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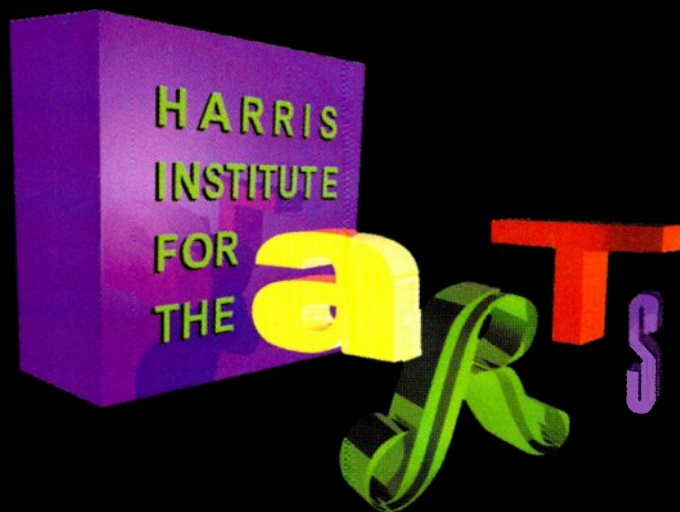
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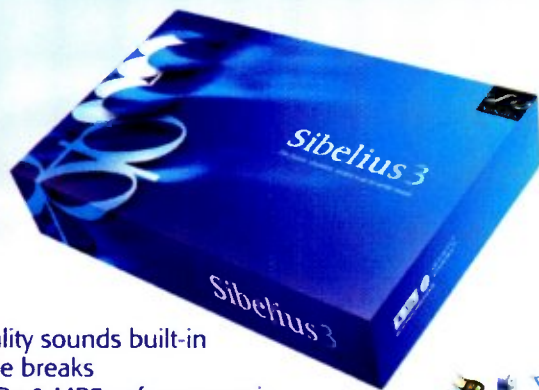


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Jealous Of Nickelback?

Dear CM,

And the battle begins. Ryan J Noth hit the nail on the head. And for you to say "refreshing to hear exactly how Chad Kroeger writes his songs" tells me that you haven't been keeping up with the issues we feel display a real lack of culture and thought. Since my last letter was published in your May/June 2003 issue, I have received nothing but positive e-mail ... except of course for your one letter from Chris Gunter ... who really doesn't understand much of the industry himself and doesn't seem to be too involved with his own group "StarStar". Everyone that I received e-mail from was basically stating "about time someone spoke up!" People are sick of the attitude in today's music "business."

The Nickelback article totally proved mine and a lot of others' views that today's "artists" and record labels are not giving the public anything of real value and instead are dumping on us with more mindless "sounds like/clone band" garbage. Knowing what works at radio or what worked in radio for the last record, everything they write is for pleasing the masses. They might as well be called "factory line" songwriters. Yes this is the music "business" but again I point to bands like Rush, who did it their way and are still successful. Why? Because they are themselves and not what some record exec told them to do! WHAT IS SO WRONG WITH A BAND BEING THEMSELVES? Not some sellout, heard it again piece of polished crud! Is it too much to ask for intelligent music from an artist that really respects the art? When we all first learned to play music it was inspiration and a heartfelt love for something that was uniquely us. If radio would take a chance on new artists who are themselves they would probably be very surprised. Can we not think and learn to hear new ideas and accept that as a society? As for Nickelback, *The Long Road* might as well be the last album [sound-wise]. If this "songwriting" is so good, then why do I have to be subjected to it 5-10 times a day or more on radio!? Again ... why can't radio support local talent one or two times a day? Are we "independents" that bad in our songwriting? I really don't think so. Is it that a corporate record label might not be getting a piece of the pie when an indie band could have a hit song? Seems very controlling to me.

Ian Graham
www.eyerhyme.com

PS – I have quite enjoyed this debate and received lots of interesting views. On a good note: Merry Christmas to you and your staff. You do have a great magazine and I look forward to future issues! May Santa bring you an iPod ... the best purchase I made all year!

**Ed. I'm glad you're enjoying this debate Ian, and thank you for the holiday wishes. You're right about the fact that independent songwriters are not bad in any way. And there's nothing wrong with a band being "themselves" as you put it. You can certainly understand that you're trying to change a system that has been in place for decades. It's not going to change easily. You mention the success Rush has achieved without radio support. You're right – they've done things their way. If Rush suddenly wrote a song that sounded like Nickelback, their fans would be up in arms about it. Rush still sounds like you expect Rush to sound. Nickelback still sounds like Nickelback has since day one. They've stuck to what they do as well, whether you enjoy their music or not. It just so happens that their style of music is listened to by a lot of people. Why do you have to listen to Nickelback 5 to 10 times a day? It's simple – their music is requested by radio listeners. True, radio stations could possibly play more independent music. Just like television stations could air more independently-produced shows. Or movie theatres could screen more independently-produced films. Do you watch independently-produced television or movies Ian? Maybe you do, maybe you don't. It's the same with music. People listen to what they like. People request what they like. Approach radio stations that play indie music and start there. There are plenty of radio stations that have indie-based shows. College radio is also an obvious choice to get started. Sounds like you're trying to squeeze a square puzzle piece into a round hole. You can't change how they work, so you either work with them or you don't. Find a way to get your music heard. Don't be angry with another band for getting mainstream airplay instead of you.*

Better To Give Than To Receive

Dear CM,

The opening remark by Bob Baker in his article, "How to Win Friends and Influence People in the Music Business" states: "people who say it's better to give than to receive are flat out lying."

The phrase, "it is more blessed to give than to receive" is actually attributed to Jesus Christ, (Acts 20:35) so your readers can decide for themselves, who is telling the truth. I'll give Bob and the editors of CM the benefit of the doubt, and assume they didn't know whom they were calling a liar. However, Bob's article goes on to encourage aspiring musicians to become master manipulators by doing things with one motive ... to see what they can get in return.

In my opinion, Mr. Baker, who is portrayed by your magazine as a music marketing expert, does your readers a great disservice with his, "use people any way you can to succeed" philosophy. While stepping on others, is certainly one way to the top, there are more credible ways to succeed and far better measures of success.

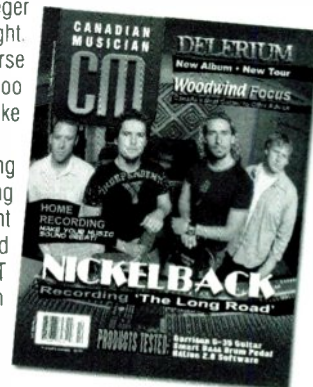
I'm enough of a realist to know that music is a business, and that hard work is the most likely route to success. In any business, one expects to "make deals" that help to pay the bills. While I would agree it is perfectly legitimate to agree up-front to "swap" services, there is certainly nothing wrong with being the kind of person who isn't always standing there after doing someone a "favour" with your hand out.

"Music is a gift," the best musicians realize very early on, that sharing that gift is a responsibility. Any musician who has ever done a benefit show, or anyone who has done an act of kindness to help the less fortunate, will know that giving (without thought of what you will get back) is something that brings far more personal fulfillment than knowing you just used someone to "score".

How can independent musicians, consider themselves to have any integrity when accusing the record industry of using and throwing them away, if they tell themselves it's okay to do the same thing to others?

As a music professional and a regular advertiser in CM, I believe that in today's troubled music industry, people who are willing to earn their place in this business, (without using or abusing others) are the breath of fresh air needed to turn the tide. When greed is our primary motivation, we sell ourselves far short of true success!

David Daw,
Co-owner, Summit Sound Inc.



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Self-Promotion On A Budget

by Bill Adams

So you want to be a rock star. Well okay, not necessarily a rock star but you'd like to make a couple of bucks on your music. The popular misconception about making music is that it takes money to make money. Promotional campaigns have to be launched in order to improve your visibility. If you plan on launching a tour, it'd be nice to have people come out to the shows so you have to let the public know. For most independent musicians, the looming overhead implied by establishing one's name in the marketplace is intimidating to say the least. Fear not! There are ways around not being independently wealthy while still getting your name out there.

Given that this is the 21st century, at this point it's almost a given that your band has a Web site. But how many people outside of the most devout fans have actually seen it? The trick to getting more people to visit your site is getting it where people will see it. To that end, it's necessary to get links established on other sites that will send potential concertgoers to your site. Many music fan sites (among them being The Ultimate Band List at www.ubl.com) will allow you to add a link to your group's Web site for free and will give you a small amount of space on their site. As well, sites like www.MuSeeks.com offer free artist hosting and will carry your MP3s for download. There, you will get space to set up pictures, a bio and a couple of downloadable tunes to show the world. Registration is free, and in some cases you can even make a few dollars if your tunes get downloaded enough. In that same vein, it may be worth it to you to check out www.primetones.com. Prime Tones is a service that takes audio submissions from artists and sets them up for download in MP3 format, MIDI ring tones, and MP3 ring tones. Prime Tones gives artists the opportunity to get their music heard on a very populist medium: cell phones. Users are afforded the opportunity to download entire songs (for a nominal fee) or use them as ringers on their cell phones, which could be a handy promotional tool. Again, registering with Prime Tones is free, and artists do get paid royalties for their work.

Of course, when you're trying to promote your music, it never hurts to be proactive with the press. The online music community is quite expansive and there is no shortage of online magazines hungry for content. Don't just sit around waiting for the media to come to you. Send out e-mails to different e-zines and try to get yourself an interview. "Anywhere you can get your name in print is good," says Mike Lukacs. Lukacs is the bass player in the Canadian indie hardcore band The Legendary Klopeks who just finished their first tour of the UK that he booked himself. "We have done tonnes of interviews with Internet sites ... one was even in Russian. It's just one more way of getting your name out there."

Invariably, most magazines and e-zines will ask for a press kit to see what your band is all about and if you fit into their typical content. For most up-and-coming bands, press kits are an expensive undertaking even when cutting corners. Even if you get a journalism student to write your bio for free, the expense of sending out the accompanying CD with your kit can grow quickly if you don't carefully select which media outlets are right for your music.

