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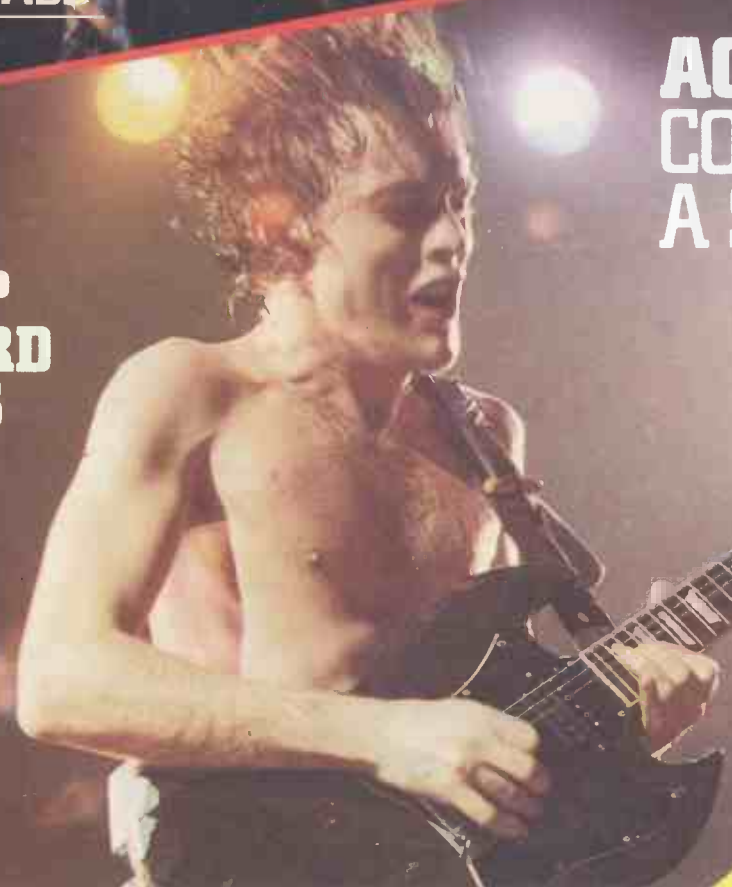
INSTRUMENTAL
#Songwriting & Recording

VAN HALEN
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♯Songwriting & Recording

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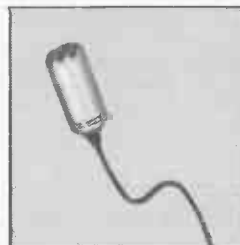
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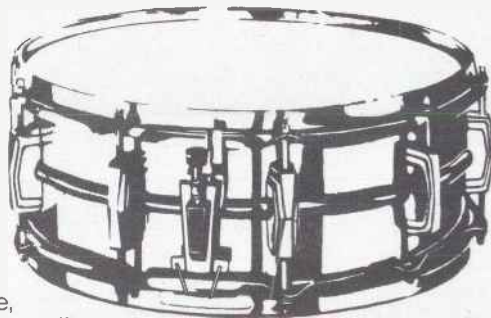


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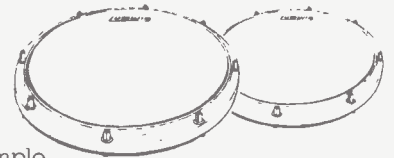
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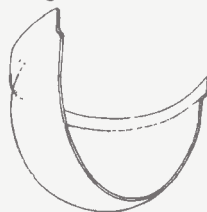
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VAN HALEN

Is Heavy Metal going soft? Tony Sayers finds it's called Big Rock

My first encounter with Van Halen was when their particular brand of heavy rock totally blew Black Sabbath off stage at Lewisham Odeon. At that time they were a brand new band and had everything to prove, and prove it they did. They managed to get Black Sabbath's stick-in-the-mud fans down to the front and rocking with their short set, full of memorable, punchy four-minute epics.

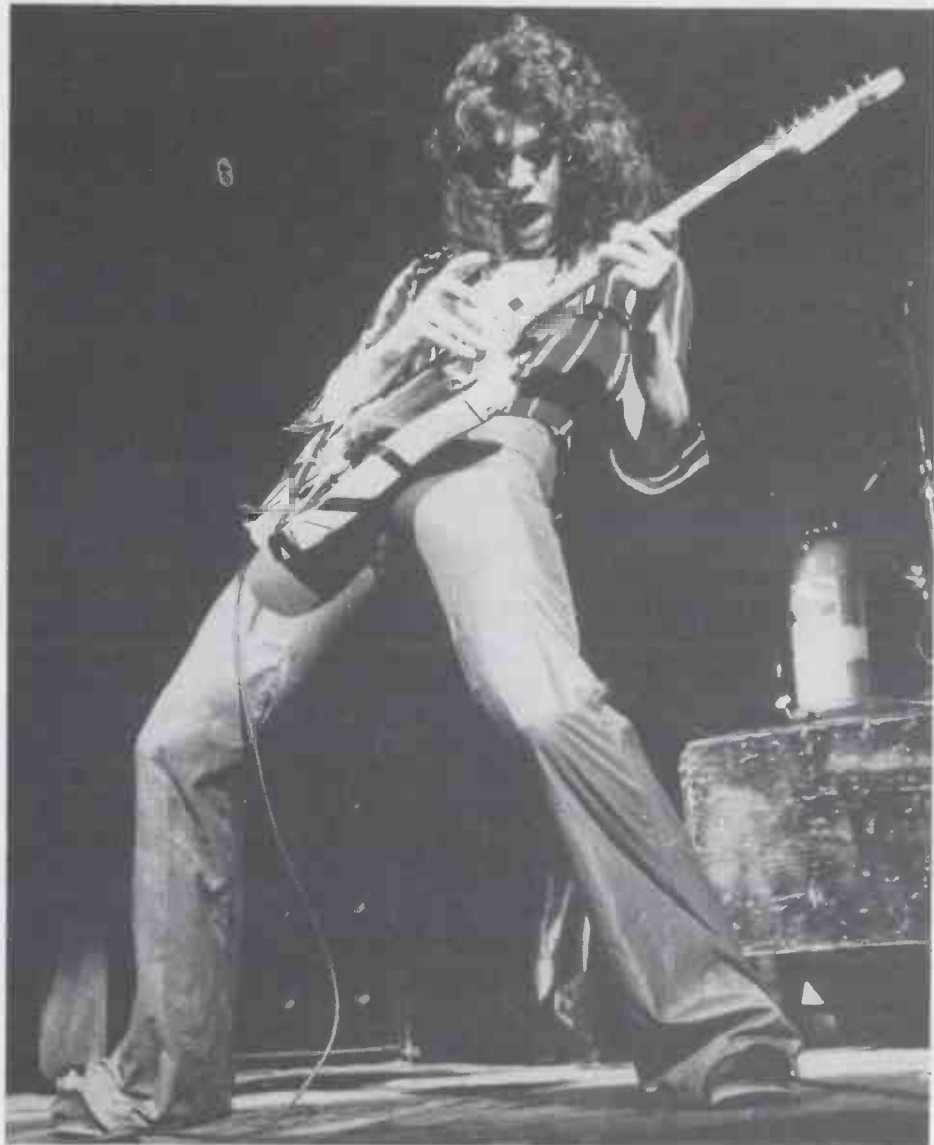
After that tour they soon returned as headliners with all the cards in their hands — a successful album to promote and a handful of new numbers which sounded every bit as powerful as the favourites we had come to know and love. In fact, their gig at the Rainbow rates as one of the most sweaty I can remember.

Since then, they have released a follow up album 'Van Halen II' and returned to the stage for a few selected gigs to promote it. There is, however, one fundamental difference between their previous excursions and this one. This time they are stars.

"We never expected our first album to happen, said guitarist Eddie. "Especially in the U.S. we figured that after four or five albums finally people would say, 'Oh, Van Halen, yea I've heard of them'. Instead we put out one album and six months later everybody knows who we are".

Indeed they do. Van Halen sold out two nights at the Rainbow and sold two million albums. So once again, I trudged up to the Rainbow to see what's new.

The first thing that struck me was the amount of equipment they had. Five artic lorries worth of amps, P.A., and drums crammed onto the Rainbow's relatively small stage guaranteed one thing at least — they looked impressive.



Edward later explained his equipment to me with a glint of power in his eyes.

"I have basically, between 12 and 15 Marshall amps which have giant capacitors put in them to soak up some of the voltage, so I can turn them all the way up without them blowing up. Altogether I have about 1,500 watts of power behind me. But I only use a half or a third of it at a time. Because if I used it all I wouldn't be talking to you now. The reason for having so many amps is because of the problem of them blowing up. If one blows I can signal to my roadies and they will just switch on another".

"The speakers cabs I designed myself. I use the equivalent of 20 Marshall cabs, that's eighty speakers. But I've put them into heavy duty 8 x 12 cabs instead of the normal 4 x 12's. This saves my roadies a little time when it comes to putting them away.

"I don't use too many effects gadgets. I have two echoplexes, and a cheap 50 dollar phase shifter which I use on the real low notes. It's more of a treble and bass booster than a phaser though. I prefer to change the sound by my playing technique rather than by electronics."

VAN HALEN

The guitars Edward uses are designed and built by himself. If, like me you thought he played regular Fender Stratocasters they you're totally wrong. Although his guitars have the body shape of a Strat that's where the similarity ends. His guitars have one pick (a Dimarzio which he has rewired to increase its output) and one volume control.

"Everybody seems to think that the more switches and gadgets you have on a guitar the better it is, but that's bullshit. There's no other guitar that sounds or plays like this one. I used to use Gibsons but being a small person I found them big and heavy. The Stratocaster body suits me perfectly but I don't like the sound. I mean I know Hendrix used to use one but he'd have twenty effects gadgets in front of him. So by a Humbucker and Gibson frets on a Stratocaster body I've applied the Gibson sound to a Fender body."

One thing that has always bugged me is how he manages to use the tremelo bar so extensively and keep the thing in tune. I soon found out that the answer lay in yet another Van Halen idea. The secret is in the nut and bridge. After tuning up he clamps a piece of metal over the top of the strings so that, providing they are pre-stretched, they can't slip. Simple but effective.

The answer to my question about acoustic guitars was a bit of a surprise.

"I've never owned an acoustic guitar. I don't like them at all. The acoustic on the record is rented".

So, which version of the solos did he prefer? Obviously the electric one?

"No, I like them both, they're different. How can you compare two things which are different? I mean people seem to compare the first album with the second, but it goes in one ear and out the other because they are both different. It's as simple as that. People say to me the guitar's not as upfront on the second album, but you can't keep on doing the same thing over and over. That's where a lot of bands go wrong."

One criticism always being levelled at heavy metal bands is that sooner or later they mellow out, and it's true that Van Halen II isn't quite as powerful as Van Halen I. So when I learned that the next album is likely to feature Edward on keyboards I began to get a bit worried. Will the next album be like the typical M.O.R. ex-metal music constantly being pumped out of the States these days by the likes of Boston and Foreigner?

"No way man, I won't be plink-plink Chopin piano, It'll be bang-bang rock 'n' roll. But I know what your saying. When I was growing up I loved Led Zepplin I. Then Led Zep II came along and was a little more easy going. Then when the third album

came out and it had all these acoustic guitars on it, and I thought 'shit' and gave up on them.

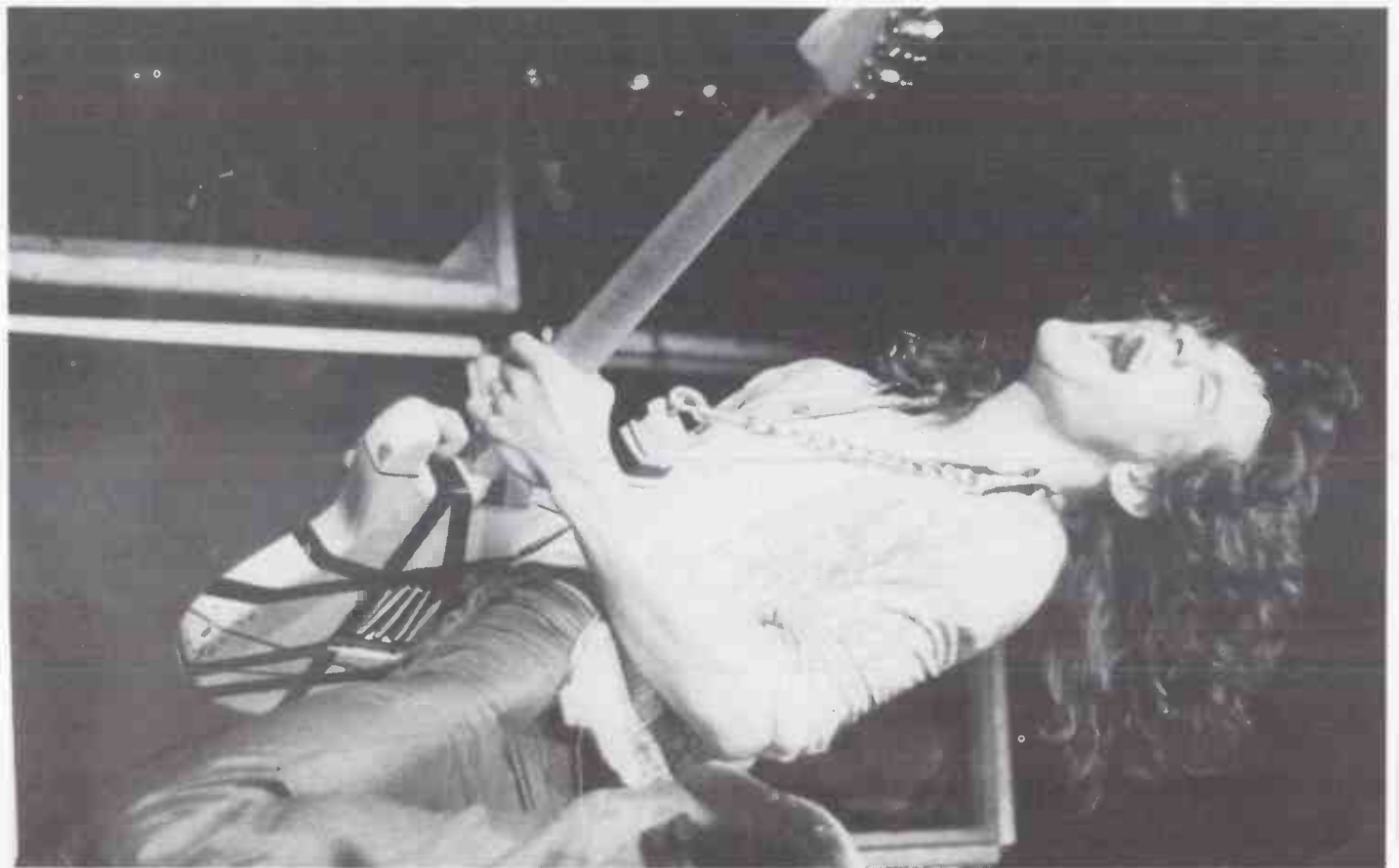
"But then as I grew up I said, 'Hey I see why they did that. Because if they had put out ten albums with the exact same noise on them they'd be nowhere'. You have to change and progress to keep people's interest. Even though I hate to use the word progress."

I wondered how the band had come together in the first place since they seemed to pop out of nowhere. My impression was that they had been formed by a record company. But apparently not.

"Oh no, we've been together five years. Me and Alex have been together since we first started playing. I've never played with another drummer. We started out playing small clubs the same as any other band. That's where 'You Really Got Me' came from. That's where 'You're No Good' came from. Don't be surprised if on the next album there's another cover version. We have a repertoire of over 200 songs by other people. But the thing is we do them all our own way".

Edward's style is so distinctive that you could never mistake his playing. He has a comprehensive knowledge of the harmonics available on his instrument and his runs have a very fluent jazzy feel. I wondered who he is influenced by and who his favourite players were.

"Well, I grew up on Clapton, Beck and



This way up! Eddie says "I play bang-bang rock 'n' roll. I have about 1500 watts of power behind me."

Page, all the obvious ones. But nowadays I don't get much chance to listen to music much except on the radio. Because we're touring so heavily".

What about jazz?

"Are you talking about say Jeff Beck and Stanley Clarke style or about Buddy Rich? I like 'em both. I like Allan Holdsworth a lot. I like the first U.K. album with him and Bill Bruford on it but I don't like the second because they're not on it".

