getting it right. The epic-type tracks are a strain, especially on stage, but they are also satisfying because they are incredibly indulgent and the audience seems to enjoy our indulgence as much as we do.

"On the next album, I think as musicians we just have to change direction for a time and see where we can take things. The next album will by no means be any more straightforward but I think it will be a little more different, using shorter pieces as a vehicle. It has been a while since we concentrated our energies on writing a five-minute tune and making that work with all the instruments we now have. It's almost leisure to say okay, we've got 20 minutes to work out in. Now we're asking ourselves, can we do in five minutes a complete piece that still has a lot of richness and variance of sound? We're going to use everything we've learned on the last seven albums and try to write more concise pieces.

"But this is conjecture at this point because there might be an idea that turns up and drives us wild and we might go after that. But I don't think there'll be one theme. For the time being, I think we've taken the conceptual thing to its limit."

It is very difficult to be blasé or indifferent to *RUSH*. You either accept what these guys do with sound and go the whole hog or you hate it. They have carried their early audiences with them as they matured and developed and they like to think of themselves as an idea and an outlet for ideas rather than a band, classified and pigeon-holed.

"We've tried to remain an idea and not to be branded as a band that does this or that sort of music. That is some of the reason why on the next album we will try to do different things from what we've been doing in the past. To stand still is a sign of complacency and complacency in a band is death."



Geddy — using the magic of the cassette interface.



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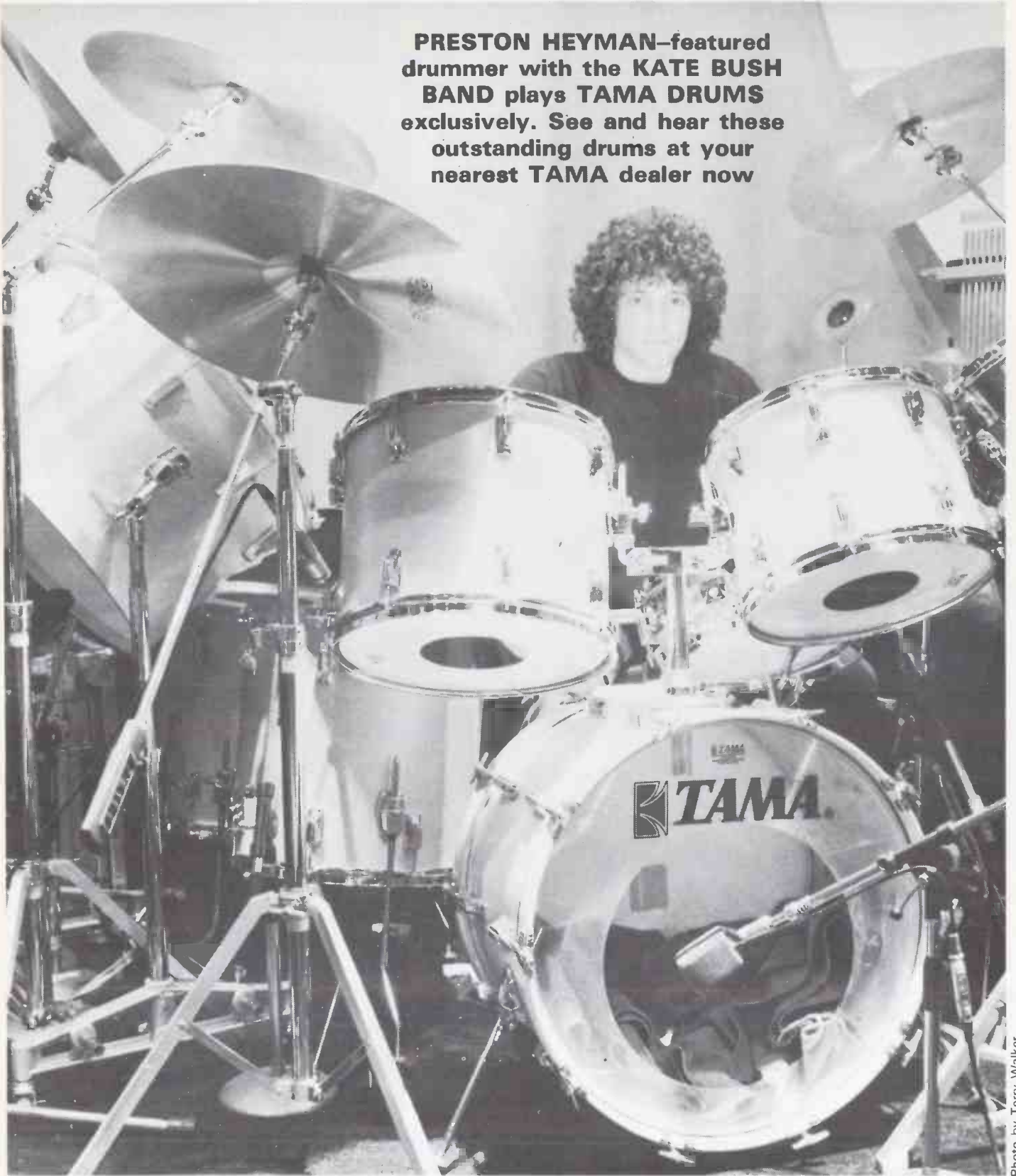


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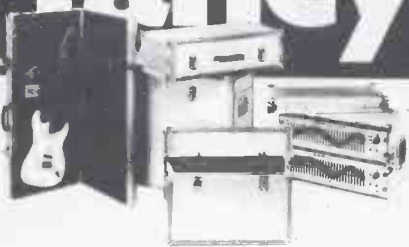
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# COOL IN CROUCH END

---

**Mary Ann Ellis, Fair maid of Kent, braves a trip to a far-flung London suburb (turn left at Finsbury Park) to meet the Tourists and chat about sounds and images.**

---

**U**NTIL RECENTLY I had absolutely no idea where Crouch End was located other than a hazy idea that it is somewhere in London. And until recently I didn't know an awful lot about the Tourists — a five-piece outfit

currently causing waves in the music world.