Planning a tour is another daunting task that could, in theory, blow your postage budget as well as run up your phone bill. Getting a succession of dates to perform in a logical progression so as not to burn excess amounts of gas is a potentially hair-tearing affair that most bands dread. For unsigned bands, all their money is made on the road, so extra expenditures cut into the bottom line. A cheaper way can again be found online. A site to check out is www.musicmating.com, an online directory for musicians that's designed to help set up a tour. Registration for the service is free and offers a network of contacts ranging from fellow musicians to venues. Contacting the venues directly does cost a bit of money through MusicMating, but it is minimal (that portion of the site operates on credits and 100 credits cost \$25) and, if it gets you a few shows, it pays for itself.

While every musician knows the value of networking with other artists to secure shows, just talking with musicians from your hometown isn't necessarily going to get you any shows outside of your immediate area. One online community that houses a lot of musicians is the one found at www.bmezine.com. The magazine itself is primarily about body modification, but the community that the site hosts boasts a higher than average concentration of musicians. The shows that Mike Lukacs booked when he was setting up The Legendary Klopeks' UK tour were done mostly using contacts he made at bmezine.com. "We worked out a cooperative agreement with some of the bands we met on there," says Lukacs of organizing the tour. "We set it up so that when we went there, we'd open for [those bands] and when they come here, they can open up for us." Gig-swapping in this fashion is not uncommon and could be a decent source of revenue and exposure if you have a large enough contact list.

After you've got your tour set, advertising it to people is the next logical step. Obviously, the venue usually does a small amount of promotion, but if you already have some fans, the best way to cheaply keep people informed is through an e-newsletter. Many artists on all levels currently employ e-newsletters to keep people informed of their movements. When you go out on tour make sure people know you have a mailing list and, if they like what they've heard, to sign up to receive updates. Regularly maintained e-newsletters are a great help for keeping your band on the public's mind even if you're not currently doing anything band related.

Any pertinent news about your band's touring schedule, releases, and any other interesting information about the band can be transmitted quickly, easily, and cheaply to your fans via an e-newsletter. The other benefit with them is that, normally, if people think they're getting advance information about their favorite band, they'll tell others and that word-of-mouth promotion is worth its weight in gold.

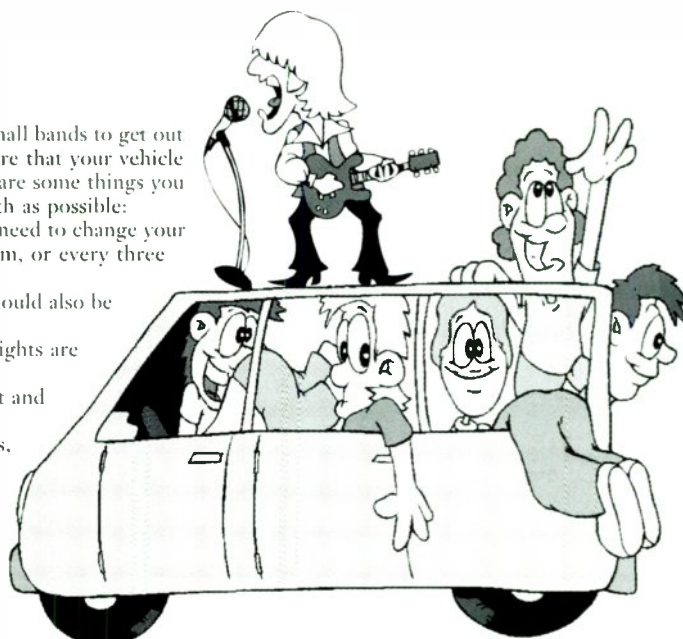
Bill Adams is Research Assistant for Canadian Musician.

Stand By Your Van

It sounds almost cliché, but the fact is that the most affordable way for small bands to get out on the road is in a van. With that in mind, it's a good idea to make sure that your vehicle can withstand the rigours of the road and to prepare it accordingly. Here are some things you should do before you leave home to make sure that your ride is as smooth as possible:

- Have your oil changed – depending on the length of the drive, you may need to change your oil while on tour as well as before. Oil should be changed every 5,000 km, or every three months.
- Check tire inflation – tire pressure should be checked regularly. They should also be rotated every second oil change.
- Check your lights – make sure your signal, brake, emergency and headlights are working properly.
- Get a tune up – an engine tune up can make your vehicle more efficient and end up saving you money.
- Prepare for the worst – pack a roadside emergency kit including flares, blankets, water, candles and matches. Some stores sell their own pre-packaged safety kits. Bringing along extra gas, oil, wiper fluid and engine coolant as well as jumper cables, a spare tire and a jack would all be sound ideas. As well, investing in an automobile club membership can also save you money and frustration in the long run.

By the time your road trip is over, your vehicle will have gone through a lot of wear and tear. It wouldn't be a bad idea to do the same maintenance checks on your vehicle that you did before you left.



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Former Headstones Launch "The Music Division"



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Freed from their prior obligations, former Headstones bandmates Trent Carr and Tim White are happy to announce the official launch of their newest musical venture: The Music Division. What started out as a prosperous side project has now turned into a full-time production business this year with The Music Division composing music for Pontiac, Wampole Vitamins and The Movie Network. The Music Division offers a fresh approach to both the creative and production process to a full spectrum of clients to meet any musical and sound design needs.

"We have always talked about getting involved in another venture that would allow us to express our wide range of musical influences as well as the real rock 'n' roll we were bringing with the Headstones," says Carr. "This company will provide the challenges for us to do exactly that."

The Music Division is open to collaborating with clients on ideas or assuming full creative control; whatever the given project may require. For more information, visit: www.themusicdivision.com.

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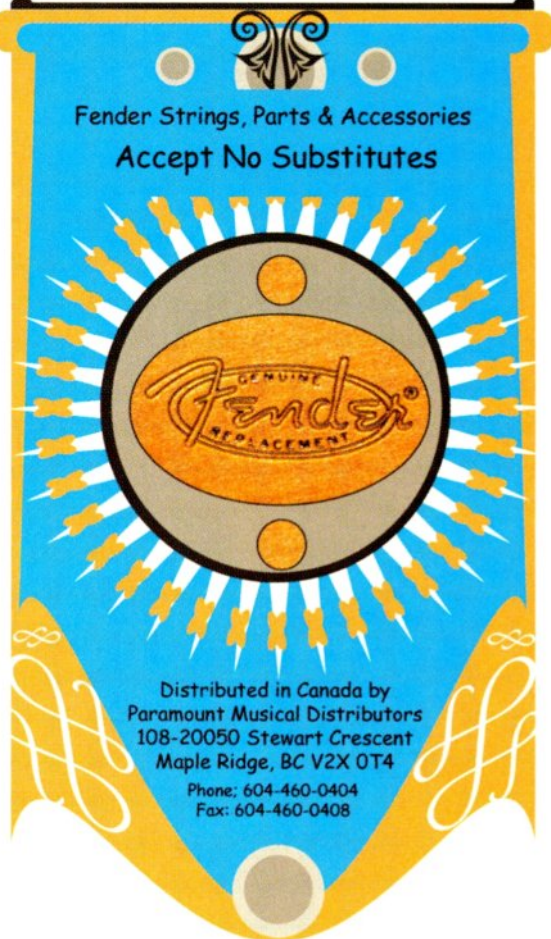
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Guitar Workshop Plus Adds Extra Session

Going even further to fill the void in music education, Guitar Workshop Plus ... Bass, Drums and Keyboards proudly announce the addition of a second session to the 2004 summer schedule. Session one will run from July 18-23 and the new session two will run from July 25 to July 30 at Appleby College in Oakville, ON.

Designed for aspiring musicians of all ages including teenagers, adult hobbyists, students pursuing musical careers, semi-professional and professional musicians, the program offers a unique setting for musical growth. As well, this program allows for group development as entire bands sometimes attend.

In addition to a large faculty roster, the list of artists who continue to work with the administration include Rik Emmett, Andy Summers (The Police), Yngwie Malmsteen and Scott Henderson. Courses are offered for all levels of play in a multitude of styles including blues, jazz, rock, acoustic and classical. The bass, drum, and keyboard courses cover many styles and afford students with many rhythm section and ensemble performance opportunities.

For more information contact: Guitar Workshop Plus, PO Box 21207, Meadowvale Postal Outlet, Mississauga, ON L5N 6A2 (905) 785-7087, info@guitarworkshopplus.com, www.guitarworkshopplus.com.

Keelaghan Wins USA Songwriting Contest Second Year In A Row

Juno award-winning folk musician, James Keelaghan, recently won first place in the USA Songwriting competition folk category for his song "Message To The Future". The competition is the world's leading international songwriting contest and this is the second year in a row Keelaghan has taken first place. "I'm pleased, again, to have the honour of winning the folk category of the competition," Keelaghan remarked. "Message To The Future" is a song of hope; hope that there will be a future in which there are people that will still understand love and family and justice." "Message To The Future" is on Keelaghan's fifth solo album, *Road*, which was released in Canada on Jericho Beach Music and in the US on Hightone Records.

The USA Songwriting Contest received over 32,000 entries this year and offers over \$50,000 US in cash and prizes. The contest offers prizes for the top songs in 15 genres as well as an overall grand prize and two runners up.

For more information, visit: www.songwriting.net.

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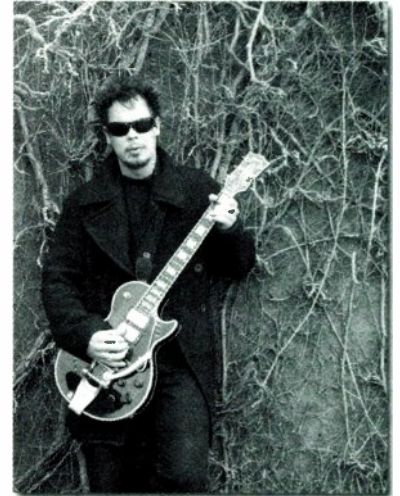


Ian Thornley Signs to 604 Records

Former Big Wreck frontman and Toronto-based rock musician Ian Thornley has just inked a deal to release his debut solo record through 604/Universal. Thornley was quoted recently as saying that he's "thrilled to be back in the recording studio and [has] found a perfect fit both from an artistic and business standpoint with 604 Records."

604 Records is the Vancouver-based label headed by Nickelback frontman Chad Kroeger and is the current home of Canadian rock heavies Theory of a Deadman. Kroeger's relationship with Thornley dates back to the early days of Nickelback, when Big Wreck took them out as the opening band on a Canadian tour. A fast bond was created between the two musicians, which lead to Thornley playing on Nickelback's multi-platinum juggernaut *Silver Side Up*. When Big Wreck disbanded, Kroeger's was one of the first phone calls Thornley received. "Ian has always been an artist I have admired," said Kroeger on the announcement of the signing. "[He] is truly one of the premiere musicians in this country."