What do you think of Al Dimeola?

"I'm not into guitarists who want to walk on stage and be it. I mean there's so many bands like Ritchie Blackmore and Ronny Montrose who seem to think its the guitar player who's making the band. So they take off and do a solo trip. But that's just stupid. Our band is like a football team, we all work together and each member is equally important. Nobody does more or less than any other".

Where Van Halen's albums score heavily is in their fresh live atmosphere, they have succeeded where most bands fall down, in capturing the excitement and energy of a live rock 'n' roll show and putting it down on vinyl. All too often good meaty live bands go into the studio and fail to deliver the goods.

"If you understand anything about recording studios, what they do with most bands is lay down a rhythm track and then add on a solo. Well I can't stand doing that so what I do is solo on the basic track because I like playing with people. I'm not into playing with machines. We all play together and if it needs it'll overdub a rhythm track instead of the other way around.

Quicker

"It goes so much quicker that way. If you listen to the album 90 per cent is live. It took us only ten days to record the second album. The first was our first time in a studio so it took a little longer . . . two weeks."

"All the vocals are done at the same time as the rest of us. But what he's doing is laying down a guide track and sometimes does it again. The reason for this is that you can't have guitar noise going onto the vocal tracks."

What amps are used in the studio?

"Exactly the same as on stage, except I use a little less, obviously. I have two stacks with five cabs in a circle and put a mike in the middle."

One thing that has always intrigued me is whether Van Halen consider themselves to be a heavy metal band or a rock 'n' roll band. Personally I think the tag heavy metal doesn't do them justice because of it's connection with serious, boring bands like Sabbath, Rush and Rainbow. I would prefer to think of them as a good time rock 'n' roll band.

However, they have a better description.

"What we call ourselves is Big Rock. Because it sounds big. We've got heavy guitars and drums and screaming vocals. But we don't do long boring jams. On albums all our songs are three minute sing alongs. Heavy metal makes me think back ten years, when the punk rock thing started, people would come up and say "What do you think of punk or new wave" and I'd say "we're new wave because we're a new band and we're happening."

"We're the same as punks in as much as we play basic rock 'n' roll. We've just got longer hair. We want to put some life back into rock 'n' roll. We want to make it fun again. I play guitar because I get off."

Disappointed

"It's difficult to follow such fine sentiments with sour grapes, but I'm afraid that I must say I didn't think the gig Eddie had just played was as good as it could have been.

What will all the solos and breaks for Dave Lee Roth to shoot his mouth off it seemed that they were letting things slip a bit..But whether this was because it was a

bum gig or because they've suddenly got it a little too easy I wouldn't like to say.

One thing is for sure. When Van Halen were out to prove that they were the business on the Black Sabbath tour a year ago nothing could touch them. But now all the pomp and the glitter seems to detract from the excitement.

Still, I'll console myself that Edward was totally oblivious to the fact that the solos were too long, (especially drums) and Dave was doing too much talking and not enough singing and hope the tension was restored at the next gig.

"If you come back and see us tomorrow it will be different. I mean, who wants to do the same thing again and again. We like to go on stage and play, not work.

A lot of bands have the attitude of "We've got to go on stage and work", but not us. I probably enjoy myself as much if not more than every one of the people out there watching".

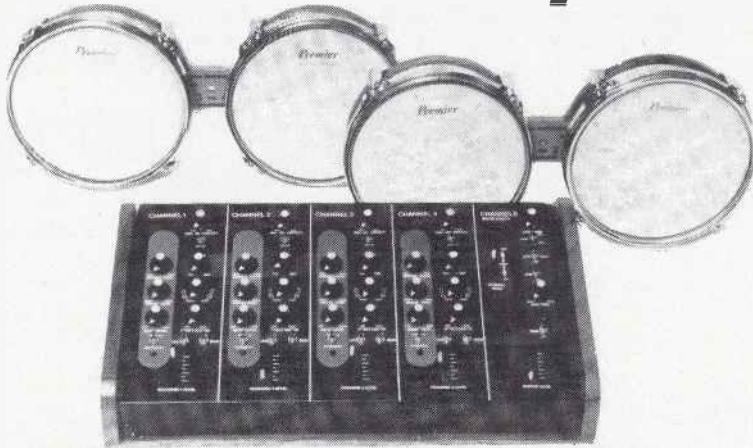
Oh well, my confidence in Van Halen's belief in rock 'n' roll restored, I'll leave the last word to Eddie . . . "If you come to our shows to see art . . . forget it."

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Is it a Strat or not? Edward designs and builds his own guitars.

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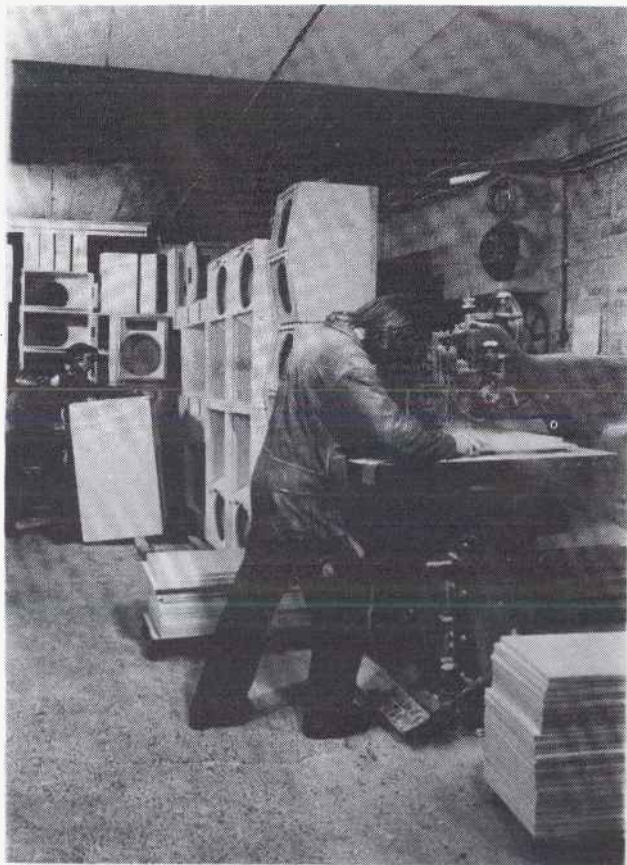


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AC/DC

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Tony Horkins puts his fingers in the socket and lights up for Angus Young

AC/DC have definitely gone up in the world. I bet when they were playing at the Marquee back in '76 they weren't staying at the Holiday Inn. Give 'em another year or so and it will be the Montcalm. Now *that's* success.

I arrive at the hotel foyer and the notice board reads 'Mr Young, Room 123.' In room 123, however, one of the lads from *Melody Maker* is in the closing stages of an interview with Bonn Scott, AC/DC's singer. I stay for a drink and wait for Angus to arrive while Bonn talks about diseases, women and booze. Eventually I'm told I'm in the wrong room so I'm ushered into another one, this time the right one. In this room one of the lads from *Sounds* is in the closing stages of an interview with Angus, I stay for a drink and wait for it to finish.

At long last it's my turn. I ask him if he's got a guitar with him to pose with for some black and white shots. He rushes out and comes back with a black and white guitar. Makes sense. I wonder if the Gibson SG he's posing with is his main guitar.

"No, not really. I've got an old brown one I've always played, but it's got wood rot. It's water-logged and the neck's warped really bad. I've had umpteen guys working on it but none of them have done any good."

It seems that Angus sticks mainly to Gibsons for a number of reasons. Anyone that's had the pleasure of seeing AC/DC live will know how small Angus is. And believe me, when you come face to face with him he really is small. As SG's share this attribute, they were an obvious choice. He also suffers from particularly small hands and the SG's thin neck helps him over that hurdle.

Looking at the back of the black and white SG he was holding he pointed out the masses of gaffer tape holding in the transmitters he uses on stage instead of the traditional guitar leads.

"I have all the transmitters built into the guitar. I've been using them for about three



AC/DC



"Maybe I'll buy a Muddy Waters album..."

years. They were about \$5,000 when I bought them."

With so many guitars on the market, I wondered how he'd actually go about picking one.

"Well, I'm smart — I go to the pawn shops. Like this (the black and white SG) was all screwed up when I got it. It's just that if it's got a good neck, and it's playable, I'll buy it. I don't like to spend too much on a guitar."

Angus reckons on having about six guitars now, but thinks he may have a few more lying about here and there. As his brown one's in a bit of a state, he uses the black and white one most of the time on stage, occasionally using a cherry-red model as well. Because of his rather unusual size he really doesn't feel comfortable with anything other than an SG.

The pickups on this B&W SG are old Humbuckers, but he's left the covers on them.

"A lot of people tell you that if you take the covers off they sound better, but it just has more scratch, so I've put them back on."

He makes up for his lack of experimenting with guitars, by having a go on the pickups. He'll keep switching them around until he's got the best pickup on the best guitar and is happy with the overall performance.

"I tried a Di Marzio once, a plastic thing, and I was beginning to sound like Foreigner!"

The strings, however, he's not so

particular about. "They keep on changing them on me," he said while trying to suss out what strings were on the guitar he was holding.

"I think the strings they put on are Gibson strings. Rotosound used to give us them for nothing but they said we've got to start paying for them. So I said, 'Fuck that! If you give them to me free I'll take them, but I'm not paying for them!'"

Aren't you getting any guitars free?

"Gibson are going to start."

Amps

Like so many other guitarists, when he gets on stage he plugs into a Marshall. He tried Ampeg — "one of the big jobs — but they always, used to blow my speakers out, but I really used to drive them."

"Now I have four Marshalls up there, but I really only use about two of them. The others are there just in case. Generally Marshalls are the most reliable rock amps."

When it comes to recording, that incredibly live sound he gets is brought to you by a single 50 watt Marshall, but is it as live as it sounds?

"Basically they are pretty live. We do all the backing tracks in one go and in the past we've even done the vocals in one go too. We experiment a lot on those albums. We spend a lot of time on them. Some people think we just walk in . . . then straight out the door. We once spent three months on an album trying to get a good rock sound."

For the first time since their beginning the band have used a different producer on their new album, 'Highway to Hell.' Robert John Lange has taken over from the excellent job Angus' brother and his mate Vanda have been doing over the years. Why?

"Basically, everyone thought we needed a change. The new one's probably the most powerful one we've done, and certainly the most listenable. There's still all the rawness and plops and farts."

Angus doesn't, however, seem to know a whole load about his new producer. "He did the . . . Boom Rats . . . or something, and some other people. He told me them all, but I can't remember."

I wondered if they'd ever tried to produce themselves. After all, they've been in the business quite a while now.

"Basically, we do need an outsider looking in. I don't feel fully experienced enough to do that sort of thing. When you produce yourself you've got to have a little bit of technical knowledge about the board and that."

Playing

Switching from recording to playing, I asked how he first got into playing the guitar.

"Mainly I got a lot of it from my brother Malcolm (AC/DC's rhythm



"I have all the transmitters built into the guitar"



guitarist), and other brothers. They can all play guitars and endless other instruments. There was always someone playing in a band and I picked most of it off of them.

"I could play all the fancy stuff before I could play anything. As soon as someone started telling me that this was E Augmented Ninth I went 'Hold on, this looks a bit hard, maybe I'll stick to plumbing.'"

What were you listening to when you were growing up and trying to play?

"Probably a whole load of things. Things like 'I'm a Man', by the Yardbirds . . . just wild, exciting stuff . . . 'My Generation'. Anything that sounded meaty."

Did you just copy what you heard on the records?

"No, that's one thing I missed out on. Everyone else could sing and copy them but I didn't have the patience. I used to try, but I'd think 'That doesn't sound right.'"

You may be wondering how a guy that is still being reported as being about 17 years old was listening to that kind of stuff when he was even younger. When I asked him how old he was he spent a long time trying to answer, murmuring about how the press kept on getting the age wrong — mainly due to him telling them lies! He concluded that he was 24, but maybe he was fibbing again. He may be really small, but he doesn't look all that young when he's standing still without his school uniform on.

Even now, Angus is still listening to old records, and when I asked him if he was

Angus is not particular about his strings. "I think these are Gibson."

listening to any new stuff he answered with.

"Not really, but maybe I'll buy a new Muddy Waters album."

This made me think that perhaps he's missed out on a lot of things that he might otherwise enjoy. He doesn't get to see any gigs and the only other bands he sees are the ones that are supporting or headlining with AC/DC. But he doesn't seem at all bothered.

"You've heard one guitarist, and you've heard them all."

A lot of the younger bands today state proudly how much they prefer playing small, sweaty clubs to large concert halls. Is Angus enjoying himself as much today as when he was strutting his stuff down at the Marquee a few years ago?

"Yes. Basically when the band was put together it was a big fun thing. We used to

have a hell of a lot of fun when we got on the road and it is still the same. We never worry too much. Even if the audience hate us and we have a good time we know now that we can turn our backs on them. We're still having a good time."

"Obviously the little gigs are better. You're in there, they can see you, they can see the expressions on your face. They can laugh with you, you can tell jokes to them . . . you can hand out football tickets to them! You can chat up the women in the crowd, whistle and do whatever. Basically, you can't beat those gigs for general atmosphere, good time, fun and anything."

How much longer do you think you can carry on sneaking into the audience to play your guitar solos?

"Well, they haven't caught me yet. There's been a few hairy ones, but as long as I'm sneakier than them, and as long as I can crawl through their legs and dodge them."

How much longer do you think you can keep up the schoolboy image?

"Well, I'm doing it now and I've got a hairy chest! As long as I don't look like an old man in a kids suit."

When talking about the future he didn't really have any plans or insights into what may happen. Like many other bands AC/DC live from day to day and hope to be around a long time. All he worries about is having a good time.

When I asked if he had any plans for maybe going solo one day he said 'You mean so low, maybe that.'

Pix. by Sue Arber

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EXILE: BACK IN STYLE

BY MIKE POWELL



KISS YOU ALL OVER' which became a No.1 hit in Britain, underlined Exile as a band to watch in the future. Their current 45 has brought the Kentucky-based group back to our shores with a vengeance.

"We were last over here in the fall of '78."

Buzz Cornelius recalled recently. Buzz was born on September 4th, 1948. He started playing the piano at the age of three and was involved with the condensed foetus of the band, The Exiled, way back in 1963.

The current line-up of the band formed in 1977, after they were signed with RAK Records by Mike Chapman and Nicky Chinn who had moved from London to L.A. in order to sign up new acts.

The six-man band, who describe their music as "good time rock 'n' roll with a little R&B and Funk mused in" were the first group to ever record in the Forum, a new studio situated in Covington, Kentucky.

"It proved extremely convenient for us," Marlon Hargis confessed. "It was well-equipped and virtually on our doorstep. Previous to the Forum, the nearest studios of any importance were in Nashville, a four-hour drive away.

"Nashville unfortunately isn't such a bright proposition if you happen to be a rock band. The producers and engineers are geared to Country sounds and you don't get the product you want unless you take along your own recording crew. Kentucky, on the other hand, is primarily bluegrass

country and the crowd there were over the moon when 'Kiss You All Over' made it world-wide.

"Then Mike brought in Blondie and mixed 'Parallel Lines' followed by our new album, 'All There Is' — which incidentally was joint recorded at the MCA Whitney Studios in Glendale, California. We have the impression

'Nashville isn't too bright if you happen to be a rock band.'

that Mike (Chapman) likes to experiment with studios! When we were last over in the UK we went into RAK's 'B' studio with Mickie Most, which turned out to be great. We used lots of synthesisers, keyboards and electronics and were fortunate that the sound we created was very like our 'live' performances.

In their spare-time, Exile are more into sport than anything else. Buss, for example, gets his highs out of fishing and horse-back riding.

"We don't really do anything

uniquely American, although we do eat Kentucky Fried Chicken! Colonel Sanders is a really great guy who attends the Kentucky Derby each year and throws a party for all the residents.

Buzz discussed the difference between the American and English music business.

"Over in America, the public demand bands to appear in person, or else the group flops except in special circumstances like Bob Dylan, etc. It was overwhelming to succeed in Britain as we did. After all we hadn't done a lot of promotion over in the UK and it was mind-boggling to sit in the States and hear of our ever-increasing bank balance!