However, I'm happy to say that the situation on both counts has now been resolved — and at the same time.

BEAT wanted an interview with the

Tourists and they live in Crouch End.

So I need say no more.

To be more precise, the Tourist abode is in fact situated over a record shop and when I arrived the band's guitarist Dave Stewart was there to greet me.



Five minutes later we were joined by blonde Annie Lennox, the band's lady vocalist/multi-instrumentalist and female front lady.

Although the band themselves have been together over two years a dispute with their recording company Logo resulted in them being unable to actually record anything for 18 months of that time.

"It was a very frustrating period for us all," said Dave "Here we were getting great live reviews yet unable to put any product out at all.

"We'd be touring all over the country and the bands supporting us would have albums and singles out whilst we ourselves had nothing at all to offer on vinyl."

The band started off as a two-piece four or five years ago when Dave became acquainted with rhythm guitarist Peet Coombes.

"Peet just turned up at my house one day carrying a 12 string acoustic under one arm, sat down and started playing song after song to me, all of which really knocked me out. At that time I also had just an acoustic to my name and so we teamed up and just started playing together."

"Together we formed various bands but they all fell apart leaving just Peet and myself as the constant nucleus."

One-and-a-half years-on and Annie joined the line up. "I had this great really old harmonium which was worked by a foot pedal on which I'd been writing songs for years," she said.

"I'd been to the Royal Academy where I received the usual classical training in various instruments although I knew that my musical outlets didn't lie in that direction.

"When I met up with Dave and Peet we really hit it off so we decided to set up a band."

Together the trio signed a contract with Logo and met every day armed with acoustics to try out different musical ideas.

Next step was a single which was

recorded at the Conny Plant studios in Germany. For this the band went electric. "We hadn't used electric up until then," continued Dave "But we realised that it was so right for all our songs."

Then came the friction with Logo. By this time, the Tourists had acquired the considerable talents of one Jim Toomey on drums and Eddie Chin as bassman.

To cut a long (1½ years) story short, the band enlisted a management company to sort out the legal hassles and the situation is now completely resolved with the result that the Tourists are still with Logo.

"It was a real struggle for us in the interim period though," recalled Dave. "But we refused to go away. We kept playing. People kept coming to see us. They even liked us."

Musically the band don't fall easily into any mould. "We're not easily classified," agreed Annie. "We're fairly eclectic." "As musicians we have totally open minds."

"We're quite formal really," continued Dave "We sing melodies. Everything is intricately worked out. But we do have a freedom of style—the eclectic side of the Beatles in a way. Or at least that's what we aim for.

"We take our art form very seriously. But we're in no way intellectual." Shortly after the legal hassles were resolved the band flew to Germany once again to the Conny Plant studios, where in three weeks they recorded their debut album 'The Tourists' which has just been released.

"We're really happy with the album" said Dave. "Conny knew just the sound we were looking for and he got it."

"Now we just want to get out on the road again (the band have just finished a string of dates supporting Roxy Music) headlining in our own right."

And so the talk turned to instruments.

"We have two very celebrated items among our equipment," said Dave. "I have a Gretsch Country Clubman which was specially adapted for Scotty Moore

"Peet just turned up at my house one day carrying a 12-string acoustic under one arm, sat down and started playing song after song to me."

"Annie has John Lennon's original Vox Continental organ with which he played at the Shea Stadium in New York with the Beatles."





“No matter what we used we always managed to get a decent sound because we’re cool!”



which I bought in a German air base off the Elvis Presley band 15 years ago. I also have a Guild S300 with Double octave neck. Both of these are put through a Marshall WOW Master Volume Amp and cabinet.”

“Then Annie has John Lennon’s original Vox Continental organ with which he played at the Shea Stadium in New York with the Beatles.”

“I also have a Kramer organ,” put in Annie and I put both through a Marshall 100 watt.

“Plus I also have a Deerman Pre-

sident Saxophone, which was the cheapest I could get,” she chuckled.

With regards to the best of the band. Eddie Chin uses a fretless Fender bass with precision body and Jazz neck. And Peet Coombes has a Ibanez Les Paul copy. Both these are also put through 100 watt Marshall’s. And Jim Toomey has a custom-built Beverley kit.

“We’re really not that technically-minded when it comes to our instruments” admitted Dave.

“We’re obviously interested in making good sounds. But on the album we’ve

some really unusual ones. For instance on one track we just played around with the aerial on an ordinary transistor radio. The results were really weird.

“Recently we got ourselves a new backline but before that we used to use anything we could beg, steal or borrow, eg Vox AC 30 amps, old radios, any foot pedals and even Linear 30 amps.

“One things for sure though,” he grinned – “no matter what we used we always managed to get a decent sound because we’re cool!”

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The past two years has seen an outburst of new and experimental bands. There is, naturally, a high percentage of garbage, but many of these groups show a fresh approach and a potential which augurs well for the future. Where the new music was previously guitar-orientated, keyboards and prepared tapes are now a common feature, and the synthesiser is at last being used, not as a glorified organ or surrogate guitar/trumpet/what have you, but as an instrument in its own right.