Thornley is currently recording with producer Gavin Brown (Billy Talent, 3 Days Grace) for his upcoming release set to drop in the spring of 2004 with a cross-Canada tour to follow.



The Watchmen: 1988-2003

After 15 years, five records, and thousands of shows around the world, Canadian music icons The Watchmen have decided to part ways and pursue other interests. In a recently issued statement, the band made clear that the decision to disband was a difficult one for all of the band members but "in the end it was decided that it would be best for all of us to move on to new artistic endeavours and challenges." After a brief tour last December to say their good-byes however, now The Watchmen are no more.

Vocalist Danny Greaves, guitarist Joey Serlin, bassist Peter Loewen, and drummer Sammy Kohn organized The Watchmen in 1988 in Winnipeg, MB in the wake of the grunge phenomenon and in 1992 released *McLaren Furnace Room*, followed by 1993's *In The Trees*, and *Brand New Day* in 1996. Though all of these records did well domestically (total Canadian sales exceeded 300,000 copies), it was their fourth offering, *Silent Radar* (1999), that broke the band on an international level and earned the band a solid following in both Europe and Australia on the strength of the hit single "Stereo".

Then it happened. The news that Sammy Kohn was going to be leaving the band shocked many fans and suddenly thrust the future of The Watchmen into question. As if to prove that a whole is better than the sum of its parts, the three remaining members chose to leave the drum seat vacant when they re-entered the studio. The result was *Slomotion*; a decidedly gigantic sonic departure for a band that had, until 2001, stuck largely to conventional rock dynamics. The band completely re-thought the conventional methods of rock recording and used the then modern digital recording studio in a completely new way. Songs like the lead-off single "Absolutely Anytime", "Phone Call", and "I Holiday (Slow It Down)" found The Watchmen using the digital medium as a surrogate for Kohn's drums; looping beats (some of which were provided by DJ Iain) and samples to create percussion and in doing so also creating a completely fresh sound for the band. And yet, it's impossible to say that The Watchmen hadn't remained true to their roots. True, the guitar-driven style of their previous records had been largely abandoned in favour of multi-textured and atmospheric soundscapes, but many of the band's signature elements remained intact. The songs did not suffer from the shift in approach; the melodic power and impressive lyricism of the tunes and, if anything pushing those original elements further into the spotlight.

Now, two years later, the three remaining Watchmen have gone their separate ways to pursue other avenues. The rumours of the band's difficulties proving more true than their fans had feared, on Dec. 31 The Watchmen played their final show in Buffalo, NY. For the band, it was to be their "proper rock goodbye" to their fans. It remains to be seen if they'll ever resurface, but for the time being, The Watchmen will be missed.



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The College Music Society Annual Meeting

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Getting To Know *Google*



Most of us, if not all, have heard of Google and probably use it quite often for our Internet searches. Google is the fastest growing search engine with over 200 million searches a day and over 3 billion sites searched. It's no wonder it has become known as the 'ultimate online searching machine.'

When visiting www.google.com or www.google.ca, you can easily be deceived by what Google really has to offer users. It is not just a search box and search button on the homepage. Google offers so much more than search results; it offers many services, features, tools and more, which I intend to shed more light on in this article.

First Things First

What exactly is a Google? "Googol" is the mathematical term for a 1 followed by 100 zeros. A googol is a very large number. There isn't a googol of anything in the universe. Google's use of the term, googol, reflects its mission to organize the immense amount of information available on the Web.

Fantastic Features

In addition to searching and finding answers to your inquiries, Google also offers many useful features. Here is a short list of features and descriptions. For all the Google features and information, visit www.google.com/help/features.html.

- **Calculator** – built in calculator to solve math problems involving basic arithmetic, more complicated math, units of measure and conversions.
- **Cached Link** – you can see the Web page as it looked when Google indexed it. The cached content is the content Google uses to judge whether the page is a relevant match for your query.
- **File Types** – allows you to search for non-HTML file formats including PDF documents and others.
- **PhoneBook** – allows you to look up American (www.google.com) and Canadian (www.google.ca) street addresses and phone number information.
- **Who Links to You?** – enables you to find all the pages that point to a specific URL using the query, `link:siteURL`, in the Google search box.
- **Web Page Translation** – allows English speakers access to a variety of non-English Web pages. This feature is currently available for pages published in Italian, French, Spanish, German, and Portuguese. If your search has non-English results, there will be a link to a version of that page translated into English.
- **Google Preferences** – enables you to save certain search preferences, including the number of results to show per page, the interface language, and whether or not to use SafeSearch filtering.
- **SafeSearch Filtering** – screens for sites that contain pornography and explicit sexual content and eliminates them from search results.

Aside from all of the features, Google also offers many services and tools. Again, listed here are only a few of the Google Services & Tools. For a complete list, visit www.google.com/options/index.html.

- **Froogle** – froogle.google.com – find products for sale from across the Web.
- **Google Catalogs** – catalogs.google.com – search and browse mail order catalogs online.
- **Google Image Search** – images.google.com – comprehensive image search with 425 million images.
- **Google News** – news.google.com – search and browse 4,500 continuously updated news sources.
- **Google Browser Buttons** – www.google.com/options/buttons.html – access Google's search technology by adding their buttons to your browser's personal toolbar.

Get Listed Already!

Submitting your site to Google is fairly easy. Google adds and updates new sites to their index each time they crawl the Web, and invite you to submit your URL online at www.google.ca/addurl.html. Google does not add all submitted URLs to their index, and cannot make any predictions or guarantees about when or if they will appear.

So there you have it, hopefully a few more useful resources for you and more ways to maximize your google.com visits.

Watch for Getting to Know Google – Part 2 in the next issue of CM.

Kelly Embleton is Computer Services Coordinator for Norris-Whitney Communications.



RESOURCES

... If you are searching for a site that contains a huge list of song lyrics, visit **Lyrics Directory** at www.lyricsdir.com. The Lyrics Directory collection is alphabetized by first name, which makes it easy to find the lyrics you are looking for.

... **Peavey Electronics Corporation** has proudly introduced a newly designed Web site located at www.peavey.com. The new site features less "clicks" between the homepage and its product, artist and news content, allowing consumers easier access to information and shopping than previously available.

... **Artistopia** is an ultimate artist and musician resource. Artistopia is dedicated to providing artists/musicians with all the necessary productivity tools to professionalize their approach to the music industry. Artistopia membership programs are designed to offer artists a fair and uniform approach to shift their music careers into a higher gear. For complete Artistopia information, visit their site at www.icubator.com/artistopia.

... **Great White Noise**, online at www.greatwhitenoise.ca, is a Canadian site exposing independent music. Great White Noise features artists, news, links, reviews, forums and much more.

... **Craviotto Percussion** has announced that information on Craviotto Percussion company history, Craviotto Percussion handcrafted solid drumshells along with a virtual factory tour can now be seen on the Craviotto Percussion Web site: www.craviottopercussion.com.

... If you are looking for sheet music, songbooks, artist biographies, anthologies or greatest hits collections then visit **Music Books Plus** at www.musicbooksplus.com/sheetmusic. Music Books Plus has a vast selection of over 600 titles including: Best of Metallica, Ben Folds, Nickelback, Radiohead, Audioslave, Linkin Park, Paul McCartney and more.

... A great online resource for guitar tabs is **Guitaretab.com**. This site features over 35,000 tabs, as well as links, forums, lessons and more. Check it out at www.guitaretab.com.

Steinberg Cubase SX 2.0

by Chris Taylor-Munro

So you're toying with the idea of plunging into the world of home-based recording using some sort of software or software/hardware combination? I too have recently gone through the daunting task of figuring out what platform to use (Mac or PC) and what music production software would be best suited for my/your musical needs. This will depend on several factors of course, but rest assured the options available today are incredibly powerful and more than capable of commercial quality results and Steinberg's latest version of Cubase SX 2.0 is an excellent choice.

Let's get the system requirements sussed out so you know where your gear stands and what upgrades, if any, you need to make before heading out to your nearest dealer. Minimum requirements for "PCers" demand Intel Pentium III/AMD Athlon 800 MHz (1.4 GHz recommended) and 384 MB of RAM (512 MB and up is recommended). The "more the better" definitely applies if you're recording a lot of audio. One minute of audio (stereo) track burns up 10 MB of hard-disk space or more. Windows 2000 or XP should be installed if you haven't already made the jump to this millennium. As for hardware you can use the Win MME DirectSound standard soundcard but do yourself a favour and get an ASIO 2.0 Multichannel soundcard (with MIDI if you don't already have an interface!) to fully enjoy your music. MAC users can get away with a G4 867 MHz (dual 1.25 MHz or faster recommended) with 384 MB of RAM (512 MB recommended) running OS X, Version 10.2. Any OS X compatible soundcard will do, but as with the PC platform an ASIO Multichannel card is best. Both systems require a USB port and recommend dual monitors, but I am using a single 17" flatscreen monitor and it's plenty to get you off and running. Which brings me to my first point regarding Cubase SX.

Navigating through the myriad of windows even with just one screen is very easy. Cubase SX allows you to "hide" your mixers, effects windows, compressors and so on without getting lost in a virtual world and then call up any particular window, position it, move it around all the while being able to see your project. Once you're happy with your screen preferences you can save them as a template

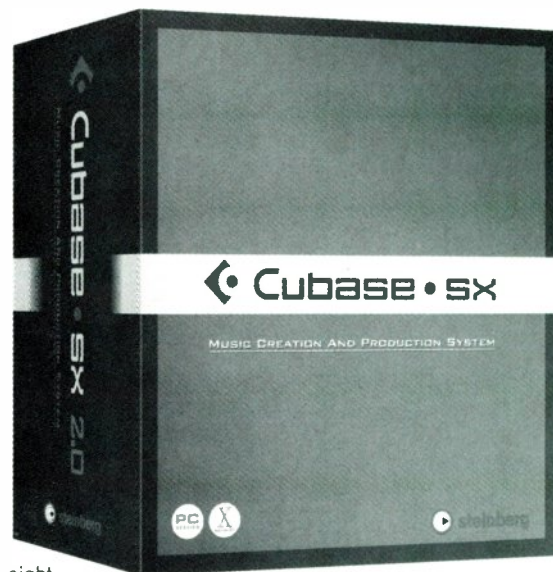
or use the preset templates. Keeping track of what you have open is important for working efficiently and I don't foresee having to spend extra dough on a second monitor any time soon. Bonus!