"The British public is much fairer than the American crowd who just want blam, blam, blam 24 hours a day. British people accept that we can't be there all the time and it really says a great deal for the folks.

"We regard the music business as a huge ball game. We look upon ourselves as new players who are out of sight, out of mind and who have to steal time in order to record and perform. We look upon it as essentially entertainment and that should thrill all rock musicians."

Randy Rickman is the newest recruit to the band. He started playing his Father's guitar at the age of 10 when

his "Pop" didn't play it any more.

Randy formed his own band in 1976 and was hospitalised in December, 1978 after a 'crucial accident'. Doctors believed that he would never again be able to use his jaw properly.

"We regard the music business as a huge ball game."

"I didn't believe in negative thoughts," he admitted to me. "To hell with it, I thought, I *will* be able to sing. Therefore I didn't become surprised when I joined Exile, because I believe in karma — that the bad luck is always eventually balanced out by an equal share of good." But what happens if your musical career has so far only been preoccupied with the good?

At present Exile's manager is investigating possibilities that the band should embark on a huge world-wide tour. "We reckon the end of the year could be a possibility," Buzz admitted. "We lean on our manager for inspiration and he always knows what is best."

Unfortunately he seems to have hit a bummer with the latest single, 'How Could This Go Wrong'. After weeks of

'The music business is a huge ball game. We are new players who are out of sight.'

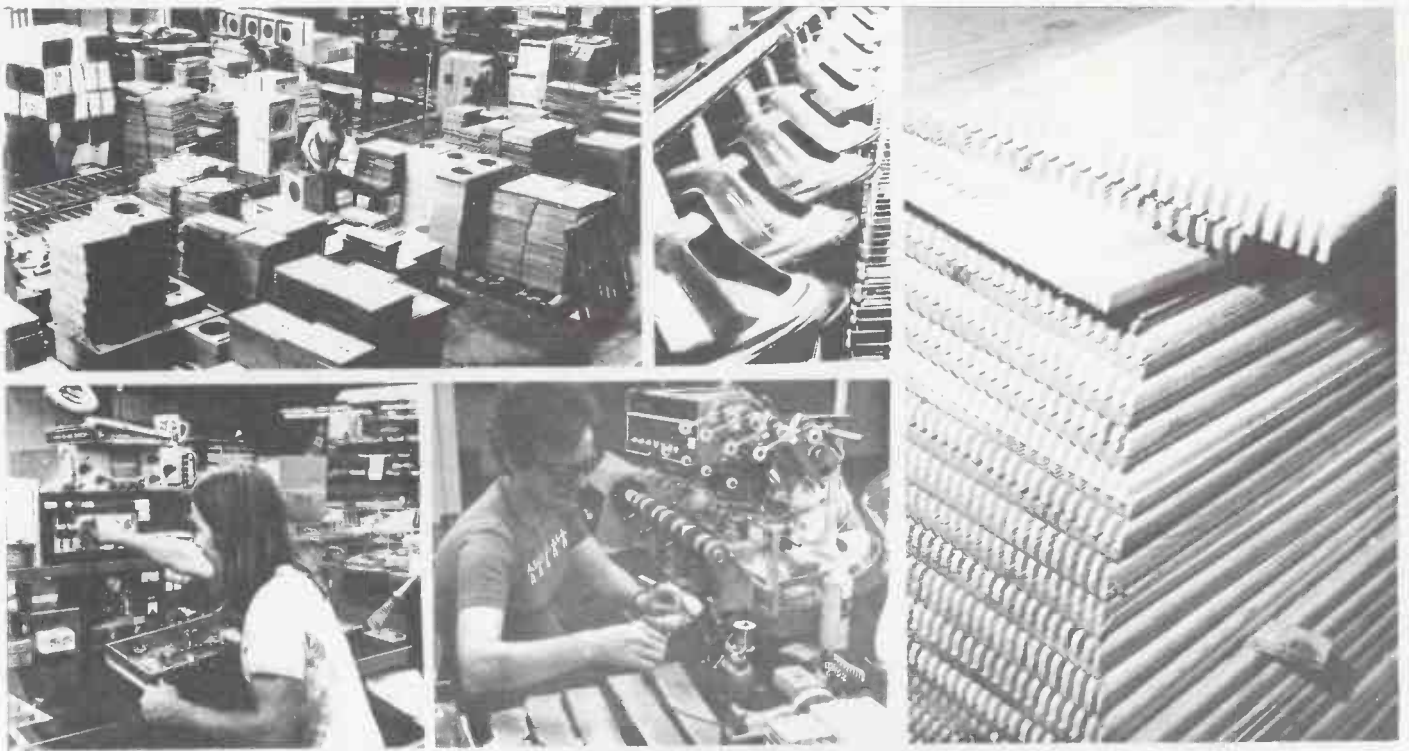
release it has yet to break through the charts; although now the group are more concerned with summer concerts in America. "Groups really hit 'em in during the summer, while the kids are off school."

Meanwhile the group haven't exiled themselves from the fact they're becoming more and more established as top-rate rock musicians. "On that account," added Buzz, "we just have our fans to thank. Without them we would be nothing."



Above: Exile's current line-up (L to R): Marlon Wargis, Steve Goetzman, Sonny Lemaire, Randy Rickman, Buzz Cornelius, and J. P. Pennington. Below: Randy Rickman in live action.





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TONY HORKINS DISCOVERS LIFE ON THE BEAT WITH THE POLICE



PIX BY SUE ARBER

HOW MANY of you a year ago would have bothered paying as much as a quid to see The Police? And how many of you have just paid about £4 to see them? At long last people have realised what a good band they are, and their album sales are finally reflecting the talent each of the three members has.

I first saw The Police before I joined BEAT, while holidaying around the western bays of California (he tries to say casually). Santa Monica was the destination and wild was the audience. I remember as I walked out saying to a guy I was with that one of the first people I'm going to interview when I get back is that drummer, Stuart Copeland. You'd never guess from the album what an excellent drummer he really is, and how original too.

Apparently Stuart formed The Police about four years ago after splitting with Curved Air. When he left Curved Air his

fellow musicians thought he was nuts because he was into "all that new wave stuff."

"They thought I was joining the Gary Glitter set!"

Stuart has eternal admiration for the guys that got up in '76 and played their stuff, bringing the first major change, musically, in years.

"Stuff today is 20 times better than it was before '76, and it's all because of those guys who just got up and played."

The Police were officially formed when Stuart talked Sting out of a jazz group in Newcastle to come down to London, where they met Andy Summers on a session. For the first two years he was the band's manager renting trucks and hiring PA's, as well as drumming for the group. Because of this he didn't have any time for writing songs, therefore Sting was the main writing force. However, now the band's got a

manager he's been busy writing some of his own stuff. At home he has a Revox tape machine, various mikes, a load of great guitars and basses and he just builds up songs the best way he can. So expect some shared songwriting on the next Police album.

But even though he can now get by pretty good on bass and guitar, and a bit of piano, drums are still his main interest. He recalls how he first got into playing the drums.

"When I was about 13 and listening to Jimi Hendrix records I was doing all the posing in the mirror stuff and trying to figure out whether I wanted to be the guitarist of the drummer. I decided I'd rather be the drummer.

Those who have seen The Police will realise that Stuart plays Tama drums.

"I was one of the first to spot them, luckily. It was when they first started

making drums and I saw them in a shop and really liked them. I was playing with Curved Air at the time, so I rang lama up and asked if they'd send me a set. They didn't want money or anything — all they wanted was a picture of me playing them. I didn't actually *have* to play them, but once I did, that was it."

"I used Ludwig before that, and the first time I used the Tama kit I remember our mixer saying to me — pleading with me — to burn the old Ludwig kit because the Tama sound was just automatically better."

I wondered what particular characteristic he liked so much about Tama drums.

"I like a really fast action so I tune the drums really tight, which gives them a fast response. But usually to get a really heavy sound you have to take your drums down, which loses that bounce. But with Tama drums you can tune them really tight but still get a very deep sound."

He also enthuses about the stands, pedals, hi-hat, construction and anything else you'd like to think of. Is there anything he doesn't use that isn't Tama?

"Sticks. I'll use any old sticks. But I think I'll see if I can get Tama to give me some..."

Stuart now owns three kits. He still has the original one he bought four years ago, another that he keeps in America (Stuart was born in America) and he's just got a

brand new one. He only replaced the original kit because it's got a bit dirty, and the stands are beginning to show signs of wear, but that's not bad going after four years.

"After all I really do give 'em hell."

The kit he uses isn't exactly massive. Like he says, he uses the tiniest of tiny drum sets, although a little extravagant with cymbals. (he's got three crashes and a splash, and will only use Zildjian and Paice). The kit only has a 22" bass drum and only three tom-toms, all of which are small.

"You don't need 14 toms to go rat-a-tat-tat on!"

"In Curved Air I had a great big double bass-drum kit with millions of tom-toms but it was just too complicated. You can't get to the root of the thing unless you start simple and go from there. You don't need 14 tom-toms to go rat-a-tat-tat on. Three will do the job."

Instead of having masses of drums, Stuart opts for effects. He'd rather have a Roland Chorus Echo than masses of drums anyway.

"I use the echo on stage — it affects the rhythm. I plug it in and get a rhythm out of it and play with that rhythm. I've got a foot switch next to my hi-hat so I can switch it on and off."

"It's got different speeds and different

kinds of echo and I set it all up before a song. It's great because you can do on-stage dubs just like reggae records. There's a million ways of using it.

"For example, I've got two mikes on the snare drum. One goes to the PA and the other to the echo machine. But you don't hear the beat on the one that goes to the echo machine, just the echo. It comes through my monitors and then through the PA as well. Because the two signals are separated they can be made into stereo, which has a great effect going from one side to the other."

Apart from that, he's thinking of using some Octobans for creating various effects, and doesn't mind using the occasional roto-tom on a studio overdub.

"But for a kit playing on stage they're just a pain in the neck and a waste of space."

We wound up the conversation by talking about other drummers. At the moment he likes listening to the B-52's, so at the moment that's the drummer he's listening to the most. He thinks he can impersonate anybody's style of drumming, and that nearly every drummer can anyhow. He also thinks that musos worry too much about technique instead of getting down and actually playing. And he's probably right. After all I'm writing this instead of playing my drum kit, and you're reading this instead of playing yours.

Now, where did I leave my sticks...?



Stuart Copeland, drummer with The Police, with one of his guitars!!! The picture was taken in his makeshift studio at home.

FIVE OF THE BEST

GIOVANNI DADOMO talks to five rock keyboard players and gives the lowdown on their favourite instruments, studio technique, and how they started playing.

JOOLES HOLLAND plays keyboards for Squeeze, the South London band who, at the time of writing, have just followed their 'Cool For Cats' hit with the even more successful 'Up the Junction.' Jools' love of basic boogie woogie piano's no secret, as the quintet of originals on his 'Boogie Woogie '78' solo EP for Deptford Fun City Records more than ably demonstrated last year.

The original inspiration, it transpires, was a boogie woogie uncle of the still very young Jools: "I liked it so much that as soon as I could — I must've been six or so — I got him to teach me a few basic tunes.

"Later on my parents forced me to take music lessons but I didn't like that at all. I never learned to read. I learned enough to know what chords and keys were and then stopped." Lack of reading's been no problem, says Jools, who's done studio sessions for the likes of Dr. Feelgood, Eddie & The Hot Rods and Wayne County. "I could bluff it if I had to, but so far no-one's even asked me to read a chart."

Still only 21, Jools' background's almost pure Squeeze. He and co-founder Chris Difford did the odd pick-up gig with other people, he says, but that went out when the beginnings of Squeeze came

along some six years past.

"I couldn't afford an electric piano at first, so I played acoustic in this warehouse where we used to rehearse. Nobody could really hear me so the others made up for it by letting me introduce the numbers!

"Then we borrowed this Hohner Pianette and sort of forgot to give it back. That lasted for a few months but the owners asked for it back in the end." Despite insistence from the rest of the band that he get a Fender Rhodes, Jools' first purchase was an R.M.I. electric. He objected to the Rhodes, he says, because he didn't care for the tone. "I quite like it now though — I suppose I've mellowed with age.

"Then I made a huge jump and got a Polymoog and lots of other things.

"But," Jools emphasises, "my main thing is really being a piano player." His next purchase will be a Yamaha, which he likes "because it actually sounds like a piano. This is actually like a small grand piano in a case, and that's what it sounds like when you hear it. We recently toured with the Tubes and they let me use theirs on quite a few numbers, and I really got to like it.

"But of all the instruments, the one that beats them all is a really good piano. If I was on 'Desert Island Discs' and I was allowed my one luxury it would be a really good piano." Brand-wise, Jools is keen on the Yamaha Conservatory model favoured by so many recording studios.

"But then there's a piano at Pathway which is one of the best I've ever played, just a little old Barnes upright. I suppose if you looked around and found

another Barnes that was made at exactly the same time it could well sound really awful by now, but that one's great. It's not perfect tune-wise, but it has a great sound."

Jools currently owns two uprights, the prized one being a Thirties model the shape of a 50p piece. "It's got green and cream keyboards, too." On the electric side, Jools recently bought a WLM organ that he's very happy with. "But there again, what a lot of people don't understand is you have to stick to one thing. I can't really play organ but I can bluff it, I can make organ sounds come out!"

His advice to beginners? "If you learned to play the piano at home and if you can afford it on HP, then I'd say get a Yamaha. Other than that a Wurlitzer or Fender Rhodes. They have a very mellow sound which isn't to everybody's liking, but they have the same action as a piano — which isn't true of electric pianos in general. Then talk to someone who knows what he's talking about.

"They don't give me any money for saying this but I get all my own stuff from Rod Argent's keyboard store. They actually show you everything very carefully and give you numbers to phone up about problems and things. They're really enthusiasts and not just the stuffed dummies you get serving in most other places. And they're always really helpful.

"If you're not sure what you want they'll show you a lot of things and then let you make up your own mind, and not start waving a lot of forms for you to sign. Because the last thing you want is to have to rush out and buy something and then be sorry later."

Jools Holland of Squeeze



Jools Holland, third from the left in the shades, learnt piano from a boogie woogie uncle.



Jimmy Destri of Blondie

THE WAY I started playing keyboards was very strange," says Jimmy Destri of Blondie (pictured on the far left). Destri's speaking from a hotel in Indianapolis, a stop on the band's first headlining tour of their homeland after 'Heart Of Glass' has brought them their first major chart success in the U.S.

Desti joined the band as a song-writer, he explains. "I used to play other instruments, guitar and bass mainly. This was about five years ago, and when I joined we all got together and talked about what else we needed and came up with keyboards."

Desti happened to own an old Farfisa Mini-Compact. "And the first time we used it onstage everybody fell in love with the sound." It was his first 'real' band, too. "Before that I'd just get up and play with friends and sit at home making tapes for my own amusement. I was very into *musique concrete*, Stockhausen

and so on. But Blondie meant I had to decide whether to go with the group or stay on at school." He was, he explains, taking premed at a local college. Blondie won. He had, in fact, played a little piano before joining the band, but he never learnt to read or anything.

"I'm still not very dextrous on the instrument. Basically I'm a song-writer and keyboards are what I use to colour the sound onstage." He still writes with a guitar, however. "If you write on keyboards you're instantly able to orchestrate and embellish a song and that's exactly what I *don't* want to do. I just try and write a song very simply and then let the band do the rest."

For live work, Jimmy has a Polymoog, a small Roland, and a rhythm machine. "I'm buying an Oberheim and I love sequencers. That's my new thing — I love the random element of them.

"Onstage now, I'm using two Leslie's and two Roland JC 120

amps. These are really good because they have a chorus built in that throws the speakers out of phase and make a note sound like a double note.

"Also, I use a Roland Chorus Echo, and MXR Digital Delay flanger. And a Roland SH 1000 monophonic Synthesiser; that's like my axe, the one I play around with.

"I have a modified Polymoog, too. The filters have been worked up to a point where they have a greater sweep capability. It was the first or second model ever taken on the road and I keep getting it modified, but I stick with it 'cause I heard the prototype was the one they were most experimental with. So I think I've got more on my side than someone with a newer model.

But the single item of equipment Destri's most readily associated with is the distinctive sounding Farfisa, of course. He currently has a twelve year-old Farfisa Compact Duo which he picked up in Sweden for £300.00. "But my proudest piece of equipment," he hastens to add, "is my Ovation acoustic guitar. But I only use that in the studio."