Another encouraging development is that 'virtuosi' surrounded by piles of keyboards do not impress any more. Inventive musical concepts are more powerful when expressed with minimal means, rather than by 'keyboard wizards' whose ideas (if they have any original ones) are hidden behind a mass of technology and thousands-notes-a-minute bravura. Much innocuous music is being created on cheap instruments studios (even in people's front rooms) and presented on stage with confidence and economy.

Great 'musical' ability rarely goes hand-in-hand with originality of thought, and if asked to choose between the two, I'd go for the latter (why do you think I just toured with John Otway?). If space permitted, I'd like to give many examples of what I believe to be important new bands. However, many of these bands are chosen indiscriminately (and prematurely) for heavy exposure by the music press, so I would like instead to give an unshamed plug to a small and admirable uncompromising import company called *Recommended Records*. They deal in hard-to-find LPs by the likes of The Residents, This Heat, Art Bears, and other unknown, untrendy but highly innovative bands (many of them foreign) as well as rare oldies by Lenny Bruce, Van Dyke Parks, Howling Wolf, Brecht/Weill, etc. Their address is: 5 Silverthorne Road, London SW8.

Anyone seriously interested in New Music should send for their catalogue without delay.

Now a review of two new electronic instruments.

Welcome to the wonderful world of Korg. Not a specialist firm by any means, this company caters for the synthesiser market on every level, from the lowly Micro-Preset to the monstrous polyphonic PS-3300. Each instrument they produce fulfils a different need, and the KP-30 is geared to a live performance situation, as it features a lot of present sounds and functions. Not quite my cup of tea, as I prefer to have basic oscillators/envelopes/filters etc., and create my own timbres from them — but nevertheless an interesting instrument.

Principally there are two oscillators, one creating the Preset tones, the other creating the 'synthe' sounds. Lets start with the presets...

On the right of the panel are eleven grey tabs, each with a small black knob above, which effects the basic preset in one way or another. I'll zip through them forthwith. ELECTRIC BASS (32ft) gives a warm, useful sound — I find the inbuilt envelope characteristics of this and all the presets are very well adjusted. The small control knob alters filtering from a muffled, damped sound, to a fuzzier, legato tone. TUBA (32ft) another useful sound with slower attack and similar filtering variation. CLAVI (16ft) a fair copy of Hohner's classic clavinet tone, most effective with the knob (marked PW — pulse width) full up. FUZZ GUITAR (16ft) a good voice for soloing, with a lingering decay, and variable tone. HORN (16ft) sounds suitable French, especially with the filtering in the lowest position. TRUMPET (8ft) more percussive than the horn, and once again, most authentic with the filtering turned down to remove the inherent buzziness. CLARINET (8ft) a basic square wave, with adjustable tone. OBOE (8ft) is nicely reedy, more effective with its tone on full treble. VIOLIN (8ft) is a bit buzzy, but effective with its attack slowed down, especially in the higher registers. FLUTE (4ft) is a basic oscillator tone (probably sawtooth) and, like all the presets, most authentic if you

play a part suitable to the instrument named, a point to remember when trying out the instrument in your local store. Its tone is variable. Finally, XYLOPHONE (4ft) another fairly basic 'popcorn' sound, with variable decay.

OK, so those are the presets. Nothing to write home about as they stand, but they can be modified in various ways to make them more interesting. Acoustic sounds are full of impurities, and emulating them is not a simple task, you have to process the original wave-forms in various ways as you play (more of that later). Of course, emulating 'real' instruments can be looked upon as pretty redundant activity, and indeed some of the newer electronic bands, with their limited experience of synthesisers, are in fact producing very evocative sound pictures using very simple timbres. A fresh, confident and creative attitude is all-important (don't let the instrument play YOU!).

In the centre of the instrument is the SYNTH panel. Eight white tabs — eight different sounds, no names, but symbols denoting wave-form and envelope shape. Again, a small black knob above each, for various types of adjustment. The four-foot tab gives a ramp-wave which decays as you hold a key down — decay length variable, for plucking effects.

Then three 8ft tabs — square wave (which sustains, with adjustable attack/release) pulse wave (another plucker) and ramp wave (sustains, with variable A/R). A sixteen ft. tab, judging by the symbol and the sound, is two square waves out of phase, a rich full sound, with variable A/R. Another = 6ft tab — interesting this one — is marked S/H, which means a sample-and-hold circuit changes the filtering at an adjustable clock rate (indicated by a flashing red light — big deal!). Then a 32ft ramp wave with variable A/R. And the 8th tab gives a coloured noise sound, with inbuilt filtering, and a slow attack/release time (variable for wind/sea/indigestion effects).



There's also a black tab which, when pressed, ring-modulates any of the synthe tones you've selected with the presets you've pressed. The pitch of the synthe oscillator can be raised or lowered by up to a 6th with the ring-mod, for more discordant sounds.

Those are your basic tones, which can be used separately or together — now we come to the creative bit, the treatments available. A 3rd row of tabs gives more possibilities...

The whole instrument can be tuned up to a major 2nd, and transposed up or down an octave, so with ranges of 32ft to 4ft and a 3 octave keyboard, we've a total range of 8 octaves. The SYNTH oscillator has its own tuning, so it can be pitched in unison or harmony or discord with the PRESET oscillator. Fully adjustable portamento is available, and a KEYBOARD SENSOR device enables one, by pressing hard on a key, to either raise or lower the pitch of a note, by a predetermined amount, or add vibrato. This facility can be switched to preset, synthe or both. Sensible. Vibrato is, of course, fully adjustable and also available with an adjustable delay.