As with any new software program one would expect the learning curve to be steep. I would not consider myself an expert on musical software to say the least (those of you who know me are laughing out loud I'm sure of it). But within one hour of installing Cubase SX I managed to record eight separate tracks of audio from my Yamaha Motif (previously recorded parts) into the project window and began cutting, pasting, applying effects, EQing instruments and immediately enjoying the flexibility this program has to offer. This is an awesome accomplishment for someone of my current technical abilities and compliments the user friendliness of Cubase SX indeed.

Getting into the wackload of features Cubase SX offers will take serious time and becoming proficient even longer, but some of the so-called "pro" features include the ability to mix in 5.1 Dolby digital surround sound using a graphical "joystick" with an onboard video window. You can transfer your project to systems running different software using OMF files on both PC and MAC essentially eliminating the compatibility factor of not being able to work with other studios or individual composers.

Cubase is also one of the first programs able to apply effects in real-time to your audio and MIDI tracks upon input, thereby giving the player an exact representation of what you're recording as opposed to applying the effect afterward and hoping you've played your part with the accuracy and desired result. The same goes for any EQ settings.

The VST instruments (synthesizers and other sound sources) that are included with Cubase SX consist of a Waldorf 64 voice polyphonic synth (the A1), a LM-7 drum module with a decent acoustic kit, quintessential 909 voices, various percussion voices and a synth bass plug-in. Enough to get you



started, but you'll soon be on the hunt for as many VST plug-ins as you can get your hands on.

Support for Cubase is accessible directly from your working screen providing you have an Internet browser and are online. Troubleshooting, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), bug reports, updates as well as contact numbers for a real live human being ensure you can concentrate on your creative endeavours not chasing down technical gremlins. That said be sure to read the manual ... it does help. Should you want to expedite the learning process Steinberg Canada offers tutorials and even in-class lessons (SXED) at their headquarters in Toronto.

In summary, Cubase SX is a great tool for musicians, not just audio engineers because it is so user friendly with its graphical based applications. I have only scratched the surface of its capabilities, but am confident hobbyists and professional composers alike will be impressed with the ease of editing, mixing and the included plug-ins SX has to offer.

Thanks to Ray Williams and Wes Orlik of Steinberg Canada for their assistance with this review.

The manufacturer's suggested retail price for Steinberg's Cubase SX 2.0 is \$1,179.

For more product information, contact: Steinberg Canada, 12 Upjohn Rd., Toronto, ON M3B 2V9 (416) 789-7100, FAX (416) 789-1667, info@ca.steinberg.net, www.steinbergcanada.com.

Toronto-based musician Chris Taylor-Munro is a freelance writer.

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Comprehensive software support means that it's truly plug and play with most of the popular DAW software out there on both the Mac and Windows platforms. Another plus is that you won't have to do any surgery on your Mac or PC because there's no PCI card to install - laptop computers featuring a Firewire port are just fine with 01X and mLAN. The best part is that all this power and convenience will come at a ridiculously low price!*



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* Price to be determined / 01X shipping in 1st Summer 2003 / Specifications and appearance subject to change without notice. All trademarks and registered trademarks are property of their respective owners.

Tascam US-122



by Nathan Chamberland

Ah, the Tascam US-122. What a great invention for travelling laptop-based recording enthusiasts! This little machine is perfect for going out and getting live samples, or even recording a new song step-by-step. Actually, the possibilities are seemingly endless.

Built road-tough in a heavy steel shell, the US-122 is made for the road. About the size of an Electro Harmonix guitar stomp-box. It has a good, healthy weight. I would have no fear of dropping this once or twice, which is a good thing because I probably would.

Basically, this is a pro sound card that doesn't need to go in a PCI slot of your computer (if you are using a laptop this is good news). The device uses a USB interface. Just plug and play. What we have here is two switchable microphone or line preamps. Each controlled separately of course. Kind of like a little 2-channel mixer. You can choose between traditional XLR inputs (phantom power on-board) and regular 1/4 inch inputs for guitars and the like. The unit boasts 16 channels of MIDI as well. So you can now download MIDI-based SysEx information to upgrade software on some of your effects devices, or use it for sequencing. For those of you who absolutely NEED to hear what you are doing, there happens to be a fully adjustable zero-latency monitoring feature already on board. Plug your monitors right into it! There is also headphone monitoring in case you are wondering.

The unit is self-powered via USB, so no need for extra tangled power cords. This feature is perfect if you are going on-location with your laptop to a place that has no power.

Since this is equally Mac and PC compatible, there should be no worries for what platform you

use. And as for recording software, this little guy comes complete with ASIO, WDM, GSIF and Apple Core Audio (OS X) drivers.

But what about more professional applications you say? Like adding outboard compressors or gates? No problem! There are analog inserts on every channel. Just plug your outboard effects in the channel insert and away you go!

If indeed you don't have any recording software, the US-122 comes complete with two programs: Tascam's GigaStudio 24 sampling workstation software and a special version of Steinberg's Cubasis recording/sequencing software. If you have a computer, you're ready to go. I must say, the GigaStudio software was complicated to use at first but once you get a hold of it, it all comes very easy. I do like the look of the program. So, with a computer that is USB-equipped, some hard drive space, and at least 256 MB of RAM, you can record anything you like. Layer the tracks one-by-one or two-by-two until you have created your masterpiece. Really, unless you are trying to record a whole band on separate tracks at once, this will prove to be as useful as any professional soundcard. The Digital/Analog and Analog/Digital conversion rate is a whopping 24 bits. The sampling frequencies are 44.1 kHz and 48 kHz, software selectable. I do wish the sampling rate was more like 96 kHz but who's complaining, it's through your USB port!

I think Tascam has really thought of everything here. Tascam has come a long way in the home recording field since their cassette-based Portastudios. I remember owning a Porta-5 and then went on to the esteemed Porta-7. I really can't say that I am all that surprised at how great this interface is. I would expect nothing less from Tascam in their

recording products, always on the cutting edge for recording enthusiasts on a budget.

I do, however, make several references to laptop recording here but this will work just as well with your desktop computer. Just grab a pair of decent sounding speakers and a couple of condenser microphones and you're off to the races! There is nothing more you need to get started. It is all right here. It's just that simple.

With all of my being and with my professional name behind it, I fully recommend the Tascam US-122 to all musicians or aspiring engineers starting an interest in home recording. This is a great product at a great price. Who knows? Maybe a project you end up accomplishing with the Tascam US-122 could end up on radio stations across the country. I personally have heard of many such situations. Go out and get one, you'll be glad you did. Two huge thumbs up from this engineer!

The manufacturer's suggested retail price for the Tascam US-122 is \$369.

For more production information, contact: TEAC Canada Ltd., 5939 Wallace St., Mississauga, ON L4Z 1Z8 (905) 890-8008, FAX (905) 890-9888, info@teac-ca.com, www.tascam.com.

Nathan Chamberland is the lead guitar player in his band FIREWALL (www.firewallmusic.com). He owns a recording studio called Sonic Myst Labs (www.sonicmyst.com) where he is a Producer and an Engineer. Nathan is also a producer for Tangerine Records and is a music educator at the Niagara Institute of Music and Arts (NIOMA).

Nathan likes long walks on the beach and is a Libra. Contact Nathan at Nathan@sonicmyst.com.

Tanglewood Acoustic Guitars

by Nathan Chamberland

Upon first opening the box that the two guitars came in, I was immediately pleased that both guitars came in their own separate soft-shell case and were well packed. You could throw this box o' guitars off the CN Tower and they would all remain in perfect tune!

I must admit, I have never heard of Tanglewood before. But I have definitely heard them now. Packed stock with Elixir strings, I knew this was a serious instrument. I was given two Tanglewood full-bodied acoustic guitars to review (the TW15N-NS and the TW15-DLX).

With one axe in gold-plated hardware and the other in chrome, I must say they are both equally esthetically pleasing in their own right. The tuners are Grovers! I have always been a fan of Grover tuners. Most of my own guitars have had the tuners replaced with Grovers or Gotohs.

As I stated above, the guitars come stock with Elixir strings. These are a neat innovation on regular guitar strings, adding a coat of Teflon on the strings. This not only keeps the strings from corroding so quickly but also gives the strings a new brilliance in tone. The materials used to make these guitars are all natural wood. They are handmade in China, but they're HANDMADE!

I would like also to pay particular attention to the neck. This neck is not the circumference of a baseball bat as so many other acoustics are, but rather that of an Ibanez USA Custom: thin and wide! Because of this, the action is amazing. It's like playing an electric guitar. There is also a truss-rod in the neck with easy access from just inside the sound-hole by an Alan-key. They even pack an Alan-key with the guitars! I, surprisingly, didn't need to adjust the necks for proper intonation. Both guitars were perfect right out of the box!

Now, on to the sound: Have you ever picked up an expensive Martin full-bodied acoustic? Have you ever played any high-priced acoustic that just blew you away in sound quality? This is exactly what happened to me with the Tanglewoods. I tuned them up, and just played until my fingers hurt. It's like hearing an acoustic guitar off of an album, LIVE! I couldn't put them down! It is so absolutely amazing to hear what an acoustic actually *should* sound like. I should, however, take a moment to give readers a description of these guitars:

The TW15N-NS is a full-bodied acoustic guitar with chrome Grover tuners. It has a tortoise-shell pick-guard and has a white binding around the body. It features an old-style "volute" neck/headstock reinforcement. The top is made of American Spruce, while the body is solid African mahogany. This beauty is in a satin finish. In my opinion, this is a full sounding guitar. Filled with rich sounding lows, prominent mids and just enough highs. This was

my favorite pick of the two. It is real sounding, good in a mix, great for rock.

The TW15-DLX is also a full-bodied acoustic, but this one features gold plated Grover tuners. It has a black pick-guard and tortoise-shell bindings. The materials used to make this guitar are the same as the TW15N-NS but is of a glossy finish. I have to say, the TW15-DLX is definitely brighter. I would use this guitar to do ballad work or folk songs. It has more of a twang to it. Not as deep on the low end, it is defined on the mids and bright on the highs. The gloss really does change the sound.