Blondie's onstage deployment is basically a triangle of the other three musicians (lead guitar, bass, drums) says Jimmy, while he and Chris Stein work from the opposite outside ends of the stage, "and we constantly try and lay down colours for the other guys to play over. So it's not your average rock 'n' roll format. No one person is representative of Bondie's sound; it's all six of us doing it together."

That original Farfisa? It was there and it was ideal for its purpose, says Jimmy. "I'd got it from a friend when I was sixteen, so I had it for a long time, and I just used to play around with it through a valve amp in my basement.

"I just always loved the sound of it. In the Sixties it was *the* sound, but now no-one cares about it anymore.

"On the lower keyboard, you can get a very low Hammond-type tone," says Jimmy, describing his Compact Duo. "And on the top one, it's just like an original Farfisa.

"The way it's made is there's a bunch of five or six oscillators

divided into a network, and each oscillator takes care of about twelve keys. It's the old way of doing things," he adds affectionately.

"The new Farfisas, the new Vox's and Yamahas have these amazing capabilities that put them almost in the realm of synthesisers. And my answer to that is if you want to play synthesisers, you should get a synthesiser."

"But I'm stuck in this world of electronics and the only way to enjoy it is to get to know it better." He's given himself another couple of years before he actually has the time and knowledge to design his own equipment, he says. Similarly, solo recordings are out for the time being. He is, however, expanding his production experience. "I'm probably better at making other people's music sound good, and as far as my own songs go, I'm quite happy to have Debbie sing them."

He's recently produced The Know, the new band formed by ex-Blondie bassist Gary Valentine, and after the current tour he'll be doing some things with U.K. expatriate Mike Chapman, producer of the enormously successful 'Parallel Lines' album. There's a single with a group called The Student Teachers that has a Destri production credit too, which should be out shortly.

"But on our own things one of my biggest fears is to go too far in the studio and then not be able to do the same thing onstage. So we rarely change the instrumentation of things. Either not at all or we change it totally."

A day or so before, says Jimmy, he'd been having a chat with co-tourer Nick Lowe and Nick had advised him to cut down on the number of keyboards onstage and go for that distinctive solo Farfisa sound that Steve Naive provides for Elvis Costello & The Attractions. He was a little taken aback, he admits. "I mean, our album came out about a year before The Attractions were formed!" If he's proud of one thing, Jimmy Destri's happy to be recognised as the man who put the Farfisa back in the heart of pop.

FIVE OF THE BEST



Dave Formula of Magazine

MUCH OF THE colour and texture of Manchester-spawned Magazine emanates from the restrained luxury of Dave Formula's keyboard intros and fills. Oddly enough, Dave's start was blowing harp in an r'n'b combo, with keyboards only coming along a couple of years later.

"At first I had this old piano, so no-one could hear what I was even doing. Then I got this terrible old heap of an organ called a Bird Contemporary. It was about thirty years old and had these horrible coffee-table legs." A long period with a Hammond ensued, finally giving way to a Fender Rhodes. By then he'd started getting some session work in local studios and 1976 saw him in a local group called Giro, who put out a couple of singles on the independent Rabid label. "I left after about a year."

Late in '77 he caught Magazine at a club called Rafters and was much impressed.

Dave's current arsenal includes a Yamaha Electric Grand, Yamaha 4c45D organ ("which I put through a modified Leslie 122") plus Yamaha String Machine, ARP Odyssey, and a clavinet — and that's his basic gigging gear, "all of which go through various mixers — whatever's available at the time — and a Yamaha desk."

Specific influences? "One of the first, strangely enough, is

this old ragtime pianist called Eubie Blake. He's about 98 now and he's just this weird, surrealist ragtime player who caught my imagination at the time.

"The rest are the usual ones: Basie, Oscar Peterson, Duke Ellington. Later I started listening to the people with Miles Davis, Cecil Taylor and so on." His r'n'b period saw him take in Memphis Slim and Little Walter. Current likes include Sly & The Family Stone, Weather Report, The Pop Group, Lou Reed . . .

For studio work Dave prefers to use studio grands to the Yamaha, he says. "Mainly because, especially at the bass end, you get fuller resonance. You just haven't got the string lengths at the bottom end of the Yamaha.

"But I don't ignore the Yamaha totally. They've just brought a new one out with a larger scale keyboard, which I must try. But on the road I'm quite happy with what I've got. You can get *too* finicky about these things. "Another new item he's interested in is the latest Oberheim Polymoog — "Joe Zawinul used an Oberheim and gets a pretty good sound out of it!"

Formula's synthesiser formula: "I like to use it as an instrument as opposed to an effect, as a noise-maker. That's something I really try hard to avoid. They can be such a pain in the arse if they're over-used.

Dave Greenfield of The Stranglers

DAVE GREENFIELD of The Stranglers started his professional career as a guitar-player, having been taught the rudiments by a school-friend. By his teens, he was working as a semi-pro and "spending all day at home with just a piano and guitar, so I learned piano then."

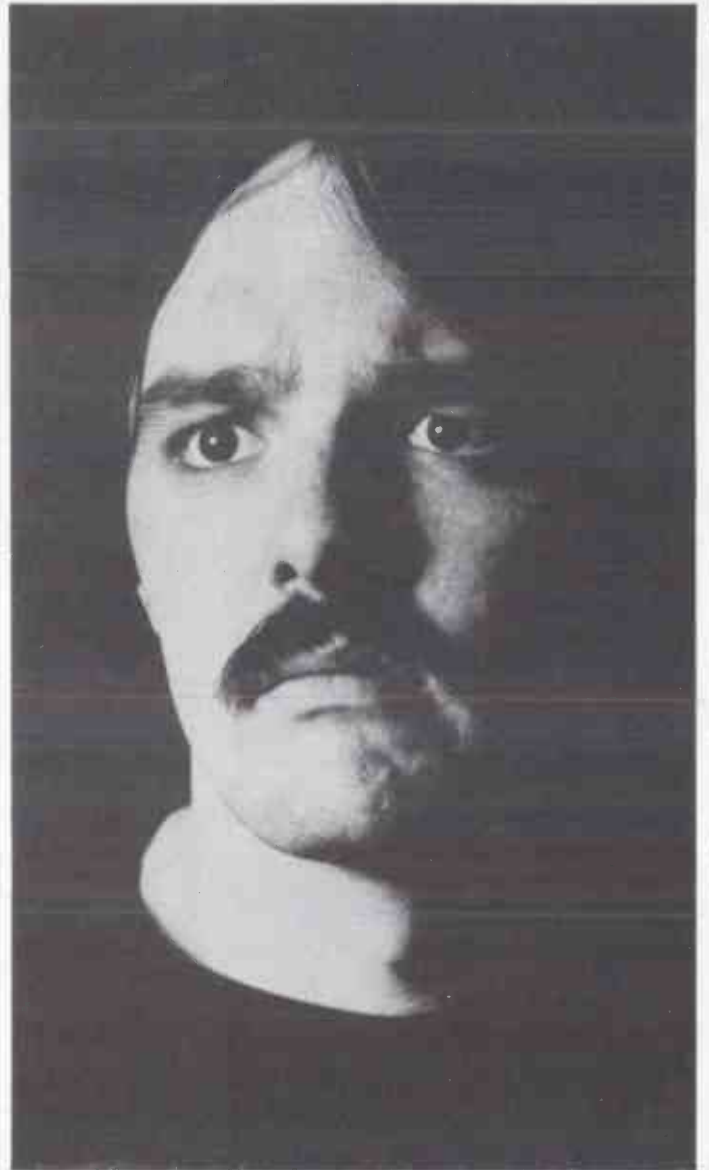
He was offered a tour of Germany with a band, and sudden personnel changes found him behind a Vox Continental.

"About a year later I bought a Hohner Cymbalette, which I had until the turn of this year. It's a very old model, but although they don't make them

any more you can still get the spares. But when we were playing in Japan it kept shorting out because of the humidity, so I finally decided to retire it.

"A year or two later, I got a Hammond L100 and a Selmer 100-Watt P.A. amp with this home-built eighteen-inch speaker we called 'The Abortion', because that's what it looked like.

"I added Minimoog about the time of 'Rattus Norveticus' and my amp changed at the same time. I was using two AC 201 cabs with a little mini-mixer on top. Now I've got three Turners and two Jaguar studio monitors with



a Kelsey mixing desk. I also got two phasers, one for organ and one for piano.

"The last thing I added was going from 4-voice to eight-voice modules, so you can play eight notes simultaneously.

"The piano's a Yamaha — the next one down from the Grand." Other recent expansions are a sequencer for his Oberheim, and a Wasp mini-synthesiser. "It just runs on batteries and is probably the best value around.

"Pretty soon I'll start fading the Moog out, because it can get boring very fast. The other thing I've just started using is a Vocoder, but that's just for one track on the album."

Does he find working live very different from recording? Not a lot, says Dave. "In the studio I usually D.I. most of my stuff, so I don't need to use amps except on the rare occasions when I want a very 'live' sound. Then it's a double mix — one D.I. and an amplified one as well."

Dave has no particular conscious influences from the early days. "There wasn't much time to listen to other people because I had to learn as I was playing. We were doing these U.S. Army bases and playing anything that was going at the time, so there was no particular style."

Even now, he says, he listens only to what happens to come on the radio.

Synthesiser-wise, Dave's keen on the Wasp: "It's very similar to the Mini-moog, plus it can do things the Moog can't. It's got reiteration (note-repeat) so that's easily obtained without using any of the effects on low-frequency oscillator, which you'd have to do on the Moog." Main differences otherwise are the Wasp's two oscillators to the Moog's three, says Dave.

"And it's got its own six-inch speaker for learning on, so you can start playing it right away without buying amps. Then for live work you can plug it in to any amp whatsoever.

"As far as organs go, the thing to avoid is the reed organs. Because they're totally useless for live work because the responses — wind and so on — are so slow. They're OK to learn chords on but no good for stage at all."

A LLEN LANIER of Blue Oyster Cult laughs when I tell him I've been asking people how they started playing keyboards — "Because their mothers beat them!" he offers.

"I started the same way. But I hated it. I learned piano when I was very young and then I quit. And I never really started learning until I started hearing early rock'n'roll, like Jerry Lee Lewis and Little Richard. And those were all the songs that I learned. And so I just taught myself. There was always a piano in the house, so we went through all the usual cliches: 'Do you have to play that loud?' all that kind of crap. I can read music. Not very well, but I can do it."

When he started playing with bands, says Allen, he inevitably found himself at the keyboards. "Although what I really wanted to play was guitar. But there was always someone better at it than I was.

"Even when we first put this band together, everyone was going, 'We're gonna need some keyboards in this'. And I didn't really wanna say I could play 'cause I wanted to play guitar. Then I finally admitted it and they said 'Why don't you do that then?' So I reluctantly put the guitar down." He started out with an old Farfisa, had that for years.

"And the instrument I most wish I had, if I could find one, is an old Combo Electronic Gibson organ, but it's discontinued now. It's what Ray Mazarek used on the old Doors records. I had one at one time but it was so old that it broke very night and I had to get rid of it. Wonderful instrument; up until polyphonic synthesisers it was about the only instrument where you could programme really interesting sounds. All the Doors records only use that old Gibson organ. But it was so unreliable that they stopped making it.

"But it's all a question of what you can afford. As we went on I got more and more instruments. In the set-up we have now, I have a baby grand Steinway on stage, miked up. Because the way I play keyboards — and I guess it's apparent on the albums — but I use keyboards as orchestration

FIVE OF THE BEST



Allen Lanier, second from the right, hated piano as a kid.

Allen Lanier of Blue Oyster Cult

before anything else. And certain songs only sound right with a real piano sound.

"So I have about five different things. I have the Steinway, a Hammond C3 organ, clavinet, and this new synthesiser that I play. Which is the one instrument I'd love to talk about because it's the answer to every synthesiser player's dream. It's a thing called a Prophet. It's made in California and it's marvellous. It's a five-note polyphonic synthesiser, and it has what I always wanted in a synthesiser which is a memory — it has a digital memory bank in it. Which means that you can dial up all the sounds that you might want, then you punch a couple of buttons and it puts it into the memory bank. So onstage you'll get to a point and you'll think, 'Now I have to sound like The Battle Of Britain', and you just punch a button and it comes up. It holds these things in memory, so you don't have to twist dials and patch chords and things like that to put it in.

"And it'll hold up to forty

different voices. And it's just a great machine. And it's reliable and it works, and it does string sections and horns and all kinds of things. It's just a great instrument to work with.

P.A.-wise Allen has two systems. "There's my own onstage sound, which runs through a rack of DC300 Crown amplifiers and has a couple of limiters in it and an E.Q. system, and an onstage Yamaha mixer. But that's basically for myself. Every instrument has an output for me, so that I can hear it onstage, and then there's also a branch that runs directly into the P.A. so that my sound-man mixes it directly from the instruments, independently of what I do. It works out quite well if you have a good sound-man," says Lanier with a chuckle.

Like Jools Holland, Lanier's basically a piano man. "That's what I think of keyboards. I get a picture of Jerry Lee Lewis, Gershwin or whatever. But I think of a real piano. But I love

Continued on page 26

FIVE OF THE BEST



ALLEN LANIER of BLUE OYSTER CULT (continued)

all the possibilities of synthesised sound in terms of orchestration and creating mood and ambience in a piece of music. That's the way I like to use it. I don't think I'll ever get into a Jam Hammer thing of total synthesiser, with lead playing and things like that. It's not something I feel terribly motivated by.

"But I do love this new Prophet synthesiser. First of all, because I can play it more like a normal keyboard. And it just creates such a great sound — it's so usable, so manipulatable; it does everything.

"If you listen to our new record, there's keyboards all over it. But they're always behind the guitars basically. Even on the songs that I wrote. I just like it that way, so I'll write for guitar and maybe piano. Maybe that's just my ear, the way I like to hear. Plus the fact that Blue Oyster Cult is a guitar band. And onstage I play about fifty-per-cent guitar. And I still enjoy playing guitar a lot. To me rock'n'roll is basically guitars. That may be a narrow-minded point of view, but that's the way I see it. I was never a big fan of Yes-type groups and elaborate keyboard filigrees and all that sort of thing. It never appealed to me.

"Probably my favourite

keyboard player at this time is Randy Newman. I guess I'm a big fan of economy, and he does so much with so little. I wish I could stand up with a piano and do as delicate a ballet as he does. Nothing fancy, nothing great, but it always hits you right where it counts. And to me that's always the most telling thing about any musician — not necessarily how many notes but what's the *right* note, and where does it belong? And he does that. And I do like to think keyboard players can do that. I still like Aretha Franklin, to me she's one of the great keyboard players. See, I'm so song-oriented, I like *all* instruments. And that's what I like about the 'Mirrors' album, there's not so much self-indulgence as opposed to making all the instruments work to make a song work, every instrument having the one thing in mind, which is to make the song an entity."

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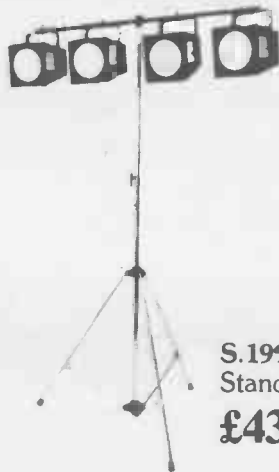
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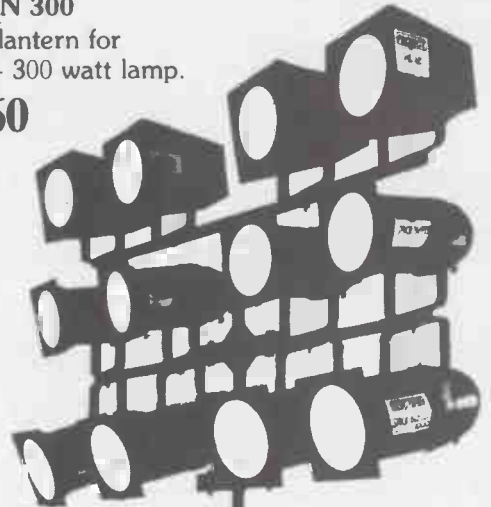
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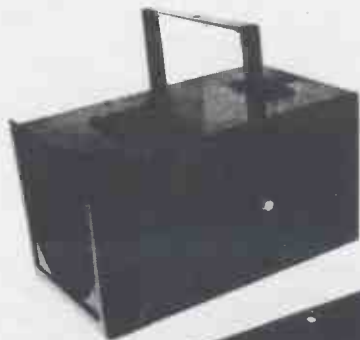
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SIMPLY FIT YOUR LIGHTS AND WIND-EM UP - NO MORE LADDERS OR ACROBATICS!