I guess its high time I mentioned that this is a monophonic instrument, and normally (especially with the plucking sounds) you'll have to lift your hand off the keys before playing a second note, but the MULTIPLE TRIGGER enables you to play a note whilst holding another note down. Of course, only the higher note will sound, but it makes playing trills a lot easier.

KEY HOLD means you can walk away from the KP-30 and the last note you played will go indefinitely (or at least until the next Budget). What a dynamite way to end a gig! A piece of pure gimmickry is the QUARTER-TONE device, which, if you're doing a trill between any two notes, will halve the interval between them. Rather pointless.

To the immediate left of the keyboard is the control panel designed for your left mitt, so's you can alter your sounds easily as you play. A balance control enables you to adjust the relative volume of the Synthe and Preset tones. There's touch-and-release button for portamento, and two joysticks, one which bends pitch either way, adds vibrato or noise modulation (to either synthe, preset, or both), and the other adjusts filtering of the synthe tones (it has a low-pass and a high-pass filter).

So there's quite a lot to this instrument, and the idea of having preset treatments (which you can adjust yourself) as well as preset tones is a good one.

The KP-30 is attractively designed and fairly light and compact. A range of sockets on the back would indicate that pedals can be used to control a variety of functions. These weren't supplied, and, as BEAT's enthusiastic new editor wanted this review written in less than the time it takes to read it, I didn't have time to get any. But never mind, I'm sure they're extremely useful. I would say that the player who buys this instrument is after a keyboard that will give useful sounds immediately and also the opportunity to delve deeper... more unusual tones at his leisure. As a user of Korg myself, I'll vouch for their reliability (anyone who says different — step outside!) M Korg Poly's

had wine, beer, tea, coffee, and tomato ketchup down it, and it's been gobbed on, without a murmur of complaint.

Check the Kp-30 out.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, don't expect electronic pianos to sound anything like acoustic pianos. Approach the *Hohner K2 Electric Piano* as an instrument in its own right and you won't be disappointed. New instruments demand new music to be played on them, and this particular keyboard is no good for Leon Russell types. It's far more suited to the Robert Rentals and Terry Rileys of this world.

The basic piano tone on this instrument is utterly colourless and characterless. I hope that doesn't put you off because this very lack of warmth can be interesting (Dave Vanian's voice). In a live situation it might not cut through too well, so adding some of the harpsicord tone would brighten it up (all tones are selected by buttons and volume-controlled by individual faders). A fairly cute clavinet tone can be obtained, which can be effective in the right setting, as for example in the nearest thing to a pop song ever done by Sun Ra, a lively tune entitled "Enlightenment", on the live LP "Nuits de la Dondation Maeght" (Shandar SR 10,001).

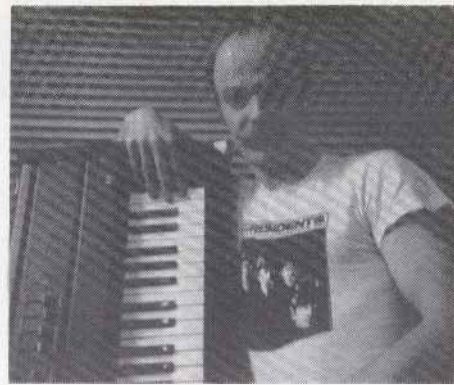
String and Cello sounds are also available, less buzzy than on cheaper instruments, but still possessing an all-too-apparent rhythmic beating only avoided on the very best synths. A good point is that the decay length of the orchestral voices can be adjusted independently. Another bonus is that the 5-octave keyboard can be split at a point 2 octaves up, so that the left and right hands can be different balances of the four available voices.

The left hand also features a bass tone, which is also quite characterless but nevertheless would add a good bottom end to a band that didn't have a bass guitarist. This can be fed to a separate output if so desired, as can the strings and cellos — a useful feature if you can afford three amps (!) and particularly hand in the studio.

An Ensemble button adds high strings to your left hand, and cuts out the strings on your right hand, so you can suddenly launch into a piano concerto, your right hand arpeggiating dramatically while the left hand provides a rich, full accompaniment.

Two pedals are supplied. The volume pedal controls strings/cello level only, for easy changes of balance between orchestral and piano sounds. And a sustain pedal features two knobs, one of which acts like a normal sustain pedal, the other can be clicked down to provide continuous sustain and thereby frees your right foot to come to rest on the end of the piano with great rock 'n' roll panache. There's a rather complex-looking output labelled Pedalboard, which I imagine is for an optional pedalboard bass unit.

The K2 is supplied with chrome legs and a music rest, and clipping the lid on converts it instantly into a sturdy flight-cased condition. It weighs a ton, and it was hell getting it up to my 4th floor flat, so taking it on gigs requires some muscle. As well as being overweight, I feel it's a bit overpriced. Just another string



synth/electronic piano combo. No surprises on this one.