Because words do not properly express the sound and nuances of the product, I have taken the liberty to record both guitars in my studio and host the two clips on one of my Web sites. They are both recorded in the same manner. There is no production, mastering or EQ involved. If you have access to the Internet, please go to www.sonicmyst.com/tanglewood.html. There you will hear the difference in both guitars. I have recorded approximately one minute each of the guitars. Both performances are separately improvised as I recorded them.

As a result of the positive impression I received from the Tanglewoods, I am a forever-changed engineer. No longer do I use only the legendary names in acoustic guitars for my mixes. No longer do I assume the unknown name is inferior. Tanglewood is by far the best sounding acoustic I have played that was made after 1990. I am so impressed by this line that I am looking to try the other products from Tanglewood, acoustic basses, electric acoustics and everything in between, even if I don't have to write about them. I fully and wholeheartedly recommend trying a Tanglewood. If you are close-minded and wish to stick to your tried-and-true acoustic guitars for recording, consider this article a brief glimpse into esoteric knowledge you will only hear about everywhere you look in the near future. This line is new in Canada, but a best seller in Great Britain. I am more than ecstatic to be among the first to review what I know will be legendary here. I give this review three thumbs up (yes ... three!).

The manufacturer's suggested retail price of the Tanglewood TW15N-NS is \$699, and the price of the Tanglewood TW15-DLX is \$899.

For more product information, contact: SF Marketing, 6161 Cypihot, St. Laurent, PQ H4S 1R3 (514) 856-1919, FAX (514) 856-1920, info@sfm.ca, www.sfm.ca.

Nathan Chamberland is the lead guitar player in his band Firewall. He is a Producer and Engineer at his studio Sonic Myst Labs (www.sonicmyst.com). Nathan likes long walks on the beach and is a Libra. Contact Nathan at Nathan@sonicmyst.com.



Distributor's Comments:

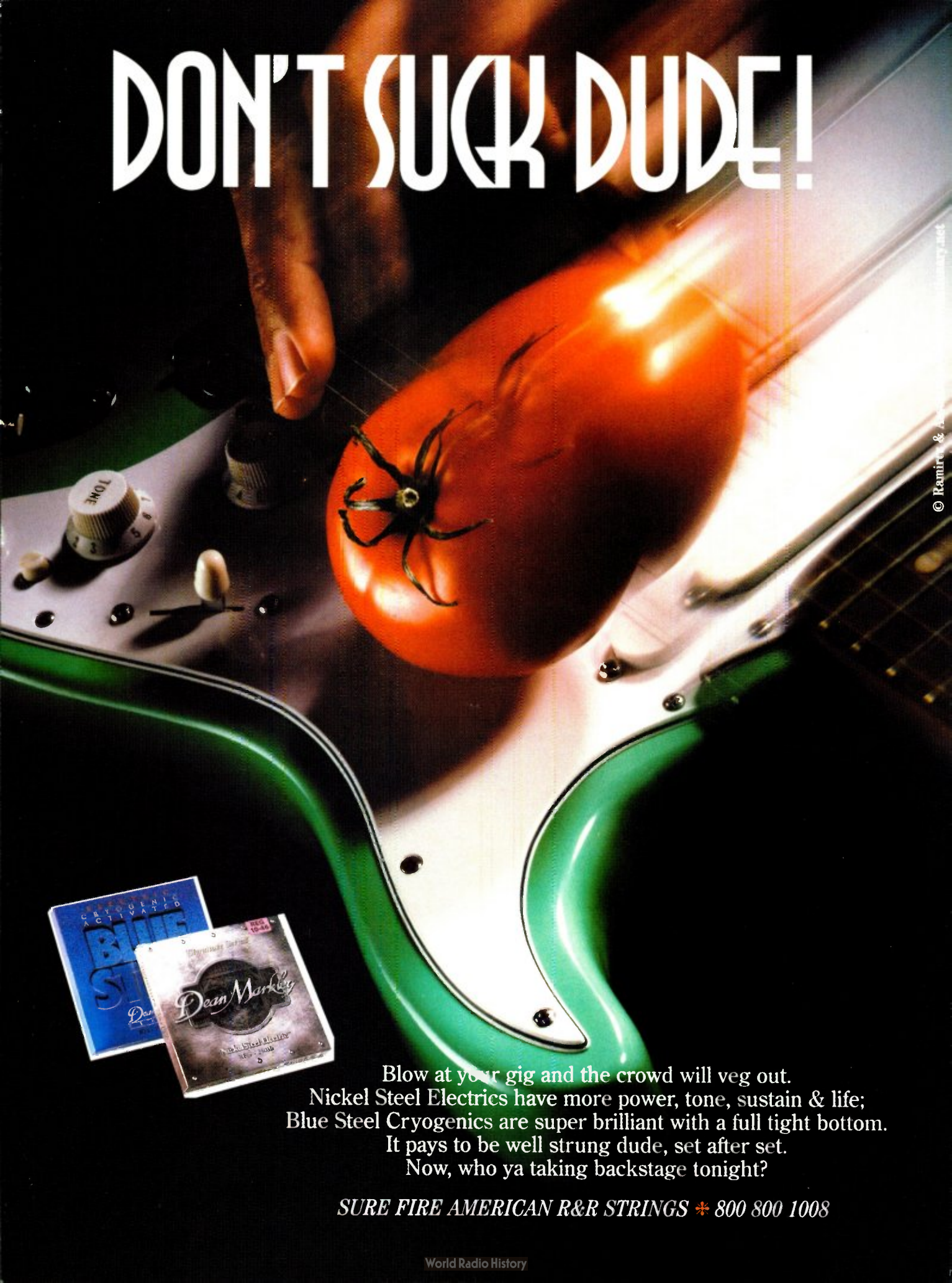
We are thrilled with the sentiments expressed by your reviewer. His reaction to our Tanglewood Guitars is not inconsistent with those of most every musician who has played them. The instruments offer a perfect blend of aesthetic appeal, many solid wood appointments, sensible and desirable design features and a new standard in the price/performance equation. The guitars' most compelling attributes however, are their great playability, and "world class" sound.

While both models tested were dreadnought guitars, the Tanglewood lineup includes a broad range of models that includes dreadnoughts, Super folk electro/acoustics, Super Jumbo acoustic/electrics, and specialty instruments from all solid travel guitars, to parlour-sized, and even acoustic basses. Tanglewood instruments range from \$199 to \$1,400.

I should point out that the "soft case" that the reviewer referred to is *not* included with the instrument, but that no quality guitar should ever travel without one, particularly in Canada!

Jeff Sazant, SF Marketing Inc.

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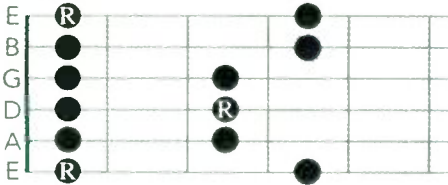
Pentatonic Scales

Pentatonic scales are the most commonly used scales for soloing in contemporary music. The two most popular pentatonic scales are the major and minor pentatonic scales. We will start with the minor pentatonic scale, which is used primarily to improvise over blues, rock or pop songs with minor chord progressions where the key note is the same as the root (tonic) of the scale. For example, if a song is in C Minor we use a C Minor Pentatonic scale.

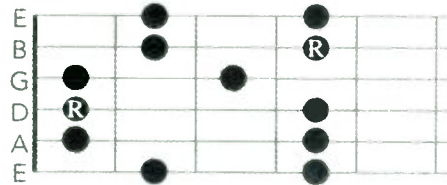
Traditional Minor Pentatonic Box Patterns

The conventional method of learning pentatonic scales is to study and memorize the box patterns shown below.

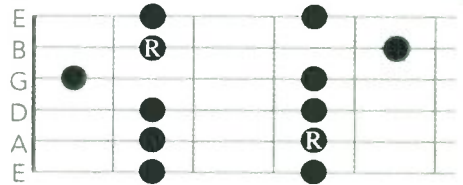
Box Pattern 1



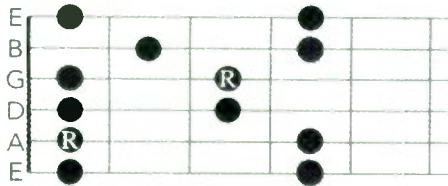
Box Pattern 2



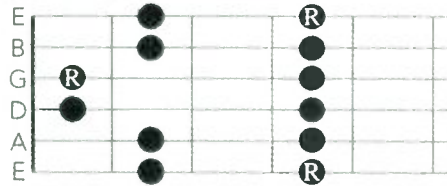
Box Pattern 3



Box Pattern 4



Box Pattern 5



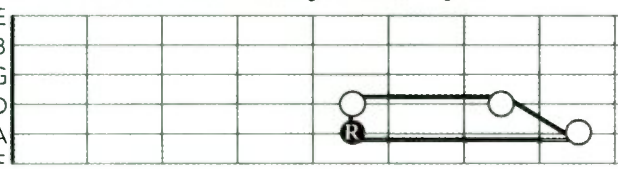
All patterns are played from left to right starting on the lowest string (in the case of these box patterns, the 6th string). These patterns can be played in any key by simply starting on the desired root. It is very important, therefore, to know the locations of the roots in the patterns and the names of the notes on the fretboard.

These are the most commonly used minor pentatonic scale patterns and they can take a considerable amount of time to memorize, since there are no memorable visible repeating patterns.

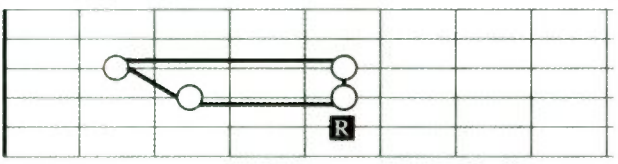
Four-Note Repetitive Minor Pentatonic Cells

Since repetitive patterns for notes appear throughout the fretboard, we can deduct that patterns can also appear in regard to scales as well. The following illustrations are cells from which we will build our minor pentatonic scales. The notes in the cells are connected by lines. It is important to become familiar with the relationship of the root to the other notes in the various cells, therefore making it easy to transpose to any root anywhere on the fretboard.

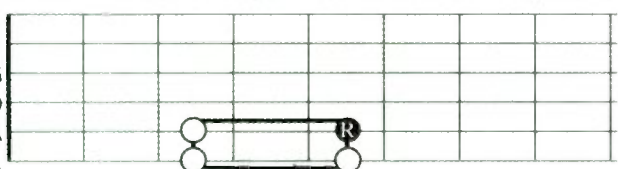
Cell 1 starts on the root and goes to the right.