In the second part of our series on the problems bands face on their way to the top Garry Cooper looks at how to protect your songs, your gear and your career.

GETTING YOUR ACT TOGETHER

THE PROTECTION RACKET



This guitar is asking to walk! 'New for old' is the best form of insurance.

Without wishing to sound like the founder of Neurotics Anonymous, musicians lead a risky life. As if the problems of trying to make a living in a business fraught with rather more financial hazards than most wasn't bad enough, the musician has to

cope with some very unique problems like complicated insurance for his equipment, coping with a business streaming with financial crookery, copyright hassles, drugs (yes, they *are* a problem!), handling instant success (if you're lucky), instant failure (if you're unlucky) — the list of hassles faced by a musician are endless. So for the second of these articles aimed at helping the young player over the less obvious hassles in his chosen career, I've decided to look at the whole vexed subject of protecting yourself and your equipment and hence you career, in its widest sense.

To kick off with, sticking to the point about responding to reader's letters which I made last month, let's look at one of the most common questions which we on Beat get asked — how do you protect your songs?

In theory British law provides copyright on an automatic basis. As soon as you whistle the tune which will eventually sell you a million records, the law says that song is your property and you are entitled to the rights to that song until the day you die, automatically, and without any need to register that song with anybody whatsoever. Even when you pass on to the great 'gig in the sky' those songs of yours pass on to your family or heirs in general, (as do the rights to books and films) for a set period before lapsing into what is rather poetically called 'Public Domain.'

In theory, then, nobody can rip off your artistic ideas. In practice, of course, things aren't that easy. Let's suppose, for example, that you are sitting in your living room playing your latest song with the window open. A plagiarist happens to be walking by your house and hears it. He takes the song home and records it, claiming it as his own. Can you prove, in a

court of law, that you had the idea first? Probably not.

Fear

The lurking fear of the songwriter is that, if he is unsigned to a publishing company whose job it is to look after such matters, his songs may be stolen by another artist. How do you *prove* that you came up with the killer riff first?

Basically there are two answers to this question and both work. The first is to record your song on cassette or reel-to-reel or write it down, and deposit it with your bank in a safe deposit box, making careful note that the bank record the date of the deposit and that the package is secured and dated in the presence of reliable witnesses. You'd be surprised how amenable banks are to providing this service but you will, of course, have to pay for the use of the box.

If your song is now stolen you can sue with the security of a dated manuscript or tape and with witnesses who will swear that the song was deposited by you on such and such a date.

The only significant disadvantage with this procedure is the cost and the fact that banks aren't perfect so they might just lose your package.

Another way exists and this is the one which most songwriters use. What you do is date and seal the manuscript or tape and post it to your own address in a registered, dated, envelope. When the parcel arrives *do not open it*, just put it away safely and it will stand up in court as evidence of the date you wrote the song. Obviously, thus secured, you can start sending other copies of the song off to publishers and other bands with reasonable safety.

Another source of problems, while we're

talking about the law, and another source of questions, is the one relating to contracts. NO contract exists which does not take something away from you, that's what they are for. Your contract may require you not to record for another label for five years, it may forbid you from playing on other people's records, basically it is there just to provide the people who issue you with the contract with a means of getting something out of you. Obviously, assuming the contract to be at least *reasonably* fair, you will be getting something in return, so it is not, automatically, a rip-off, more an exchange.

Wording

Because the English (indeed any) language is full of ambiguities, your contract will be carefully worded to state specifically what is the set of terms outlined. It is no use using everyday language as this is simply too loose for a court of law to treat seriously, hence all the 'heretofores,' 'hereafter mentioned the aforesaid' etc. etc. These words are used by lawyers to prevent any form of ambiguities whatsoever from creeping into the deal. These ambiguities are the very loopholes which lawyers (on both sides of a case) either hate or long for — it all depends on whether you are trying to sue or being sued yourself!

The only way to treat contracts is *nevert* sign them unless you know precisely what you are signing, and the only person who can help you here is a lawyer, and not just the corner lawyer either, he *must* be a specialist.

I have a friend who is a fully qualified lawyer. Recently a client of his was dragged off to a police station for questioning over an alleged crime which (as it happens) he did not commit. He called my friend out to get him released and yet the lawyer, who specialises in divorce, was virtually powerless to help, simply because he was ignorant of the branch of law in question — criminal law.

Your average solicitor will look at a music business contract and blanch. To him it is, if not quite the double Dutch it seems to you, a pretty daunting prospect. His experience is in conveyancing, petty crime, divorce, boundary walls etc. etc. and he is not used to the conventions of the music business. what you must do therefore, before signing *anything*, is take your proposed deal along to a music business lawyer and get his advice. These specialists are capable of looking at deals in all sorts of ways and can even negotiate on your behalf to get a *better* contract. They know (better than anyone) what the going rate for a three singles deal with the XYZ company is and they will soon tell you where you're going wrong.

Don't use the lawyer employed by the



When your songs are played on radio and your records are selling millions you need to have signed fair contracts. Get your own lawyer.

record company, publisher or manager in question, get yourself a new guy who is paid by you and you alone and seek his advice as to what you should and what you shouldn't sign.

Hire purchase contracts are much less complicated and it is reasonable to assume that those issued by the large finance houses are as fair as the law makes them be. The question to ask here is can you keep up the payments? My own personal belief is that you should avoid H.P. like the plague, but it is up to you in the final analysis.

Having secured yourself legally, protected your songs and your contracts, what other areas are there where you need protection? Well an obvious one is the need to protect your gear. Here is where specialisation helps yet again. Your average insurance broker is not an expert in insuring group gear and, although he *can* get you cover, it may be better to go direct to a specialist here. There are several companies specialising, many of whom advertise with Beat and the other music papers.

As with buying anything, and never

forget that insurance is a purchase, there are both good and bad value deals to be made. It is worth, therefore, looking closely at what several brokers offer you and making your choice accordingly.

When buying insurance for equipment make sure that you check the exclusion clauses in your deal. Preferably buy all-risks insurance (which means what it says). If you don't you could well be in the position of an acquaintance of mine who had a whole pile of his keyboard equipment stolen from his van outside his house without any recourse to the insurance company whatsoever. They had quite simply excluded gear left in vehicles from his cover!

Another insurance boon is a system known as 'new for old' cover. This means that if your new Polymoog is ripped off six months after you bought it you are covered for the purchase of a new one, not a grotty old one priced at the insurance company's evaluation of the stolen one's worth. In my experience most insurance companies are hard to deal with, they seem to want it all their own way. The only possible way of securing yourself with them is to make sure



Bands like Wings have tens of thousands of pounds of gear, but if you add up what yours is worth you'll probably be surprised. Make sure you are properly insured.

GETTING YOUR ACT TOGETHER

that they have absolutely no room to wriggle whatsoever, give them the chance and, in my experience, many will.

Yet another aspect of insurance to watch is that the gear is insured in *your* name, not that of your management company or agent. If the gear is stolen and the management company holds the policy entitlement then *they* will get the bread, not you, and they may decline to keep you band on the road by spending the insurance money on fresh equipment!

One company with whom I spoke were the well known firm of Canworth Insurance Brokers Ltd. in London. They offer £2.50 per £100 insured for the U.K. and this will cover you for up to 14 days on the Continent as well.

Full European (over costs £3.75 per £100 covered and World cover costs £6.25. Word has it that this is a particularly good firm to deal with in that they are apparently reliable and extremely used to handling bands and their equipment.

Advice about the simple physical protection of gear is really unnecessary. Flight case what you can afford to flight case (working with the most fragile gear first) and keep vans double locked at all times. Try and never leave gear in vans,

even for ten minutes, never leave gear at church halls over night and weekends, and always leave a roadie looking after your valuables in the dressing room while you're on stage. If you can't do that give your valuables to someone you trust to look after, and keep the dressing rooms locked while you play.

While I'm doing my Shaw Taylor Police 5 bit, a story about another friend of mine might make you laugh — it might also save you some money. This particular character collected Strats like some people collect matchboxes. He was forever buying and selling them in the quest for the perfect instrument. One day he advertised one of his guitars in *Exchange and Mart* and was 'phoned by an apparently interested 'customer' who said that he really wanted the instrument badly and could they meet in London. The two parties met and somehow the 'buyer' managed to trick my friend into letting him stay in a taxi with the instrument while the 'seller' hopped out to buy a train ticket or something (I really don't quite remember the details). The friend returned to find, yes, you've guessed it, the cab gone and his Strat gone with it!

Now, as luck would have it, the same friend was advertising yet another of his interminable Strats some year or so later and got a 'phone call from the thief, who must have forgotten that he'd ever called this number before. He travelled down to my friend's house who suddenly realised that this was an old familiar face. He managed to stall the villain while the police were called and the crook was nabbed. This, I swear it, is a true story. The sad part of it is that the first Strat, now long since

stolen, was never recovered and there was no compensation. The motto? Take care, when selling or buying instruments!

Insurance, contracts, theft, what else do we get asked? Ah yes, there's another familiar question that gets asked about protecting band's names.

This is, as far as I can see, rather a problem. To actually register a company costs very little. Registering a business name enables you to open a bank account in that name and also enables you to legally trade under that name (without registration you must use your own name). The trouble is that mere registration doesn't entitle you to sole use of that name. This would appear to come only with the formation of a limited company which costs a fair bit of money to get under way.

Most people never encounter the problem of two bands operating with the same name, but, usually, whichever is the bigger of the two bands gets it — it's hard life, isn't it? Possibly having a limited company with your band's name at the title might save you, but it might not because you might be offered quite a lot of money to sell that name and, anyway, how do you think you would fare if *your* band was called the Beatles too!

As with most problems in life, music business hassles are a combination of using your common sense and knowing the wrinkles. The former is up to you, the later will come from thinking hard about every single thing you do and sign and, where you can, asking advice of those who have either been through the same mill themselves or who are paid to give you professional advice.

BEAT GEAR GIVE-AWAY!

WIN AN ARIA GUITAR OR A HOHNER KEYBOARD!



The Hohner International K1 Piano, worth £372.40, is the keyboards competition prize. The K1 features a full range of sound voicings, plus vibrato, speed and delay controls, sustain pedal and fully-controllable left-hand bass.



The Aria TS600 guitar (left), worth £274.60, is first prize in the guitar competition, and the YS 500 (right), worth £239.80 is second prize. Both winners will receive hard cases with their guitars.

WHAT TO DO

First of all you've got to remember what you play — keyboards or guitar! When you've figured that one out answer the questions below corresponding to the appropriate prize. There's only going to be one keyboard winner, but two guitar winners. The first one gets the more expensive one, and the runner up gets the next one. Both guitars will be supplied with hard cases too.

ARIA GUITAR QUESTIONS

- 1) What Aria bass does Gerry Cott of the Boomtown Rats use?
- 2) Which American guitarist is the PE 175 named after?
- 3) Which of the following three guitarists uses the following three Aria basses: SB-1000, PB-500 and PB-550?
 - a) Alan Jones (Shadows)
 - b) Sting (Police)
 - c) Jimmy Bain (Wild Horses)
- 4) Who is the president of Aria guitars?
- 5) In not more than 15 words say why you'd like to win an Aria guitar.

HOHNER KEYBOARD QUESTIONS

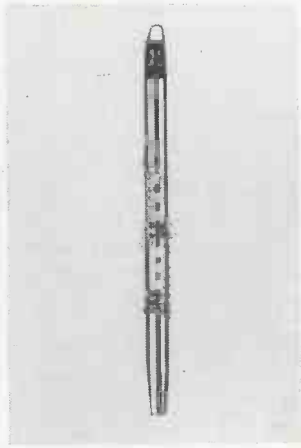
- 1) Which two Hohner keyboards form the new Hohner duo?
- 2) Which Hohner keyboard just plugs into an amp (Not battery or mains operated)?
- 3) A sticky pad system was used on one of the earlier famous Hohner keyboards. Which one?
- 4) Name the Hohner keyboard that is commonly known as the funk machine?
- 5) How many keys does the Hohner K1 have?
- 6) In no more than 15 words say why you'd like to win a Hohner K1.

All entries by October 15, 1979. The editors decision is final. All entries to Beat Instrumental, 1B Parkfield Street, London N1. You may enter for either the guitar competition or the Keyboard competition, but not both.

NEW TO YOU

LYRICON BY MUSICAID

The Lyricon



THE LYRICON, a new dimension in wind instruments, is now available in the UK from Musicaid, the musical instrument manufacturers and distributors of St. Albans.

Musicaid have been appointed sole distributors in the UK for the Lyricon wind synthesiser which is manufactured in the US.

It is designed to satisfy the demands of the creative professional musician for expression, accuracy, feel and versatility as well as suiting the amateur with its ease of playing. It operates over a six octave range, from a thundering bass to bird piccolo in one easy jump. Musicaid are at 176, Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts.

WATCH OUT FOR THIS HOT STUFF

On Wednesday 11th July three Brenell Mini 8 tape recorders were stolen from the AHB factory in Islington. The serial numbers which are written on a rear panel label and stamped on the chassis frame (revealed only when the back cover is removed) are as follows: 000302/L8,

000345/L8, 00349/L8.

Matching Power Supplies bearing corresponding numbers were also stolen.

Should any approach be made to you concerning the sale of Mini 8 tape recorders, all information received should be passed directly to Managing Director, N. Heuser, of Allen & Heath Brenell, Pembroke House, Campsbourne Road, London N8.

Insurance Company reward may be applicable in appropriate circumstances.

K. ZILDJIAN CYMBALS RIDE IN FROM CANADA

K ZILDJIAN cymbals are being re-launched in the U.K. by Hohner. K. Zildjian are the original Zildjian's and have been made in Turkey (until last year) since 1623. They are now 'hand-made' by Turkish craftsmen from the original factory at the new Zildjian factory in Canada.

Made from exactly the same high quality materials as other Zildjian cymbals they have a totally unique sound and appearance created by the high degree of hand made craftsmanship in their manufacture. This quality is required by the discerning player

that needs an exciting new colour and character to their set-ups and playing that can only be found in K. Zildjian.

In the past few years supplies of K. Zildjian cymbals have been very limited due to the very limited quantities that were produced, but now a limited range will be produced and maintained by Hohner in the U.K.

The range includes 13", 14" and 15" matched pair hi-hat cymbals, 13", 14" and 15" crash cymbals, 16" and 17" crash/ride cymbals and 18", 19", 20" and 22" medium ride cymbals.



SIX HUNDRED ROLL UP FOR DRUM CLINICS

A MERICAN jazz/rock and funk star Alphonse Mouzon, drummer with Mouzons Electric Band, Herbie Hancock and Weather Report, held over six hundred drummers spellbound when he conducted two clinics recently in London and Scotland for UK Sonor distributors M. Hohner, and Sonor Keydealer Grant Music of

Edinburgh.

Mouzon is pictured above with (L to R) Gordon Williamson, Sonor Marketing Director, Chris Stevens, Sonor Promotions Manager, and Laurie Westell, Hohner Sales Director. Below, Mouzon is drumming up a storm in front of an attentive audience at The Venue, London.



TANNOY LAUNCH NEW SPEAKERS

IN 1978 all loudspeaker manufacturers suffered a severe blow when the price of cobalt, used in the magnet systems of many famous brands, went through the roof.

Tannoy were already working on ferrite magnet systems for their new range and this was successfully introduced in December 1978.

At the same time they were working on the new range, Tannoy were well advanced in converting the very popular Arden and Berkeley using the ferrite magnet system. Some careful design work in their laboratory and engineering shop has led to the new Arden and Berkeley being even more efficient than their predecessors. SPL is up by about 1dB at 1 M with 1 watt input.

The Arden and Berkeley both use the Tannoy 15-inch dual concentric loudspeaker system originally developed for professional recording studios way back in 1947 (when the driver handled 15 watts). Now,

thirty-two years and several updates later, (now the driver handles 85 watts), the professional user still represents an important consumer of Tannoy's total production of dual concentric loudspeakers.