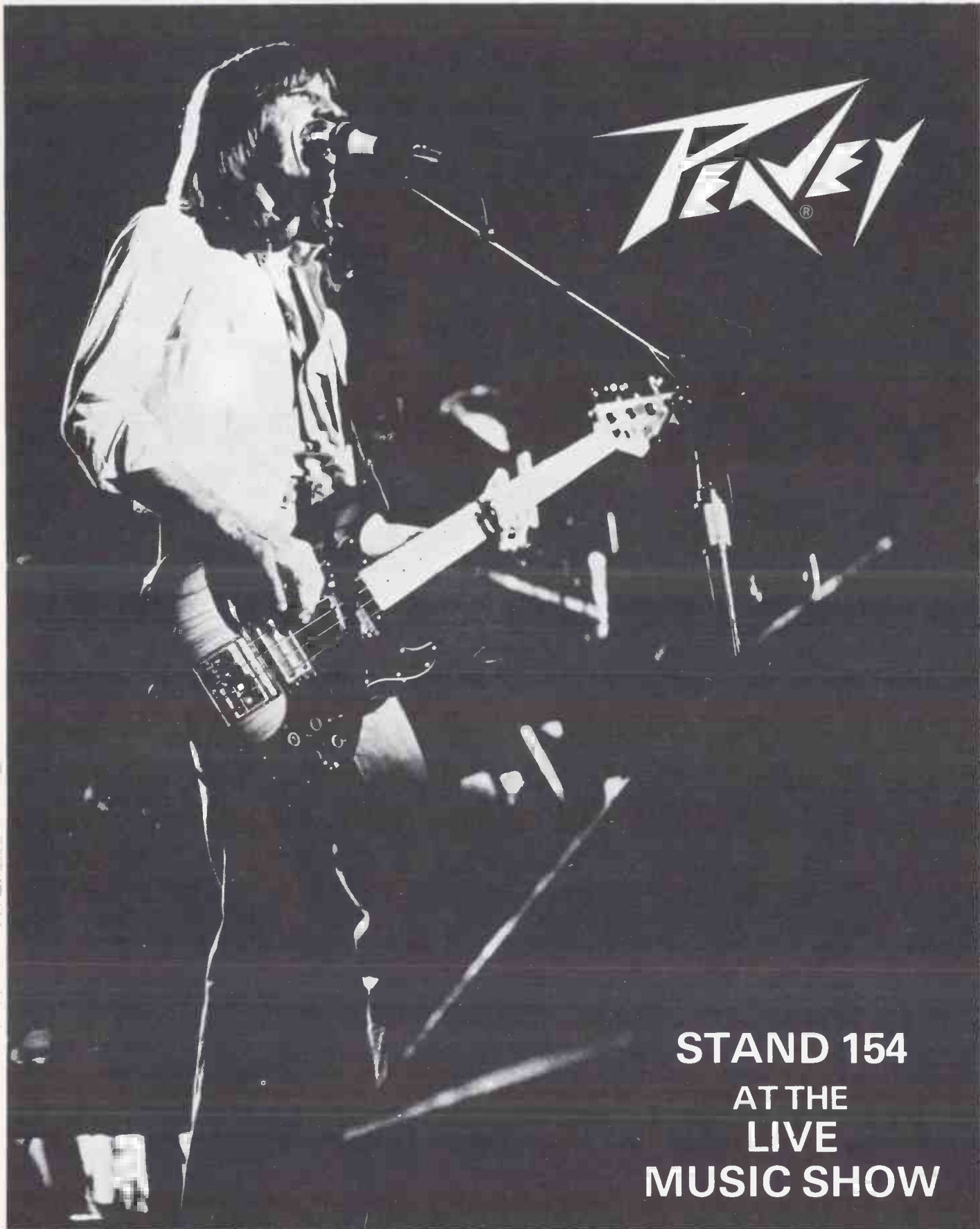
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## INSTRUMENT REVIEW

### Amplifier



## MARSHALL 2144 50 WATT COMBO

Price £341.50 (inc. VAT)

Reviewed by: James McGill

a user to squat behind and peer upwards into the cabinet. Later and more familiarly you can lean over the top at some quite impossible angle to find the socket by feel. As the socket is not labelled 'footswitch' and is positioned near the second speaker jack there is always the risk of really putting your foot in it!

The amplifier section follows a tried and proven basic Marshall formula, using Mullard EL34 valves at the output. A 3-stage master volume chain provides the preamp gain with 3 ECC83s. Separate preamp and master volume pots mean the sound can be as clean or as dirty as the player chooses at any given output level, depending on how hard you want to drive the preamp. Finally a fourth ECC83 in the reverb loop circuit feeds the spring via phono plug leads to the US built Accutronics module fixed to a back panel. It is interesting to note that Marshall have replaced their more usual Hammond reverb module with this American job — the fact in itself may not be significant. We were unable to test the reverb feature in the time available because some rough handling had killed off the relevant ECC83 before our receipt.

At the speaker end the two 12 inch Celestion drivers look like they may come from the Powercell range rather than the 'G' series Marshall have in the past used. These have satisfyingly large magnet assemblies. Forced air cooling around the voice-coil is via a duct in the magnet centre. When one is driving hard and things begin to get a little hot this can be an excellent idea.

Plug in, move from 'standby' to play with the master fully open and the preamp anywhere you like (depending on how much cotton you've stuffed in your ears) and you have classic Marshallisation with a san seriffe capital M. The glorious warmth of valves sweetly clipping, the output pushing out far more than the 50 watt rating would imply takes the playing level higher and higher — it just doesn't seem to hurt your ears! The Celestion drivers —

bearing the Marshall logo — bear up to this outburst of Hendrixitis without demur. Possible circuit improvements under the bonnet account for improved speaker damping, and the new drivers take the system efficiency way up. For a 50 watt job the sound is very, very *big!* And no two ways about it. Tight and immediate the sound starts and stops when you want it to — the amp controls the speaker cones 'store' energy and add a bit of the last note to the next to give a slightly mushy tone. Sustain and resonance should come from the instrument at your fingertips — not from a loose amp and poor speaker control. At the price it has to be full marks for the 2144.