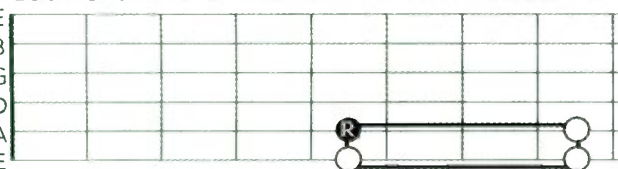
The root for Cell 2 is not in the circle but will be used as a joining note. Joining notes are square. This pattern is above and to the left of the root.



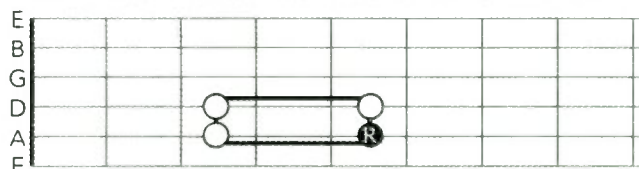
Cell 3 starts to the left and below the root, which is the fourth note.



Cell 4 is below the root and has the root as its third note.

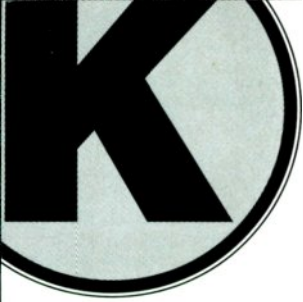


Cell 5 is above the root and has the root as its second note.



by Vivian Clement

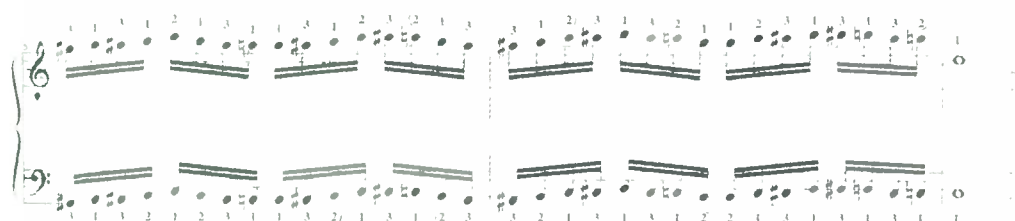
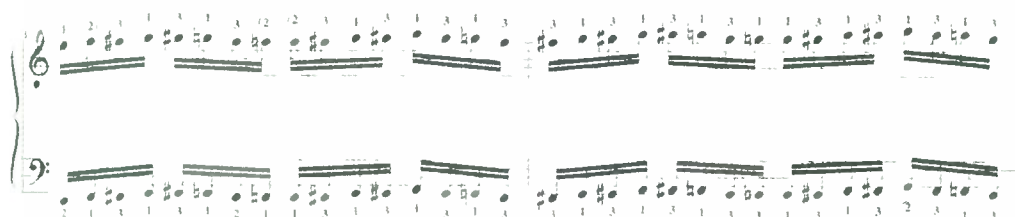
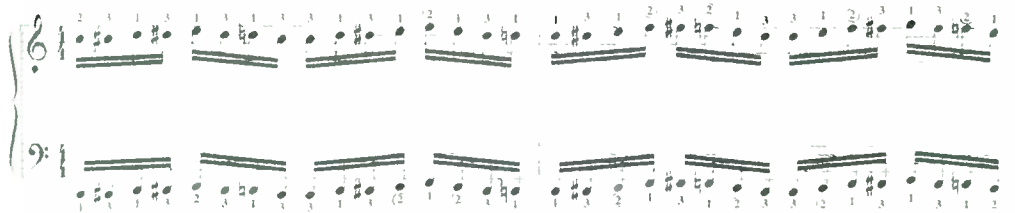
Vivian Clement is a versatile guitarist whose style ranges from jazz to blues to pop who has released several CDs. During the summer months she teaches guitar at the Toronto Campus of the National Guitar workshop as well as privately. Presently she keeps busy performing in the Southern Ontario region and owns and records at Exodus Studio with her husband Anthony Paiano.



Warm Ups and Linear Sprints

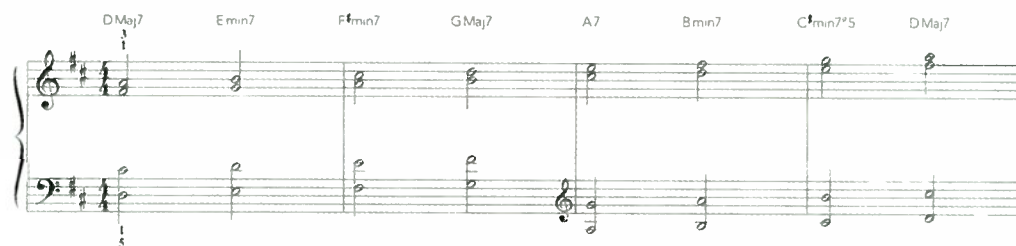
This pattern uses the chromatic scale with the hands two-octaves-plus-a-3rd-apart. Play slowly at first, paying special attention to evenness of volume. Keep that control when bringing it up to speed.

When memorizing the chromatic scale and its patterns, notice what we call the 'finger 2 landings.' In the right hand, finger 2 plays C and F and in the left hand, E and B. Both hands play all other white keys with finger 1 and black keys with finger 3.



Chord Toner

Memorize the harmonized scale below. These are the diatonic 7th chords in the key of D Major. They are voiced using left-hand shells (the root and 7th of each chord), and the right hand plays the 3rd and 5th of each chord. Play in all keys.



by Tom Brislin

Tom Brislin is a keyboardist, vocalist and songwriter who appears regularly in the New York and New Jersey areas. He has performed and/or recorded with artists in many styles of music including Meat Loaf, Glen Burtnek and Michael Brecker. These warm-ups are excerpted from his book 30-Day Keyboard Workout, published by Alfred.

Best Of The Bass



Best Of The Bass

"Hey Rich, I am learning the bass guitar, who should I listen to?" I get asked this question quite often, so I thought I would take some time and run through a list of bass players who have influenced me over the years.

For me, the first bass player to grab my attention was **Geddy Lee**. When I first started to play the bass, I had no idea that the bass guitar could take such a commanding role within a song. Lee's inventive, melodic lines redefined the role of the bass guitar within a band. Check out *Moving Pictures*, or *Exit, Stage Left*, and you will wear out your headphones.

John Entwistle of the Who also stands out. A tall order when you play with guys like Pete Townshend and Keith Moon. Like Lee, Entwistle crafted amazing lines that were very complex, without overwhelming the song. Entwistle also helped redefine the sound of the electric bass by using round wound strings to get a deep, piano-like tone. *Live At Leeds*, or the deluxe edition of *Who's Next* are great places to start.

Following a similar style of bass player led me to **Chris Squire** of Yes. Again, amazing tone and awesome lines. If you can overlook the self-indulgence of *Fragile*, you will find some great playing. *The Yes Album* is also worth checking out.

And then there is **Flea**. Flea made slapping and popping cool again, laying the foundation for the new generation of nu-metal bands. Not only did he help drive the Red Hot Chili Peppers to success, his guest appearances with Alanis Morissette ("You Oughta Know"), Young MC ("Bust a Move", dig those crazy pants in the video) and Crazy Town ("Butterfly", sampled from "Pretty Little Ditty", found on *Mother's Milk*) bear his unmistakable presence. The George Clinton-produced *Freaky Styley*, *Uplift Mofo Party Plan* and the *Abbey Road* EP are my faves.

Another great slapper is **Marcus Miller**. Great tone, solid feel – largely an unknown name outside of the bass geek community. With over 400 album appearances, he has played with everyone from the Bee Gees, to George Benson, Miles Davis, Aretha Franklin, Elton John, Luther Vandross, even Billy Idol. I found him playing on a David Sanborn album.

You can't talk about slap bass without mentioning **Larry Graham**. With Sly and the Family Stone, he evolved a whole new style of playing bass, using his thumb to emulate the beat of a kick drum, and "snapping" with his index finger to simulate the snare. Early Sly hits like "Dance To The Music", "I Want To Take You Higher", "Thank You (Fa Lettinme Be Mice Elf Again)" are great examples of the early sounds of what came to be known as funk bass. Also, check out "The Jam" by Graham Central Station.

Honorable mention goes out to **Stanley Clarke**. I found a copy of *School Days* one day after school, and was blown away at how fast this guy could play. Not really my thing, but still a great player worth checking out.

Another cool funk bass player I like is **Rocco Prestia** from Tower of Power. Often credited with innovating 'fingerstyle funk', his quick-fingered playing on *What Is Hip* is amazing.

Steve Harris, founder of Iron Maiden also leaves an impression with his blazing finger speed. Check out *Wrathchild*, *The Trooper*, *The Number Of The Beast*, or better yet, *Run To the Hills*. Raise yer sword.

It's true that even most bass players make fun of the electric fretless bass. However, check out **Pino Palladino** and you will find a worthy argument for the cause. Having played with nearly everyone in the UK for the last 20 years, most notably the Who on their last tour, stepping in as a last minute replacement for the late John Entwistle, you may find that if you haven't heard of him, you certainly have heard him. Paul Young's *Every Time You Go Away*, *I'm Gonna Tear Your Playhouse Down*, and Pete Townshend's *Give Blood* are worth a listen.

Another wicked fretless player is **Alain Caron** from the Montreal-based fusion group UZEB. Very popular on the international jazz circuit and a treat to see live, they unfortunately disbanded in 1992. One of the few bass soloists I can actually listen to and enjoy. Don't Be Bop.

I remember clearly the first time I heard **Les Claypool**. I was driving around San Francisco in my grandmothers' car, and I was flipping through the radio dial. I found some college station, and the sound that was coming out was insane. The band was Primus. The album was *Frizzle Fry*. Again, not really my thing, but a good example of someone stretching the boundaries of what the bass guitar is capable of.

Jaco Pastorius – the self-proclaimed world's greatest bass player. And all the members of the Jaco army would agree. His is a tragic and cautionary tale, but his legacy lives on with great tracks like "Continuum", "Portrait of Tracy", and Weather Report's "Birdland".

James Jamerson, member of Motown's "Funk Brothers" was the bedrock of the Motown sound. He played on nearly every Motown hit that mattered. Marvin Gaye's "What's Goin On" is often considered his best work. Check out "Standing in the Shadows of Motown". His lines were deceptively simple, combining rhythm and melody in a way that took the tunes to a new level.