The company launched the T125 Oxford in December 1978 and now announces the introduction of a slightly smaller unit, the T115 Cambridge. This new model features the same compression driver h.f. unit as the Oxford but uses an 8-inch bass driver compared with the Oxford's 10 inch unit. With a sensitivity of 88dB at 1 M with 1 watt input and ability to handle 45 watts R.M.S. (easily handling peak levels of 120 watts) the Cambridge extends the Tannoy range at the lower end of the price scale.

Tannoy now has a range of consumer loudspeakers at prices ranging from £169.50 per pair for the Cambridge, up to £2,500 for the Buckingham (pictured below).



EXPLORER 2 FROM GIBSON

THE GIBSON Explorer was first introduced in 1958. Now, 21 years later, the unique design re-emerges modified to incorporate the excellent sustain qualities of the walnut/maple/walnut three-layer sandwich construction in the "Explorer 2".

The Explorer 2 features several new Gibson innovations including the fine tuning TP6 tailpiece and two high output Gibson "Dirty Fingers"

Humbucking pickups, with 12 individually adjustable exposed coils. The pickups are controlled by a three way toggle switch and one master tone, and two volume pots with black speed knobs.

With gold-plated fittings throughout and the really powerful, distorted "Dirty Fingers" sound, the Explorer 2 has a body and sound that make it seen and heard above the crowd.

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IT'S BACK . . . by popular demand. Acoustic's Model 806 P.A. Enclosure. The Model 806 is a full range, highly efficient, horn-loaded reflex enclosure with one 15" speaker, one midrange horn and driver, and one piezo tweeter. Designed to complement the vocal range, this enclosure may be used with amplifiers of up to 125 watts at 8 ohms. The Model 806 is totally compatible with all Acoustic sound reinforcement equipment.

A sensing circuit protects the midrange horn by lowering the signal level to the horn when potentially damaging signals are present. The circuit can be reset by depressing the red circuit breaker button on the rear of the enclosure.

SPECIFICATIONS

C A B I N E T
DESIGN Vented Baffle
Horn

S P E A K E R
COMPLEMENT One — 15"
Speaker One
— Midrange
horn One —
Piezo tweeter

S P E A K E R
ACCESS Snap off Grill
INPUT

CONNECTORS . Two — 1/4"
Phone Jacks

P O W E R
HANDLING . . . For use with
amplifiers up
to 125 watts
at 8 ohms

N O M I N A L
IMPEDANCE . . 8 ohms
C R O S S O V E R
SYSTEM 1.2 KHZ
CONSTRUCTION 3/4"
Interlocked
d a d o
construction
Hard coat
finish

CABINET SIZE . 30"H 24"W
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SONOR

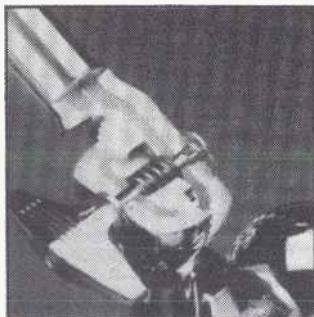
PERCUSSION

When only the best is good enough

Here are 27 top drummers who play Sonor— because only the best is good enough

- * John Marshall * Bobby Worth * Graham Jarvis * Martin Drew * Alan Ganley * Tony Mann
- * Ray Miller * Nicco McBrain * Simon Fox * Malcolm Green * Rick Winter * Harry Hughes
- * Freddy Adamson * Tommy Thomas * Jimmy Tagford * Alan Jackson * Laurie Allan
- * 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



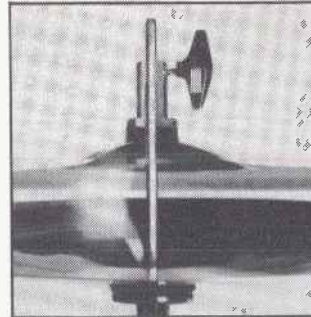
All tilters on cymbal stands, bongo stands, tom tom holders and boom arms have a steel skeleton over which a strong alloy is cast.



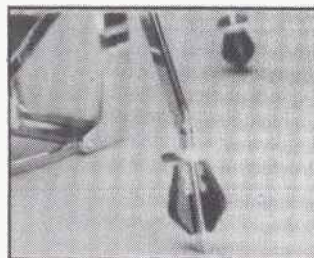
Wedge-shaped locking device with steel plate ensures reliable positioning of shell mounted tom tom.



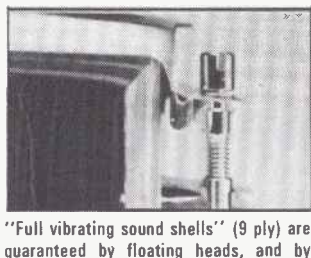
Prism clamping device ensures reliable positioning of tom-tom legs.



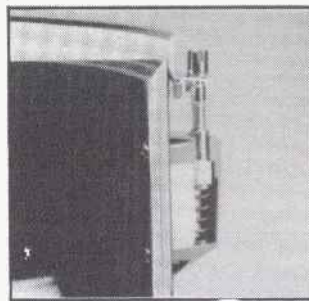
Hexagonal rod and guide ensures firm positioning of upper cymbal holder.



Two dimensional adjustable spurs with prism clamping device convertible from rubber tip to metal spur.



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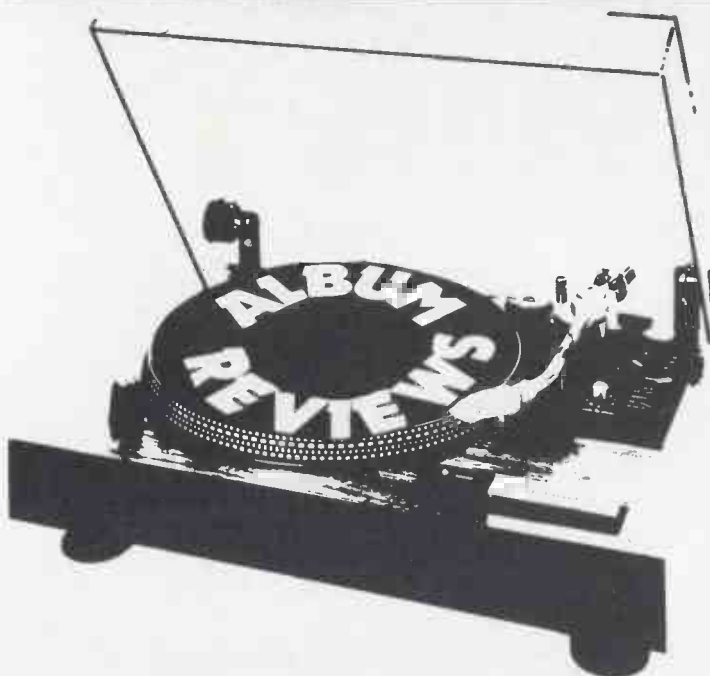
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Regular Items



New price Zones

ZONES
UNDER INFLUENCE
ARISTA, SPART 1095

Why bother reviewing an album that was released at the beginning of June in a September issue of a monthly magazine? Three reasons really. 1) The persuasive powers of publicist Mick Wall. 2) The fact that it's a great album and was overlooked by the old staff on BEAT. 3) Because it's been re-released at a special low price for a limited period of 6 months.

Arista are the first company to make a positive move towards lowering the price of albums. After all, how many people can afford £6 for an album? For 6 months 'Under Influence' will be available for a mere £3. One way that Arista can survive without the extra cash is by reducing the royalties each band member gets. So it's a conscious effort not only on the part of the record company, but on the band too. If any shop tries to pass a copy over to you for any more than £3 you're being ripped off, so let us know



The Zones — re-released at budget price.

if it happens to you.

So what's the album like? It's very clean, highly polished pop music played and sung with a bit of class. Maybe the sound is just a bit too clean, but that's down to the production. When I saw them live the guitar was more prominent and punchy and the keyboards were more distant. On the album the keyboard work of Billy McIsaac is brought right out to the front, perhaps a little too much, leaving the guitar further back in the mix creating too polite a sound.

However, the album is still very enjoyable, with a fine selection of original songs. The best tracks on the album for me must be 'Vision On', 'Mourning Star' and 'Mainman.' The latter song's about David Bowie, and was written by lead vocalist Willy Gardner who was apparently disappointed after seeing his idol perform live.

"I cried more for me than you, They didn't understand, That you were my Mainman."

Mainman is Bowies record label. All clever stuff.

Grab a copy of the album now, because the price goes back to normal after 6 months, and you'll only regret missing it while it was cheap.

the album, although the lyrics sound a bit too much like the old Byrds classic, "So you want to be a rock and roll star".

It's altogether a "nice" album and anyway they're a nice bunch of lads, so if you fancy a "nice but nothing new album" go out and grab a copy.

SP

The sound of softies

THE SINCEROS
THE SOUND OF
SUNBATHING
EPIC, EPC 83632

I can't understand what market Epic are trying to aim the Sinceros at. A few weeks ago a press reception was held to launch this album, where everyone was given a bag containing such things as swimming trunks, a towel, suntan lotion, the lot, and invited to dive in a hotel swimming pool with leggy models. The food was nice, the drinks were free and a video ran with the boys on it, Oh yes, we were all given a copy of the album too.

TH

But the other day I went to see them play live — at the Hope and Anchor pub in Islington, a dive to beat all dives. It was great, but hardly fitting the image projected at the reception.

Until seeing them live, I'll be honest and admit I didn't bother playing the album. But their live set was superb. Tight, fast, catchy and very trendy. The whole thing was very enjoyable, and comparable to The Police, especially with the harmonies.

So the next morning I get up and put on the album — but everything's flat and sterile. Why do producers feel the need to flatten and polish up a good raw sound.

Musically, the songs are great, catchy and poppy. I can honestly say I like every track apart from 'World's Apart' which is the biggest load of crap I've ever heard. It also happens to be the new single! Don't judge them by it.

Right proper Charlies

CHARLIE
FIGHT DIRTY
POLYDOR PPD 001

Here we have another very "chic" looking lady displaying the latest efforts from Charlie, a band who've been trying for some time to make it in England.

'Fight Dirty' bears some very Americanised-middle of the road sounds, perhaps a little to similar to their previous attempts. The slushy lyrics don't do the vocals much justice but there's some nice string arrangements worth listening to on "Too Late" side two, track five. "Killer Cut" opening side two is perhaps the best track on



The Sinceros — nice live sound — wet recorded one.

As for standard of playing, it's variable. The keyboard player does his job, the bass player is excellent, as is the drummer (who both happen to be playing on the Lene Lovich album) but the guitar player is weak. He does know it however, and a few jokes were cracked during the live set about his playing. But he's also the singer and songwriter, therefore an essential part of the group.

I'd like to see them take on another guitarist, leaving the present one to concentrate only on vocals, and then get a new producer to put a bit of excitement into them record wise.

Then they'd be a great band.

TH

Cleaner dirt

AC/DC
HIGHWAY TO HELL
ATLANTIC K50628

Another blast of SG/Marshall from the boys from down under. For the first time since they started recording they've used a different producer. Previously Vanda and Young took the production credit, but Robert John Lange of Boomtown Rats, Thin Lizzy etc fame has taken over.

When I first heard that they'd changed producers I figured it to be the end of AC/DC as uncivilisation knows it. Vanda and Young have done an excellent job over the years and I've always hailed them as the best rock n' roll, producers ever. Surely knowone else could do as good a job.

Well, I was wrong. Robert

John Lange has done superbly. The songs still have the balls of the previous albums, but just a little more clarity. The sound still comes out of the speakers at 100 mph, but everything sounds just a little more tuneful, especially so on backing vocals.

Musically I can't honestly say that the band have progressed. It's just more of the same, but if like me you liked them in the first place you'll be happy with this album.

It's as basic as rock n' roll should be.

TH

Still going strong

DAVE EDMUNDS
REPEAT WHEN
NECESSARY
SWAN SONG, SSK 59409

Good god, Dave Edmunds isn't still making albums is he? I got 'Get It' but shouldn't have got it. But when I was interviewing Francis Rossi he told me that this was a good album, and I liked the single 'Girls Talk', so why not give it a go?

I have to admit it, this album is great. I haven't stopped playing it since I got it. It's full of some great rock n' roll records, swinging, swaying and moving with style from beginning to end.

It's not surprising that Rossi liked it. 'Sweet Little Lisa' is a dead ringer for 'Paper Plane.'

What's more, just take a close look at the credits. How about Nick Lowe on bass (surprise surprise) and Terry Williams on drums, and Billy Bremner on

guitars (doesn't he play for Leeds?).

This is probably the best thing he's done for years.

TH

Blowing hard

LEW LEWIS REFORMER,
SAVE THE WAIL
STIFF, SEEZ 16

At last the first album from Lew Lewis. I've seen him twice live and had a great time on both occasions. Lew Lewis sticks to what he plays well — rhythm and blues.

Lew Lewis sings a bit like a rocked-up version of Johnathan Richman and plays harmonica (courtesy of Hohner) like it should be played.

Lew wrote four out of the 10 tracks on the album, the rest written by other members of the music world. Like Francis Rossi of Quo, Tom Petty and a couple of members of the J. Geils Band.

Like the press release says, 'ideal for parties, Bar Mitzvahs, weddings or just plain dancing'.

TH

Reviewers: Tony Horkins,
Sue Pettican



Dave Edmunds — still talking about girls.



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There comes a time in every band's career when it's necessary to leave behind the bedrooms and the scout halls and move into proper rehearsal studios. In almost every case you have to go one stage further and make a demo recording of the stand out songs and send them out in order to get the ball rolling.

For a small band this is a big step to take and is usually a very expensive one. So it's important that the step is made in the right direction. Most bands make the fatal mistake of choosing cheap studios and end up no further forward than they were at the start.

Wharf Music is a recording and rehearsal studio complex situated just south of the water in studio land. It started life as a rehearsal studio in Bermondsey and has now moved to the borough where they have taken over an old church hall and built three rehearsal rooms and an eight track demo studio.

Space

The first thing that strikes you as you walk into Wharf Music is its spaciousness. So many demo studios are small, dirty and depressing, but Wharf is clean and open plan, and even has a secluded garden for bands to escape into when recording gets a bit too much for them.

Basically Wharf is run as three separate entities:- Rehearsal studios, P.A. hire and a recording studio called Blackwing recording. The P.A. and rehearsal room section is run by Dave Davis and Alan Cornish and the recording studio is run by Earl Radcliffe and ex-Laser Physicist, Turner Muso.

Although it is no Abbey Road, Wharf's clientele has turned out to be, in the main, pro bands looking for somewhere to write, rehearse, and demo material in a pleasant, easy going atmosphere. Among the bands using Wharf's facilities are Glen Matlock's new band, The Boomtown Rats, Screen Idols and Radio Stars. Although the studio was designed with demos in mind, they have already mastered an album for Don Weller and

Charlie Records. And a Johnny Wakelin "In Zaire" single.

Three studios

Each of the three rehearsal studios are large (between seven and eight hundred square feet) and cool. A pleasant change from the sweat boxes I've become accustomed to. The first studio has a 400 watt P.A. and costs £2.50 per hour, studio two has a 1000 watt P.A. and costs £3.00, studio three also has a 1000 watt P.A. although it has an elevated stage and lighting for showcasing, hence the extra 50p at £3.50 per hour.

The recording studio at £10 an hour is about a thousand square feet and is air conditioned keeping it bearable. The most remarkable feature of the studio is that it has variable acoustics. One end of the studio has a completely dead sound since it is built in four inches of rock wall. But the other end of the studio has a live ringing sound which can, if required, be deadened by the curtains around the wall.

"This comes in very handy" Eric explained, "because these days most bands are trying to get away from that clean, super produced studio sound and get back to a bit more of a live sound, which we can give them here".

Through the window is the control room. Once again its nice and large and very comfortable, easily housing the average band for a mixing session. The desk at Blackwing is a Malcolm Hill D series, which was specially built to Eric's specifications.

The tape recorders are pretty standard for an eight track demo studio. The main one is a TEAC TASC0 with DX8 noise reduction, but they also have a TEAC A7300, with DBX noise reduction and a Revox varispeed with Dolby A which is used mainly for effects.