The tone controls do their job admirably, though the presence control seemed a trifle limited. This could have something to do with the busted ECC83. Bass, treble and mid controls track smoothly and progressively. As usual these allow the player to extract the nuance he is searching for. The footswitch supplied is, unfortunately, a piddling little affair which looks and feels cheap and nasty when compared with the solid conservatism of the Marshall's design. While this is more robust than it looks it made me wince to imagine Rick Neilson of Cheap Trick dropping off his platform onto the boost switch!

At the end of the play I think we have another Marshall which will take on any competition in its league. £341 may sound like a lot for a 50 watt combo and you could easily find models of 100 watts for the same cash. So what. This 50 watts is added to a conversion efficiency which should blow a lot of impressive seeming devices clean away. At this price I can't think of any tranny amp — excepting the Redmere Soloist maybe — which comes close. And it's a Marshall. Whatever happens today it looks like Marshall are going to be with us as long as folks keep buying amps — any argument? In the words of J. Geils it'll blow your face away. Check it out.

Marshall have never been about fashion — technological fads and such. But year in year out over the past 20 Marshall must have gladdened many hearts as well as providing the subject matter for many a page of descriptive prose. They could probably start a monthly magazine of Marshall reviews. Well, here's another page! The bigger and brighter white logo on their new unit simply states 'Marshall', and in a word saying it all — well, almost. Out of their latest clutch of market goodies the 2144 combo shows a few very very interesting departures.

A criticism which has at times been levelled at Marshall's earlier 2068 is a certain lack of 'attack'. Despite its 100W rating the 2068 has always seemed a little short on the real muscle necessary to back up an otherwise fine reverb performance. The 2144 delivers. The sound has still the Marshall stamp — but tighter, upfront, real ballsy.

The 2144 combo is medium large and very heavy. That is to say hernia-stuff heavy — we come to the sound in a while. Its sturdy cabinet is vinyl-clad and has a plywood baffle board, a simple black synthetic fabric grille and an open back panel. Impact plastic protective corners and feet salute our new age of functional austerity, which is in part relieved with a gold-anodised aluminium plate recessed into the top panel to show off the line of controls. From left to right we read: two jack inputs (high, with footswitch socket at rear for volume boost and reverb in/out and a low gain 'clean' channel), pre-amp gain, master volume, reverb depth, bass, mid, presence, treble, power on/off and standby.

The back panel is a little messy, with leads from the reverb module down at the bottom of the cabinet floating around inside and the mains lead coming in. The footswitch socket at first purchase requires







## PEAVEY T60 GUITAR

Price: £292

Reviewed by: James McGill

The adverts say Hartley Peavey has been wanting to make this axe for a while. He's been making some pretty hairy amps for over 20 years, as well as diversifying into mixers, and the whole PA scene, so it was really only a matter of time before he turned his hand to instruments. Subject of this review is the T60, brother to the T40 bass, is the fruits of an aptly turned hand.

The body is grain-filled ash to accentuate the natural wood characteristics and a hard polyurethane clear finish lets it all show; this part is a little similar to the Gibson Paul reviewed in last month's Beat. The neck ('patent applied for', it says) is of 'bilateral' design intended to provide stability and warp resistance (more of this later). Its two halves around the stainless steel torsion rod are of opposing grain orientation, with the line passing through the head. An Allen key is provided to adjust neck tilt for string height.

Looking at the bridge this is a peculiar looking diecast affair with a nice clean copperbased chrome finish. The strings sit on individual saddles, individually adjustable for intonation. The saddles are used to set the arch pattern of strings around the fretboard rather than to provide height — this is a mistake one could easily make. String height needs to be adjusted with special equipment used to loosen the torsion rod nut. Perhaps the implication drawn here is that the neck is specifically designed to have an intrinsic bow in the neck held in check by the rod? The neck certainly seemed very *flexible*. It's one thing for a guitar to give a little as you pull it towards you to get a small amount of wah, but in the case of our T60 it was quite easy, without undue pressure, to completely damp the strings — a movement of several millimeters in the forward, back and twisting modes. Unless the manufacturers have intentionally done this — a player could of course use the feature in his playing technique if the neck is proofed against warp — I hope it applies only to the review sample.

The neck itself is a joy to use — perfectly shaped and neither too wide (à la Gretsch)

nor too narrow. The soft natural wood finish continues along its 25½ inch scale though the high and wide nickel frets take a little getting used to — they tend to oil the smoothness of playing somewhat. Note bending becomes easier but the speed merchants among you would need to set the frets down a bit. At the head the tuning machines are sealed units, beautifully executed and quite secure.

In the controls department the T60 scores for versatility. Each of the two pickups has a volume and tone rotary, with pickup selector and phase switch which reverses the bridge pickup in relation to the neck pickup. An interesting (patent applied for, of course) innovation in the tone circuitry is that as you rotate a control from bass to treble the circuit progressively changes from a humbucking to a single coil pickup. The only guitar I have known to offer such a feature is the Yamaha SG1000 which of course is not variable. One big disadvantage is that the more bass you apply the more hum you create — quite alarmingly by the end of the control's travel. The manual acknowledges this in a fashion by suggesting 'hum cancellation is present throughout most of the control range.'