Cliff Williams a great bass player? Sure. AC/DC have mastered the fine art of keeping things simple. Using lines that anyone can play, Williams provides a dead simple foundation that makes up in sheer rock what he may lack in virtuosity. See also **Dee Dee Ramone**.

Some other great players worthy of mention follow. **Cliff Burton** of Metallica rocks. Check out "For Whom The Bell Tolls". **Don Binns** of Sons Of Freedom also rocks. If you can find it, check out "The Criminal". **John Deacon** of Queen. "Another One Bites The Dust" and "Dragon Attack" are cool. **Tony Levin**, who plays with Peter Gabriel and others, is a monster, probably one of the best players around today. **Jack Bruce** of Cream, check out "Sunshine Of Your Love". **Paul McCartney**, c'mon, he was in The Beatles!

And so, the list can go on and on and on. I realize that I probably have missed your favourite bass player. But hey, it's my list; hopefully you will be inspired to check out some of these guys and begin a list of your own. Take care, stay in school, drink milk, and remember, music is supposed to be fun.

Vancouver-based Rich "Rock" Priske is bassist for Matthew Good.

So What Is It About Ringo?

I've been told when a boy kisses a girl ... you take a trip around the world. Or so sang Ringo Starr, drummer of The Beatles. But I've been told when Ringo drums you become part of that world when you get caught up in a roller coaster ride that was The Beatles.

The Beatles would not have been The Beatles without Ringo. The sound, the rhythm, the texture, the feel, the groove ... call it what you like but I call it messing with the kit!

Ringo Starr turned my world upside down when I was just a little boy. He was the reason I picked up sticks. I wanted, as a nine-year-old, to be Ringo Starr! It's easy to overlook his contribution to drumming because of the enormous effect The Beatles themselves had on the world. There never has been or will be any thing quite like The Beatles.

Ringo played his own style – a style that has affected and influenced a generation of drummers and still, to this day, is a leading light to many drummers. You only have to read leading drum magazines when interviewing today's influential drummers to read that they quote Ringo Starr as being their major influence for playing drums.

So what is it about his playing that still strikes a chord in today's drumming world? First and foremost he played for the song, the single most important aspect of any *real* drummer. As my good mate Zoro has said on many occasions, "Be a servant to the song." To many this is the whole purpose of drumming, and rightfully so. When you play a song you should take into consideration first and foremost the song itself. Ringo was a master of this. Playing what was needed and leaving out what was not. This does not mean that you can't put in fills or play something that is out of the ordinary, it just means playing what is right for the song. Take for example his deft drum work on "In my Life". Pure genius. Or what about the Ringo shuffle, some where between 8th and 16th notes? Or the swing feel he introduces coming out of the lead guitar break in the song "Something"?

Many of today's legends are big on Ringo: Dennis Chambers, Vinnie Colaitua, Kenny Aronoff, Terry Bozzio, Jim Keltner, Ndugu Chancler, Billy Ward ... they all state they have been influenced and continue to be influenced by Ringo-isms.

The sound is determined by how a person plays, their style and their technique. It's often been said by detractors that Ringo has no technique, but I would disagree. He has the technique that is required to be Ringo. Those fills have always been a mystery to most. It's mainly because he's a lefty playing right-handed and each fill starts with the left hand. Check out "Don't Let Me Down" live on the roof from the movie *Let It Be*. Ringo plays all the ride cymbal work during the verses with his left hand on the ride cymbal directly in front of his left hand. (Perhaps this explains why he uses two large rides on the left and right sides of his kit.) This creates a totally different feel to leading with the right hand. Try it sometime – you won't be disappointed. Ringo Starr made me realize that by being yourself you can make dreams come true.

He has time to die for. George Martin once said that when The Beatles did many takes, as many as 20, Ringo was always in time, on time and was time personified. What a compliment! But the feel was always, and still remains today, constant and that's what made The Beatles sound so good. Just take time out to listen to the only drum solo he begrudgingly made on *Abbey Road* on the song "The End". It made the list of the 25 greatest drum solos ever recorded according to *Modern Drummer* magazine. Some may disagree with this and that's obviously their right, but you can't argue with the fact that the solo was for that song and unique for that song. It had perfect timing – the perfect solo.

In a recent interview I conducted with Rick Van Horn he is quoted as saying that Ringo was the most influential drummer who ever lived, stating that "Ringo as part of The Beatles, not only influenced people to play drums, but as part of The Beatles he influenced people who would not otherwise have done so to even consider playing



by Bruce Aitken

music". I wholeheartedly agree.

I have learned a great deal from listening to the songs of The Beatles, and in particular, the drumming of Ringo Starr. A giant amongst drummers, he's a man with a million ideas.

So what is it about Ringo Starr? Well quite frankly he was of his time, of our time and with us for all time. Long live the king.

Bruce Aitken is a drum instructor based in Marion Bridge, Sydney, Cape Breton Island, teaching approximately 60 students per week. He is the founder of the Cape Breton International Drum Festival (www.cbdrumfest.com) and is endorsed by Zildjian cymbals, ProMark sticks, RythmTech percussion, Otavion Hearing Protectors, Taye drums, Remo heads, XL Specialty Cases and Audix microphones. Bruce is currently drumming for Canadian artist John Campbelljohn. Visit www.bruceaitken.com for more information.

Recording the Flute in the Studio



Nature Boy Vs. Scratch It!

I have received a lot of compliments regarding the overall sound quality on my most recent CD, *Nature Boy*, and so I thought that some readers might take an interest in how this came about. I also thought that it would be useful to contrast the engineering approach used on *Nature Boy* with my second (and entirely self-produced) Extreme Flute project, *Scratch It!*, especially since both of these projects were produced independently.

With respect to *Nature Boy* (a jazz flute quartet/duo session), the engineer on the session, Inaam Haq of Cherry Beach Sound, did an excellent job. Indeed, I chose Inaam precisely because he is both reputable and has considerable experience in recording acoustic jazz. For the *Nature Boy* session, the only real instruction/injunction that I gave him beforehand was that I wanted a late '50s/early '60s Rudy Van Gelder/Blue Note/Prestige kind of vibe with some ambience in the overall sound quality.

For both *Nature Boy* (an acoustic jazz project) and *Scratch It!* (a very mixed-idiom Extreme Flute project), I used my Haynes flute (a '60s vintage instrument), French model, straight-line G key with a low C foot joint. There are better instruments. (Indeed, there are better Haynes instruments!) But I've had this instrument for a very long time now ... and I admit that I'm used to it and I'm comfortable with it. So the one element that is entirely common to both of these projects (aside from me, of course) is the instrument.

Inaam indicated that, "My main observation in comparing these two recordings is that the *Nature Boy* tracks are much quieter than the *Scratch It!* tracks due to the use of very little compression in the recording process [in the case of *Nature Boy*]. The quieter levels on *Nature Boy* were needed in order to let the tracks 'breathe' more. By using less compression, the peaks will be louder while the underlying material will be softer.

As for me, the flute player, I'm not really that conscious of mic placement, partly because I tend to move around quite a bit when I play. Nonetheless, I *can* say that I tend to like the mic well above the embouchure hole to avoid wind-blast (unless I want just that thing in the sound in which case I will actually tuck in on the mic, especially for soft things where I want a whisper-type effect.) Overall, I think it is fair to say that I'm never more than about one foot away from the mic at any point in time.

For this particular session, Inaam used an AKG 414 EB (which is a large diaphragm condenser mic) on the flute. Also, Inaam didn't use any effects on the flute signal at

either the engineering or the mixing stages. Indeed, the flute signal was flat except that, in order to give the sound a little more air/room, Inaam used some unobtrusive reverb. The piano signal was also very flat and, physically, it was shrouded with blankets at the time of recording. The drums were ambient-miked and the bass was baffled in a small, low but open three-sided affair. All of the musicians were somewhat spread out on the floor in the studio; i.e., no one was closer than about 8-10 feet from me.

Inaam knew his set-up and his gear and was right on top of where the musicians were at and at all times (especially with stops and starts, etc.) He was also careful to observe the musicians' general observations and reactions to things as the session proceeded and made a few salient notes in his track log for what proved to be very useful reference when we turned to the mixing later on. Ultimately, Inaam was very adept at keeping the booth from being a source of any concern or distraction to the players thereby enabling the band to concentrate on their performance (And we *had* to do that ... because we didn't rehearse!) which, of course, enhanced the overall comfort level and let the players do their best. On my second Extreme Flute project, *Scratch It!*, I myself mixed and recorded everything. For this project, I used a Tascam 788 digital multi-track recorder and an AKG C2000B mic. However, in order to warm up what might have been a somewhat cold digital flute sound, I also used an ART Tube Preamp. The flute sound was placed up front and high in the mix. With the Tascam board, I always recorded the flute very flat. I would then experiment with the extensive onboard effects of the Tascam and process or alter the flute sound during mixing. What is very interesting (and harkens back to what Inaam was saying) is that, once I got a processed and/or altered flute sound that I thought I liked, I found that, when I switched between the processed sound and the flat signal as a final check or reference on where I was going, most often I reverted back to the original flat signal!

I admit that, in certain cases (such as on the title track, *Scratch It!*), I did quite deliberately compress the flute sound heavily and subject it to a pretty strong chorus effect to get a much grittier sound over what was a hip-hop groove. However, in most other cases, I left the signal flat and only invoked a touch of reverb to give the flute sound a little air or space once again.

For the "Free Diving" tracks, I also employed a combination of delay and intervals, the settings for which I had to alter as the

recording progressed. Since I had to manipulate these settings manually as I both played and recorded the track, there was no going back.

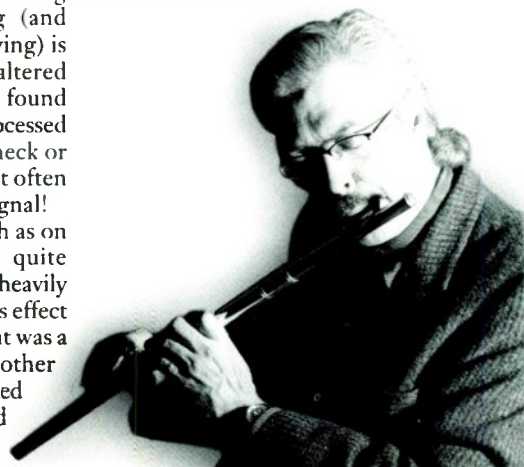
Overall, what is interesting to note in the case of both projects is that, even in the case of *Scratch It!*, which is a completely different thing idiomatically from *Nature Boy*, I inevitably found myself gravitating to a relatively unaltered, unprocessed, flat, acoustic signal on the flute!