Monitoring

The all important Quad monitoring system is made up of Tannoy Ardens and also has the



The studio has a large, comfortable control room with a specially-built Malcolm Hill D-series desk. It has eight-track TEAC machines and a Revox which is used mainly for effects.

usual Auratones for comparability. This is then all powered by a 15 band MXR stereo graphic.

The effects they have available are easily patched into the desk and these include echo, phasing and flanging. The mics are basically AKG, and Shure.

All of this equipment is fairly standard for a demo studio. So at £10.00 per hour you may wonder why its that little bit more expensive than other

studios. But what you pay for is open space, comfortable surroundings and a relaxing atmosphere. Everything is geared to making the band feel more at home. (Beer and pizzas are available for a start).

As far as the future is concerned, there are plans to launch a small record company, but as for now, Eric and his pals are concentrating on providing a service you'd be well advised to check out.

TONY SAYERS

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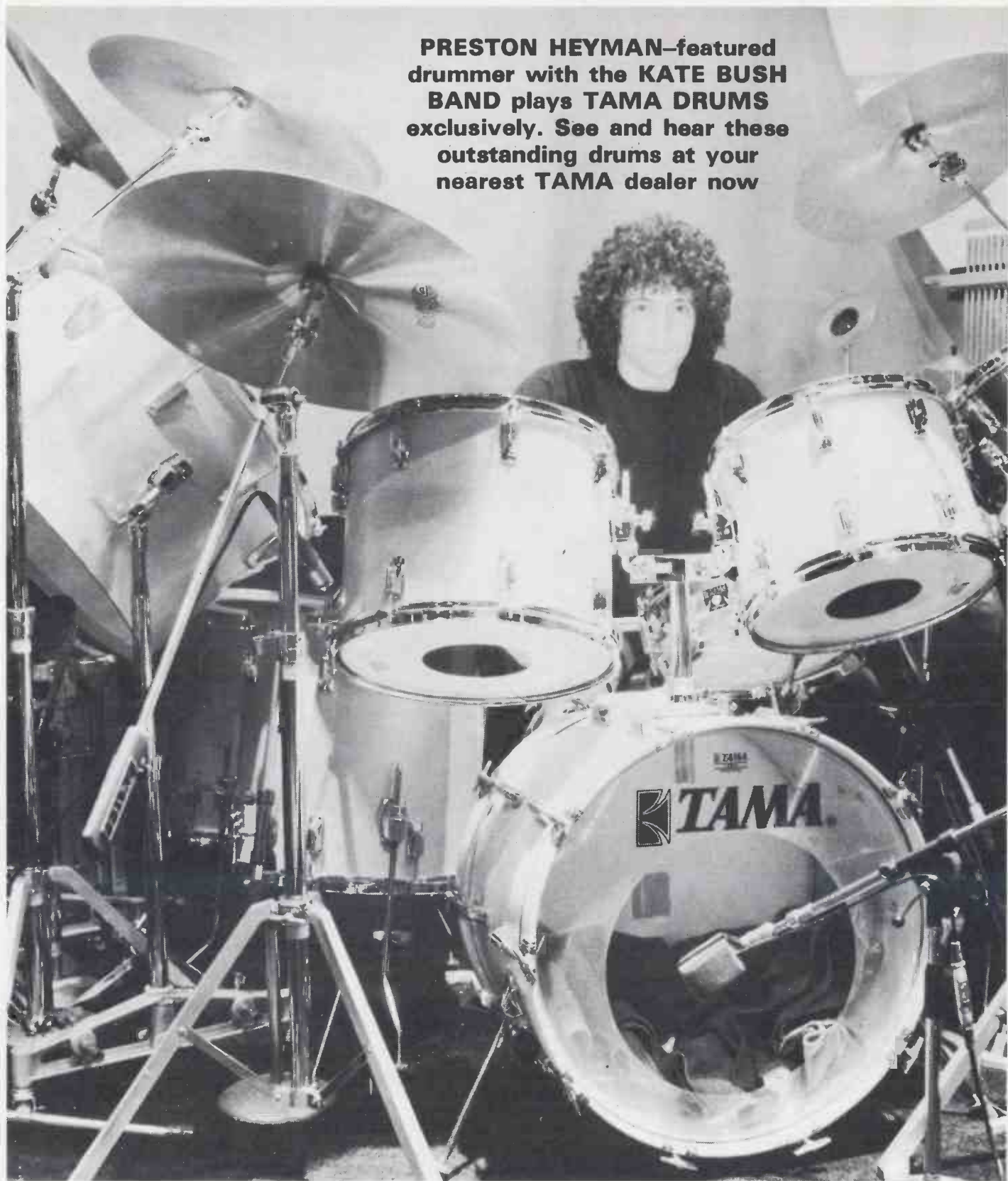


Photo by Terry Walker

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DEALER PROFILE



MORE MUSIC COLCHESTER

You may remember that in our June issue of *Beat* we visited the Chelmsford branch of More Music. Indeed we felt that More Music was going to be more than just another music shop — and it would seem we were right.

Within just eighteen months, John Hessenthaler and his crew have opened three music stores — Colchester, Chelmsford and Ipswich respectively, and taken the three towns almost by storm providing the 'more musically' minded with large varieties of musical gear and equipment at discount prices.

Through More Music's heavy advertising campaign in most of the music papers and magazines you may be familiar with their name but not necessarily with their shops. Enter *Beat* Instrumental, to tell you more!

Right then, the Colchester store is the H.Q. of the three stores so we decided to elbow in and see exactly what it was like.

As we drove into Colchester it was interesting to note that one of the newer movements in the musical instrument trade had been born in one of the oldest towns in Britain.

More's are situated in Church Walk, a small street in the town centre. The quiet little street somehow seemed to house the right atmosphere for trying out gear — relaxed and almost tranquile. All the stock for the three shops goes firstly to Colchester and then it is distributed to Chelmsford and Ipswich, after it's checked for any manufacturers faults or damage caused in transit.

John Hessenthaler, More's Promotions Manager, showed me round the store and introduced me to the manager, John Dodson. John believe it or not is only sixteen! He worked in the store as soon as it opened, he was still at school so it was a Saturday and Sunday basis. Then when he left school he took on his weekend job full time. John Hessenthaler, the previous store manager taught him the ropes and soon found he could leave the shop for

other pressing engagements with the assurance that the younger John could help any customers and deal with any problems which might arise in his absence.

When I was introduced to John Dodson he was playing keyboards, and although he is only sixteen it was evident that his knowledge of the instrument was more than adequate. John D then went on to tell me about the Colchester branch.

It opened about 18 months ago and since then it would seem that More Music have brought up most of the street, firstly there is the main shop which stocks guitars, amps, and keyboard. Directly across the road More Music occupies another building which is used for repairs and servicing. Next door to that is a drum emporium with a large stock of various drums and drum accessories.

"If anybody wants repairs or servicing of gear we have a technician at each of our three stores. So its unlikely that someone has got something we can't mend" John told me. He went on to explain that repairs weren't More Music's main line by a long chalk, "No, its to supply musicians with quality gear at sensible prices".

During the day we spent in the shop we were constantly interrupted by customers or what I might describe as 'locals'.

Many customers know both the Johns on a very friendly basis, for example two mobile disco crews who evidently were familiar with More Music and very satisfied customers were lent (yes lent) mic stands and rope lights. What a great feel of trust and honesty!

The overall prices of More Music are almost unbeatable and along with manufacturers guarantees, a further More Music guarantee for 1 year is given on all new gear (better than a kick in the pants . .

Ed). The actual shop is open 6½ days a week including Sunday afternoons.

More Music I was told are always happy to oblige working musicians, they can arrange H.P., part exchange, hire and should you live too far away from Essex to collect any gear you wish to purchase from them, they can deliver it to your house. In fact the most commonly used term between MM and their customers is "Anythings Negotiable."

Apart from musicians other sectors of the market to whom More Music are particularly good to, include schools and colleges to whom they offer a terrific discount.

The general feel of More Music seems just right, the people who run the stores know their gear and the business inside out. Experience of promoting working bands such as AC/DC, The Clash, and many more who would take up the rest of this page, has given them an insight into what musicians expect and at what price, thus the Colchester branch boasts the custom of 'The Members' and 'Led Zepplin' who purchased a Guild Guitar, recently.

I asked John Dodson what plans he had for the Colchester branch.

"Well, I want to be able to offer the most comprehensive range of keyboards in the immediate area and possibly buy up the rest of the street — to facilitate them, if we do manage to buy most of the street we will apply to the County Council to change the street name from Church Walk to More Music Walk!

One question which nobody at MM will answer is who their mysterious financial backers are. It's not an important question to be answered but it would be interesting to find out, after all if a company can offer a good deal to musicians and go on making profits and expanding at the rate which More Music are they've got to have their heads screwed on the right way.

N.E.



Pic — John 'H' Early in the morning at Colchesters' More Music Store (Before the rush) captured by Mel Wallis's camera.



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GIBSON ES-347 SEMI-ACOUSTIC

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VAT and hard case

Semi-acoustic guitars have always seemed a little on the fragile side to me, but this Gibson ES-347 is an exception. Just something about the way it's been put together indicates that it's a much sturdier model than other semi-acoustics.

The model we have here is finished in black with white trimmings, which suits me down to the ground for a start. It has a maple top, back and sides, a 24¾" scale, 22 frets, an ebony fingerboard, a new TP6 fine tuning tailpiece, two series 2 Humbuckers and all parts are gold plated. The overall effect is outstanding.

The machine heads are pretty similar to Grovers, only better. They're a new type and stay in tune very well without any slipping.

I like the neck a lot too. It feels very constant, being flat from front to back and easy to play — but not too easy. If a guitar is too easy to play it's not exactly a good instrument for improving and working on your style. The way this neck has been made makes it very good for a beginner developing his own technique.

The frets help to make the neck feel nice. They're very shallow as if they've been played in for a couple of years, only they're new. The fast fingerboard also adds to the overall effect of the neck, as does the perfect setting of the action — not too high, not too low.

The bridge is a very precise arrangement. The fact that it's very solid and constructed rigidly to the body makes way for a healthy amount of sustain. Each string is separately saddled and very precise.

The tone controls too are perfect. There's a much wider range on the treble than on the bass, but that's to be expected. The feel of both the tone and the volume controls is very positive and all in all a very wide range of sounds are available.

The 347 is fitted with a switch to make the twin-coil pickups into single coil

Reviewed by: Brian Robertson

pickups, which adds further to the range of sounds available. This particular switch is also very well placed — making it simple to get to in split seconds. To me that's a very important feature.

I gave the tone variables the ultimate test — I played along with a BB King album. Within a very short space of time I had matched the sound almost exactly to the sound on the album. Playing along to the record also proved another point, this time about the guitars playability. I only intended to play along to one track but I just couldn't put the guitar down. I ended up playing along to the whole album.

The pickups themselves are very responsive, and very powerful too. They stay pretty clean up to about 8 on the gain, and then you can get a real ballsy sound.

The balance too is very accurate. The

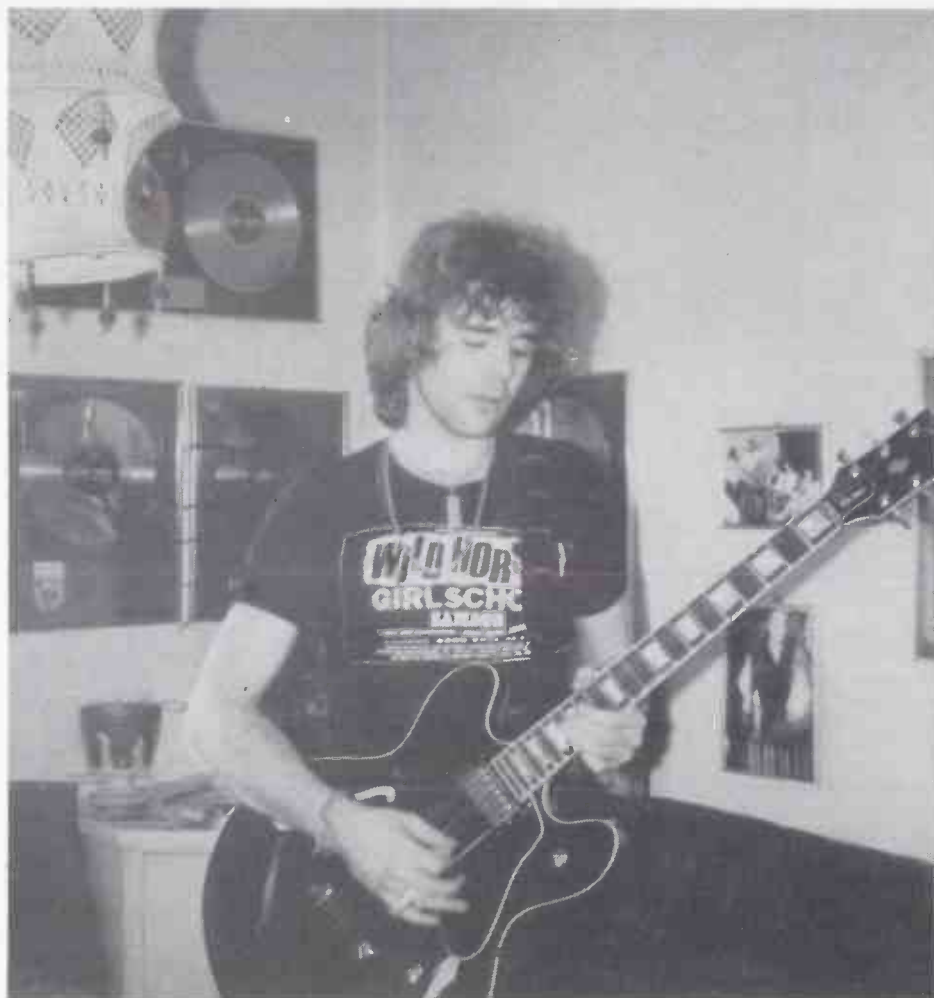
neck doesn't try to pull itself down at all, and the guitar was very comfortable to wear in all respects. For its size the weight is very accurate, and I wouldn't hesitate to wear one on stage given the chance.

It really is a very good all round guitar. I can't say 'it's for a blues guitarist', or 'it's for a rock guitarist' because its tonal variants and its feel in the neck cover all styles.

It's certainly one of the best Gibsons I've had the pleasure of playing in a long time. It proves to me that Gibson can still come up with the goods after all.

At £777 including the case and VAT, and apparently a five-year guarantee if bought from a reputable dealer in the UK, I'd say that it was underpriced. I would normally expect to pay between £900 and £1,000 for a guitar of this standard.

Catch it while it's cheap.



Robbo with Gibbo

INSTRUMENT REVIEW

Drums



Zildjian Cymbals

There was to be a review in this space of this new range of Zildjian cymbals, but due to various obstacles thrown in our path, namely the Live Music Show, it was not to be. Instead we bring a run down of what the new range consists of and hope you can hold on till next month when Kenny Jones of The Who will be reviewing them for us. Until then, it's over to Zildjian...

DEEP RIDE CYMBAL

The new Zildjian Deep Ride Cymbal is fitted with a specially tapered cup, is medium heavy in weight, and has an extremely flat profile, which combine to produce the deepest low end sound of all the Zildjian Ride cymbal range. Although this cymbal maintains the "ping" qualities and stick definition necessary to sustain a ride beat, the sound could be described as low pitched, dark and warm.

This cymbal is available in diameters 20" (51cm) and 22" (56cm).

FLAT HATS

Available in sizes 14" (35cm) and 15" (38cm).

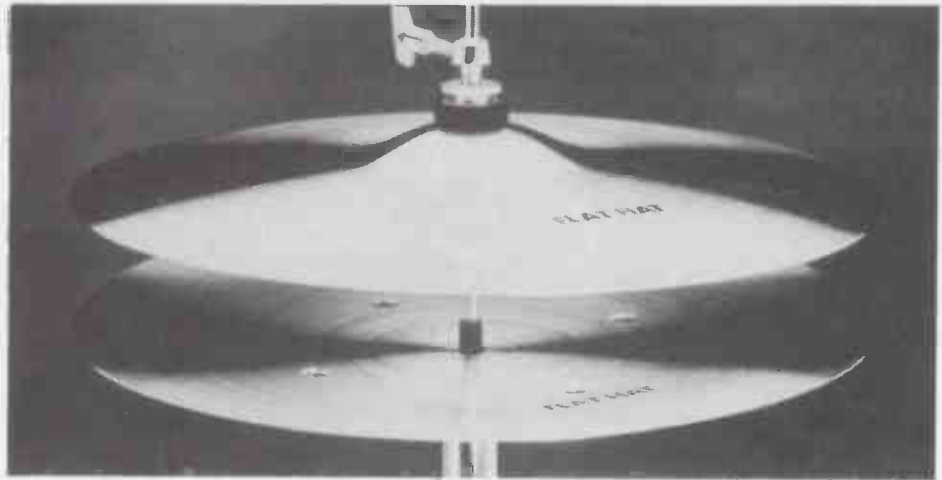
EARTH CYMBAL

Available in sizes 20" (51cm) and 22" (56cm).