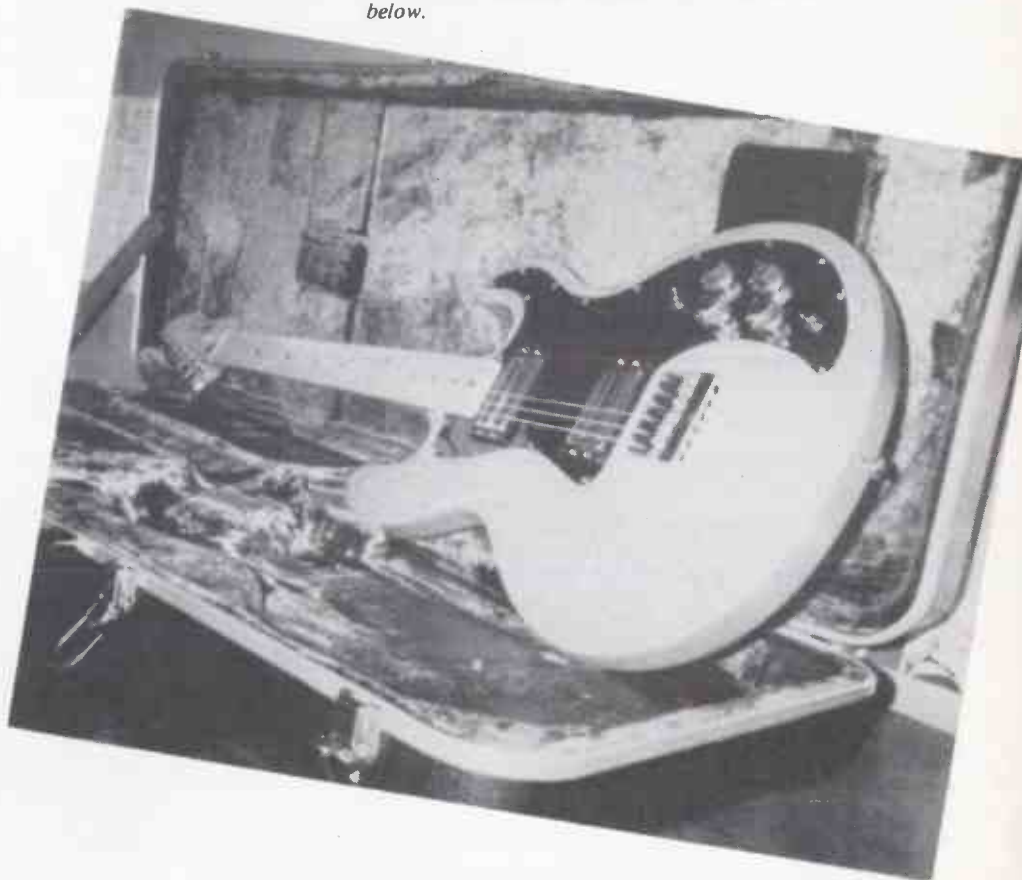
On the sound front the T60 scores heavily. The tone circuitry allows a wide variety. Here any apparent similarities with Fender stops: the humbuckers growl like the best Gibsons around. As the treble control is advanced and the single-coil effect is progressively brought in the treble comes biting through like on no guitar I

have been fortunate enough to handle. The phase switch produces that clean characteristic 'hollow' tone. As mentioned earlier this works only when both pickups are in circuit — presumably to avoid an embarrassing loss of volume at full sail should the switch accidentally be knocked on! The range gives the T60 a wide range of applications — from blues to the heaviest of metal. Nice one Peav.

It has to be remembered that the model on review has had its fair share of examination one way and another — the strings were old and the top E snapped on me as I was de-tuning it (!) to reveal a fair build-up of muck along much of its length. The instruction manual suggests you should not loosen the strings 'unless absolutely necessary'. As it went on to suggest I use anti-perspirant before I touched the instrument I was disinclined to follow their advice on this point. The guitar quite obviously had not been cared for with as much love in its progress around the reviewers as a cash customer would give it. With a price tag of around £300 the T60 is firmly within the most competitive sector of the market. The various points about its performance taken into account I would rate the instrument very highly indeed. With a little work on the tone circuit noise, some attention to the frets perhaps and a caution about the neck the T60 is a great guitar.

Perhaps the time has returned for it to be fashionable to be seen playing an American guitar after all these years of Jap supremacy.

The price of the guitar includes the case pictured below.





**NEXT MONTH:**

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"BE A ROCK AND ROLL STAR"

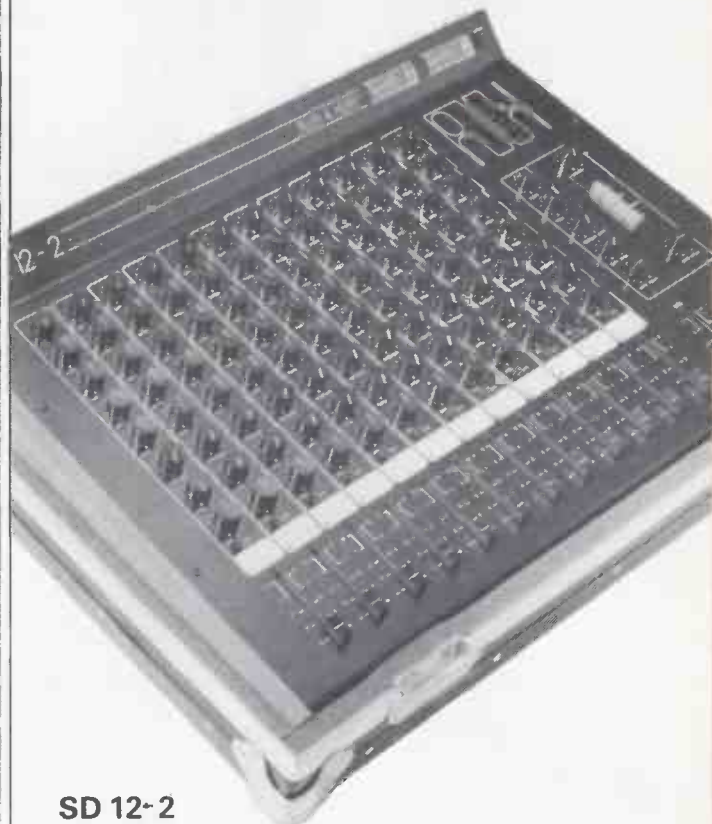
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Next month sees the start of a new  
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### **AGENTS:**

Audiomarketing, Stamford, U.S.A., Saturn Audio, Canada; Studio Sound, Frankfurt; Fading, Madrid; Intersonic, Stockholm; Sun Music, Denmark; Pieter Bollen, Eindhoven; Son Professionnel, Paris; and most other countries.