The Flat Hats and Earth cymbal had a very successful introduction to the European market at the 1979 Frankfurt Trade Fair, and the Deep Ride Cymbal was introduced by the Zildjian Company at the 1979 Atlanta NAMM Music Trade Show.

EARTH RIDE CYMBAL

The Earth Ride cymbal is a completely new and exclusive Zildjian product. The appearance of the cymbal is one of a smooth brown earthy finish, and tonal grooves are completely eliminated from the cymbal. The elimination of the tonal grooves in the cymbal cuts down the ring or overtones which most other cymbals project. Earth cymbals are all extra heavy in weight for strength, durability and the high pitched ping qualities a heavy cymbal will produce. Diameter sizes are 20" (50cm)



The new flat-hats are available in sizes 14" and 15".

and 22" (56cm).

Zildjian expect the Earth Ride cymbal to be directed mainly in the area of hard rock music, and is for drummers who enjoy the advantage of having a strong bell (cup) sound, which cuts through heavily amplified music. This cymbal can be played quite heavily without the cymbal losing the definition of the beat.

Already using the Zildjian Earth cymbal is Peter Erskine with Weather Report, the Grateful Dead, and Roger Pope with Elton John.

NEW CHINA GONG

The new Zildjian China Gongs are available in sizes 18" (46cm), 20" (50cm) and 22" (55cm), and are crafted in the Zildjian alloy in a medium thin weight. These gongs are more manoeuvrable and are splashier than normal, with a super fast response and short sustaining tone depth. They are intended for use by professional percussionists in more contemporary orchestrations and in recording studios.



Old looking, but brand new. Earth cymbals are available in 20" and 22".

One of the features of these gongs is that they can simply be fitted to a regular cymbal stand, and the drummer does not have to purchase a large gong stand just to use this one item. They can also be played with drum sticks.

These gongs are rated to have tremendous projection and volume with only a light stroke needed for maximum response. Amongst people featuring the Zildjian China Gong are Steve Schaeffer, Shelley Manne, Peter Erskine, Billy Cobham and Lenny White.

ZILDJIAN TURKISH GONGS

The Zildjian Turkish Gongs have been redesigned and are heavier and available in 4 different sizes — 22" (55cm), 24" (61cm), 26" (66cm) and 28" (71cm). These gongs have been specially tapered and edged to produce a cleaner design and yield a deeper, mellower sound. The Turkish Gongs are more apt to be used in traditional orchestras and symphonic environments. They offer a sustained, powerful tone with rich quality. Considering the long sustaining depth of the Turkish Gong, the response is very fast.

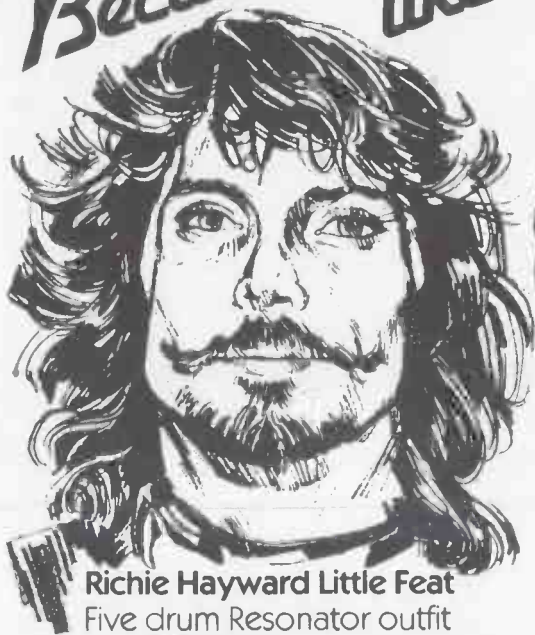
ZILDJIAN FLAT HATS

Yet another new and exclusive Zildjian feature. These hi-hat cymbals have been produced by Zildjian in response to drummers demanding cymbals that not only have the fast, sharp and bright sounds for today's music, but to additionally feature depth and body.

Available in 14" (35cm) and 15" (38cm) pairs, the bottom cymbal features a flat profile which not only eliminates unnecessary overtones, but also ensures the tight sound that today's music demands.

Not only are the Zildjian Flat Hats designed to eliminate any undesirable air cushions between the cymbals, but a 100 per cent "cymbal edge to cymbal edge" contact is also possible.

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Because they don't play
like the other guys.*



Richie Hayward Little Feat
Five drum Resonator outfit



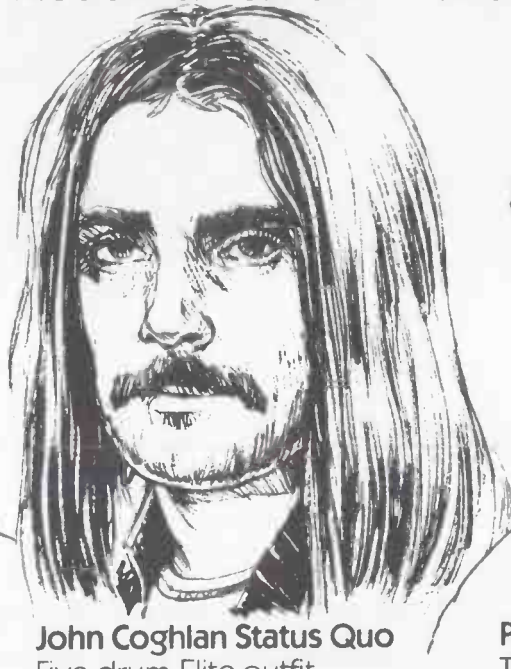
Clem Burke Blondie
Five drum Resonator outfit



Darrell Sweet Nazareth
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INSTRUMENT REVIEW Keyboards



EMS POLYSYNTH

Price: £1,400 inc VAT

Reviewed by Billy
McIsaac of Zones



Billy McIsaac.

The EMS Polysynth has a range of mini octaves and incorporates three wave forms — triangle, square and pulse. Basically it's divided into three sections.

Control

This consists of a control oscillator, pulse width rate and envelope generators (ADSR 1 and 2).

Sources

Noise and oscillator bank.

Treatments

Filter VCF, Frequency amplifier VCA and initial gain.

Polyphonic

The whole thing is fully polyphonic, and also features an analogue delay line which can give you a chorus echo, reverb and flanging effects. The EMS also gives you facilities for bending notes (a large white knob to the left of the keyboard) and also has touch-sensitive vibrato.

About the best thing going for this synth is its control layout. Everything is easy to get to and all the knobs are colour coded and bright, which makes them easy to see in the dark surroundings, and believe me,



EMS Polysynth — not so hot.

when playing live that's quite important. More than once when gigging I've gone for a control that isn't there!

Limited

The problem is that although everything is easy to get to, the sounds are limited. There is, in fact, a severe lack of distinctive sounds of any quality. It also lacks that punch. A certain amount of gimmickry, sound wise, can be used to effect in group compositions but in this respect too, the EMS is lacking.

At least the thing's well made, and generally solid in its construction. The board itself has a light touch to it and round

the back there's facilities to add a few things. For example you could attach some foot pedals and a sequencer too. Apparently, EMS have a new sequencer coming out soon that can store sound for 12 minutes.

The biggest blow as far as I'm concerned is the price. £1400 is a load of money, and I think it will be very prohibitive in the Polysynth's success as it seems to be aimed at keyboard players who are just starting off. If you've got that much money to spend you'd be much better off buying a good monophonic synth and a second-hand string machine. For that price the amount of sounds available are just too limited.



Reviewed by: Gordon Giltrap

Despite heavy strings, the action is excellent, and the neck is very straight and very comfortable. I like the idea of the trustrod being inside the body rather than at the head end of the neck, as it makes for easier adjustment. The bridge too looks very solid, with a bone saddle and two pins to keep it firmly in place. Although the fingerboard is very nice, I don't think full use has been made of its width. The string spacing due to the nut is too close, and on this model it's a bit inaccurate.

It's unfortunate that it has a laminated top instead of a solid one. It would be better to pay a little more for a solid top, mainly because solid-tops tend to sound better with age. You can never be sure what's going to happen to the sound of a laminated top.

Tonally it's very bright on the treble end, but a little weak on the bass.

All things considered, however, it's a very nice guitar, and compares very favourably price-wise. Certainly worth checking out.

BW-650

In contrast to the 6-string, the nine-string model has a solid top, which by now you should know is preferable.

I've never actually seen a nine-string guitar before, and I think its appeal may be limited. It has one distinct advantage though. Most 12-string guitars tend to go out of tune in the 9th fret very easily and

you normally need a compensator bridge to keep it in tune. The 9-string model overcomes this problem yet still has the overall sound of a 12-string guitar. I think that the guitar would be more interesting if the octave strings were on the 4th, 5th and 6th.

As on the 6-string model, the fingerboard, bridge and neck are very good. It also has the same good trustrod arrangement.

Again the machine heads are superb, and I'm pleased to see that the string spacing is accurate on this one.

The finish is superb, and the tapered head is particularly attractive, as are the inlays on the back.

My main grumble with this guitar is the heavy action, but it could just be the strings. Also, although the bridge is nice and solid again, it's strange that the saddle on this is plastic instead of bone. It was bone on the cheaper model.

Both guitars have a matt finish on the back of the neck, which I prefer both visually and on a performance level.

In its present state I'm not that knocked out by the overall tone. But with new strings and a little adjustment it could sound very nice, and because it has a solid top the sound should improve with age.

You have got to be a good player to really get the most out of this guitar.

All in all though, a very interesting guitar, accurately priced. Give this one a check too.

MORIDAIRA W-606

six-string acoustic

Price: £148.65 inc. VAT

MORIDAIRA BW-650

nine-string acoustic

Price: £259.70 inc. VAT

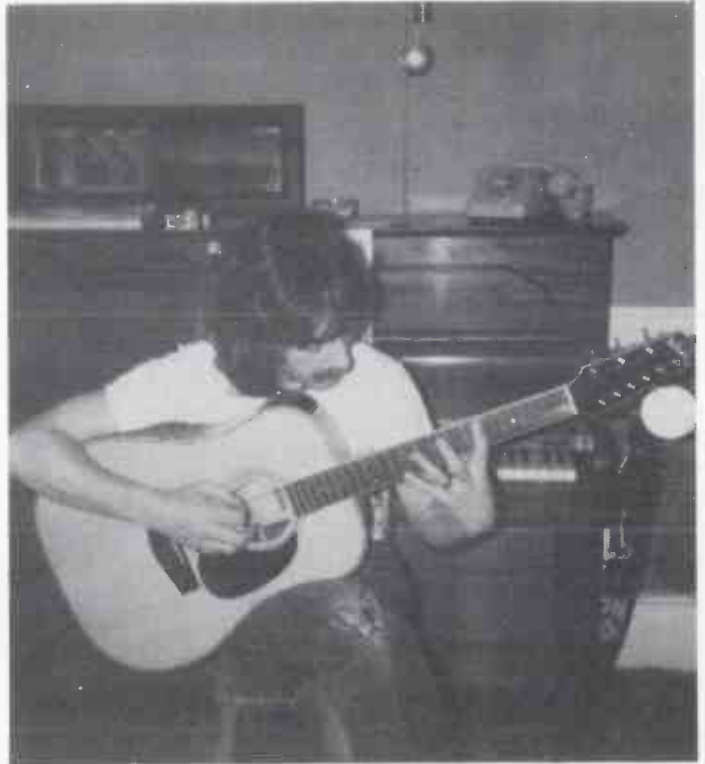
The first observation I'd make about these guitars is that they've obviously modeled like a Martin.

The cheaper of the two, the W-606, has a laminated spruce top, rosewood sides and back, mahogany neck and a rosewood fingerboard.

Outwardly, it's a very well made instrument. The machine heads look and feel like Schaller's but they're not. Like Schallers, they're excellent.



Gordon Giltrap with the W-606...



... and the BW-650



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Reviews



YAMAHA BB-1200 BASS

*Price: £475 inc. VAT
hard case and
tool kit.*

*Reviewed by Jimmy Bain
of Wild Horses*

scratchboard and thumb support (with screws, though there are no holes in the guitar) and a lead. Oh yes, and a yellow cleaning duster with the Yamaha logo on it too. The whole package is certainly very persuasive.

Starting off with the pegs, I'd say they look like Schallers, though they are in fact Yamaha's own. I use Schallers on my Tele, and as these are like them I obviously like these too. They give you good response and a positive feel. There's a tool supplied for adjusting their tension too.

The head itself is designed like a Fender. As on the Fenders the G and D strings are held down by a small plate.

The neck's really nice too. There seems to be a trend today to make the body and neck into one. This is really a good idea because not only does it strengthen it, but it gives it a denser sound. This particular neck is rock maple with mahogany inlay, and it's laminated too. Although it's quite a big neck, it still has a nice feel to it, though people with small fingers may have a little trouble up at the top. It's sort of like a Precision neck, and like that will take a small amount of getting used to.

At the top of the neck in the body there's a small groove to get at the truss rod. With the tool supplied the whole thing will be very easy to adjust.

The bridge is really nice too. Each string is separately bedded and all manner of adjusting is available at the twist of a tool (also in the kit, of course.) It's actually

made of heavy-duty diecast metal and the deep grooves that each string sits in ensure accurate spacing of the strings.

The pickups too are also adjustable (tools supplied etc etc). About the pickups it says it's a "... specially designed split-type single-coil pickup, series wired and diametrically phased to avoid hum and increase output power."

Sounds good too! They feel very solid, and the plastic surround looks attractive, making the pickup look bigger than it actually is.

The controls too are very solid. (Nice bit of plastic, that). The volume control is very sharp, and a wide range of sound is available with the one control. And that's it. Nice n' simple.

The body itself has some very nice features. The cutaway part fits really snugly into your body when you're playing. Also, the cutaway at the front too makes it easy to reach the strings. It's a very comfortable fit in all respects. Nice weight and very well balanced.

It's good too to see a concise booklet/manual too. It's nice to know exactly what you're getting.

Bearing in mind the million and one things you get with this bass I'd say it was very good and the price justified. Unlike other Japanese guitars it's not a bad copy, but a good original, quality made. It seems like a lot of craftsmanship and work has gone into it.

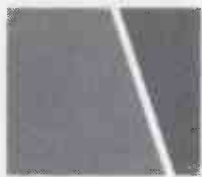
Very solid, very nice, and let's have one.

THERE'S no doubt about it. This bass is beautiful on the eye. Solid, big and outwardly simple.

Supplied with it is a solid hard case, a leather strap, a tool kit with various screwdrivers and adjusters in it, an optional



Jimmy Bain with Beat Instrumental T-Shirt. Oh yes, and the Yamaha Bass!



fact: Cleo's one of our best friends...and vice versa.

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BASSIST, 18, no gigging experience, seeks other serious musicians to form Heavy Rock band. Manchester area. Chris, 798 9533, after 6.30.

NERVOUS WRECKS still looking for decent bass/vocalist and keyboard wizard. Gigs lined up, recording deal imminent, equal opportunities for girls. Discover new vistas of musical exploration! Apply NOW, phone Mick on 352 6226. No arseholes.

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COMPETENT SEMI-PRO American Jazz rock Guitarist seeks working pro band in London! Influenced many years by Allan Holdsworth. Have done much studio work; gigs, etc. Much experience!, need some sort of accom. till settled. 21 years of age, own Marshall Fender equip. (Can fly over soon as pos.!) (Prefer fretless bassist!) Write: Dael Hauskins, 5421 Zola Ave., Pico Rivera, Calif. 90660, U.S.A.

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WANTED: male or female vocalist to join powerful rock band into new wave. Must be keen, equipment provided and can accommodate. Phone 0440 63383, Cambridge area.

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