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I have dramatic proof here that musicians *do* wash. When I first tried to get in touch with Duncan Mackay, 10CC's keyboard plonker, he was in the bath. Not only that, but I had to wait a full five minutes until I could talk to him!

Well, with back well and truly scrubbed, he was ready to reveal his equipment to me. But first of all, you may be wondering where you've heard his name before. Maybe you're linking it with Ginger Baker with whom he played for the grand total of about two weeks?

Or maybe with Jon Hiseman and his reformation of Colloseum? Or perhaps you saw him on the road with Cockney Rebel? Or was it that you saw his name on both Kate Bush albums or even on an Alan Parsons project? Or maybe you caught his solo album?

Whatever it was, he's now a full-time member of 10CC, and the heart of all his gear is a Hammond B3.

"I've got a graphic equaliser built in which gives a punch to the sound," said Duncan.

He's got the equaliser built in at a stage where the Hammond will sound raunchy at any level. For a quieter sound, and for a string and choral sound, he uses a Polymoog.

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**"I've got a graphic equaliser built in which gives a punch to the sound."**

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And then there's his Yamaha CS80 synthesiser. The Yamaha CS80 has only six memory banks but Duncan has had it altered to take another four.

"There's this guy down at Yamaha called Dusty Miller that did it."

He has high praise indeed for the Yamaha, saying that he used to have six ARPs on stage but now he's got the Yamaha he doesn't bother anymore.

Sticking with Yamaha a bit longer, he also plays one of their electric grands, the CP70B, with a Roland digital chorus plugged in for a honky tonk sound. Under all this he has a set of Moog Taurus bass pedals.

A friend of his by the name of

# 10CC

## Beat's new ed Tony Horkins with positive proof that rock stars do wash!

Chris Quail, who does bits of work on his gear, also designed a 12 into 2 mini-mixer. All the effects are fed into the mixer, like his Kepex noise gate (especially used on the Hammond), an MXR studio flanger, MXR studio phaser and a Yamaha digital echo. As all these effects are fed into the mixer they can all be used on any piece of equipment.

Before any equipment is allowed to pass through any of the equipment it's sent first through an amplifier. The amplifier that's apparently at the wrong side of the equipment is a Crown 300 Watt job. The reason it's there is to ensure a stable source of electricity to stop nightmares like wow and flutter. After all, wow and flutter can be a big pain in the Moog in a live show.

On the other side of the boards lies a 4-way crossover distributing the signal into various channels. The bass and low mids go to a Peavey 400W stereo power amp, and the uppers go into two Quad 405s. Quad 405s are actually hi fi amplifiers, and Duncan was so impressed by them on his hi fi that he decided to use them for his keyboards.

His speaker cabinets were designed for him by a PA company and feature a JBL horn and driver and a 12" Gauff for the upper-mids, and a 15" Gauff for the lower-mids. He's also using a couple of Musicman bass bins which he's not too happy with. His joining 10CC happened so quickly that he didn't really have time to look

around for something he really wanted.

Like most keyboard players, Duncan was using a Leslie but he felt that it wasn't loud enough. So it was back to his friend Chris Quail for an electronic one. Before hearing Quail's design he wasn't particularly impressed with other attempts at electronic Leslies, but he was more than pleased with Quail's. So far Quail has made about six which have been going to local blokes around where he lives.

On July 9, 10CC are booked to go into the studio and start work on a new album at Strawberry Studios. This will be Duncan's second album since he joined the band about a year ago. Eric Stewart, Duncan's boss, takes over the story:

"The old guy didn't like touring, and he wanted to get something together with some of the people from Kokomo Duncan fitted in really well."

Eric went on to say that although they have an outline for the album, nothing really gets worked out until they get into the studio.

On past albums, they've booked themselves into the studio for about five months and anticipate a similar length of time for this one.

In the studio Eric will be using his '58 Les Paul.

"I used to have a '66 which was unbeatable. It was just one of those guitars that was perfect, but it got ripped off at Hammersmith Odeon. The '58 isn't as good. It may just be psychological."

He tried some De Marzio pickups but didn't get on with them that well so he's back with the originals.

He's particularly knocked out with a set of strings he discovered two years ago. They're made by a guy called Da Vinci whose family has been in strings for 50 years. He's been making the machines that make the strings for the likes of Gibson et al, but decided to have a go at making his own. Due to the shape (octagonal) and binding Eric says the strings stay in tune longer and have a great tone.

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**Wow and flutter can be a big pain in the Moog in a live show.**

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As for amps he uses Music Man small combos, old Fenders which he thinks are beautiful, and for a good loud sound he sticks a Marshall 50 watt through Marshall cabs and jacks it up.

Although Eric prefers the guitar, he also plays the piano, on which he writes all of his songs. Not only that but he'll be engineering the album and co-producing it with Graham Goldman. He learnt that trick in an old demo studio back in '68.



10CC — with Eric Stewart (right) and Duncan Mackay (second right).

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