As a summary observation, I will say that I have recorded many different musical environments (from jazz to rap) and I have been pretty pleased with the recorded results. This suggests to me that, ultimately, my Haynes flute sends out a pretty good signal. However, Inaam states, "Tonally – it's all up to you – the player!" In the end, it is probably fair to say that the final recorded result is a function of (1) the player, (2) the instrument, and (3) yes, the engineer!

Finally, I am prepared to conclude from my experience on both of these independently produced sessions that simple/simpler approaches (and often what are simply acoustic-oriented approaches) inevitably work best!

Bill McBirnie is a jazz flutist located in Toronto. He has been chosen Flutist of the Year, Jazz Report Awards and, more recently, was a winner in the National Flute Association's triennial Jazz Flute Master Class Competition. He has produced two Extreme Flute projects as well as a recent CD with The Mark Eisenman Trio entitled, Nature Boy.

All three of these CDs are available at www.indiepool.com/extremeflute. If you want to contact Bill directly, he can be reached at billmcb@idirect.com.



by Bill McBirnie

Kacks & Clams

SPLEE-AA!

In a recent interview, NY Philharmonic principal trumpet Phil Smith told the interviewer that he wanted a license plate that read SPLEE-AA. He had to explain that this is a sound familiar to all brass players, when we miss a note. Missed notes are generally referred to as kacks and clams, e.g. 'he kacked that note' or 'nice clam!'

The Sweet Spot

Generally, a clam occurs as a result of hitting a note too far from the centre of the pitch. A small mis-pitch produces a faulty attack, while a large mis-pitch causes you to miss the note entirely. (SPLEF-AA!) Sometimes mis-pitching is a result of hearing an incorrect pitch, and sometimes it is a result of incorrect physical functioning.

Every note has a 'sweet spot'. The lips vibrate with maximum intensity and at exactly the right frequency, producing a sound full of resonance and overtones, and creating a deep 'slot' for the note. When you hit the sweet spot, your lips are in sync with the vibrations of the horn, and it is actually hard to miss the note. A note that is played off-centre produces a tone that is dull, and tugs at the chops as they fight the horn. It increases the possibility of a kack. Aim for the sweet spot on every note; you will play easier and produce fewer kacks.

The C Word

The most common cause of kacks and clams is a lapse in concentration. As you drive a car, you may be distracted by something on the side of the road. If, just at that moment, the driver ahead slams on her brakes, a fender-bender may result. In the same way, as you play your attention may drift and the next thing you know you've overshot or undershot a note. Kack! The longer you play, the greater the chance that you will miss a note. This is partially because the muscles get tired, but it is also because your brain stops concentrating. When practicing, you need to develop your powers of concentration, just as you develop the muscles of your embouchure. If your brain is not tired at the end of a practice session, you have not utilized all your resources.

Ouch! @#%!

There is another reason that brass players miss notes. It is insidious, and has become an ingrained aspect of practicing for many brass players. Think about it: what do we do when we miss a note? We stop, let the water out, take a breath and go at it again refreshed. In short, we reward ourselves for missing a note. There must be incentive to play without missing notes, and consequences for letting your concentration lapse.

Exercise

Pick an easy exercise containing just quarter or half notes, perhaps something from the beginning of the Arban's book. Start at a medium tempo and see if you can make it to

the end of the exercise without missing a note. When you do miss, start back at the beginning. You may be surprised and a little distressed at how tough it is to make it all the way through even a simple piece, clam-free. It will require concentration. Forcing yourself to start an exercise from the beginning every time you miss a note will quickly make you pay attention to what you are doing.

The Mind Is Smart, The Body Is Stupid

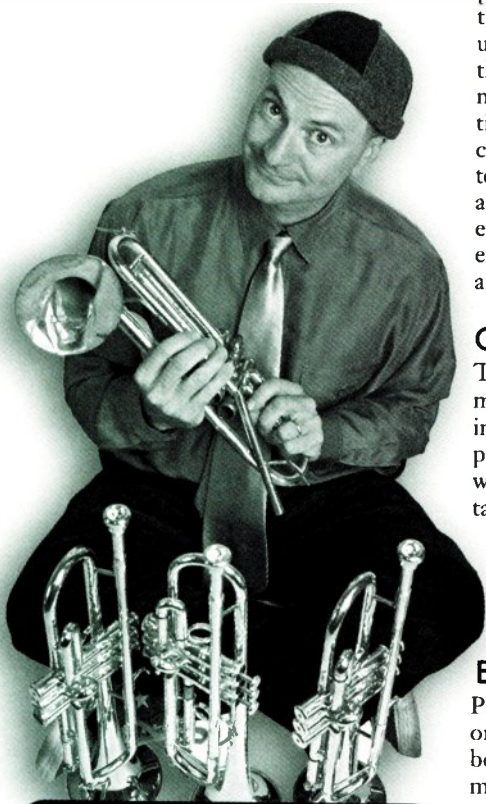
The body does not know the difference between a right note and a wrong note. It requires diligent commands from the mind to teach it the correct way to do things. You must successfully repeat an activity over and over before the body assimilates the technique and starts to function without much conscious thought. Until the body has learned to function correctly when playing the instrument, the mind will be hampered in its ability to focus on the music.

It is not sufficient to fix a mistake once and move on. If you play something incorrectly four times in a row and then get it right on the fifth try, you have established only a 20 per cent chance that you will play it right the next time. The mind is satisfied, but the body doesn't have it yet. When fixing a mistake, work on it until you can do it correctly at least three times in a row.

We Are Human (Even Wynton)

Playing a brass instrument is like playing baseball; nobody bats 1,000. Kacks and clams happen to everyone, as Phil Smith's license plate can attest. But with dedication, determination and concentration, you can improve your batting average.

Chase Sanborn is a jazz trumpet player based in Toronto, and is the author of Brass Tactics and Jazz Tactics. (This article is excerpted from the new Revised Edition of Brass Tactics.) Chase is a member of the jazz faculty at U of T and is a Yamaha Artist. He can be heard in good company on his latest CD Cut To The Chase. For information on Chase's books, CDs, GR-CS trumpet mouthpieces and other products, please visit www.chasesanborn.com.



by Chase Sanborn

Why Digital?

Is there anything dangerous regarding digital recording that a musician should know about? Any pitfalls that should be avoided?

Never underestimate the beauty of good old analog distortion, even if it's below the level of human hearing it's lovely in the right setting. With tape, most people like to see the red light just a little going to tape (recording that is...) and the upper end of the scale is a good neighbourhood at mix time. On the other hand, digital distortion isn't nice.

Not even a little tiny bit of it.

Ever.

Got it?

A good friend of mine does a lot of mixing of projects that have been done, or at least completed, in home studios and often says to me 'Just because everyone can afford to make records, doesn't mean they should!' I think he may have been questioning the content just a little bit as well, but the main issue is basic engineering. If you record something badly, it's very unlikely anyone down the line can make what you have done sound anything other than badly recorded. With this in mind, pay attention to things like phase coherence, compression (take it easy!!) and EQ. If you need more of anything it's easy to add but impossible to remove.

Can you briefly explain what options are available for a musician? (DAWs, computer-based software)

Computer-based solutions fall into two categories, the entry-level recorders take advantage of your sound card (or a better one) and the native power of your computer to get the basics done. At the other end of the spectrum are the dedicated hardware/software systems that combine a computer with hardware that is purpose-built for the job of capturing audio. Pro Tools is the major player in this field and is the defacto industry standard for recording – major label budget or not. Pro Tools comes in a variety of 'strengths' from Pro Tools Free available online for nada, to the very affordable M-Box and Pro Tools LE all the way up to the full blown Pro Tools HD (not that affordable!). There are other options in both software and hardware, for example, Apogee (among others) make great input and output converters that talk to Pro Tools, as well as other software. The software package Nuendo, by Steinberg, is making great inroads in the field as well as other packages that began more as sequence solutions like Digital Performer and Cubase. In the middle is the DAW (Digital Audio Workstation). DAWs are all-in-one dedicated solutions that

include the recorder, mixer and effects all in one box. Most of the major manufacturers have one or more on offer, from budget items that do the bare minimum to some very comprehensive units that will do just about everything, including burn the mastered CD at the end of it all.

Where do you think digital recording will go from here? Faster, more power, more bit-rate? What?

Yes, please! I think it's likely that all of the above will be inevitable but, more importantly, it'll be a case of greater and greater user ease. The interfaces will become more intuitive and the results more foolproof. As things stand right now the summing algorithms in software solutions are the weak point. Mixing 'in the box' (purely in Pro Tools or other software) is great for processing and automation of just about everything but when it comes to the math of combining lots of tracks into a stereo master, things fall apart a bit. For this reason you'd be hard pressed to mix something at a professional level without going out through a console or dedicated summing amplifier (such as the Dangerous 2-Bus by Dangerous Music). I'd imagine that if my friends and I (idiot musos, you know who you are!) have noticed this issue, far more intelligent people are already hard at work on a solution so it's likely only a matter of time before this is improved.

Any last words of advice?

Don't let the gear take over! I'm not kidding here, it's really easy to spend lots of time learning the software, getting the greatest tones anyone has never heard and forget entirely why you started either of those projects. The bottom line is the gear doesn't make the music. You do. As musicians we're in a great place right now. We can make whatever music we feel like, without needing the budget of a huge studio for every track and, therefore, the budget from a label and all of the pressure to sell that comes with it. By the same token, we can find outlets for our music that will allow us to make a living on our own terms, so be confident in your vision and trust yourself.

Mike Turner is a Toronto-based producer best known for his previous role in Our Lady Peace.



by Mike Turner

Why digital? What has digital audio recording offered musicians that analog couldn't?

The opportunity to revive the age-old debate of analog versus digital in terms of fidelity is hard to resist, but really, it's not the issue here. The issue is, in a word, affordability. Technology offered digital audio to the consumer in a way that analog can't compete with in terms of old-fashioned bang-for-the-buck. In order to have an analog recorder, you bought one. If you wanted a compressor, you bought one (for each place you want one!) The same goes for an EQ and all of the other hardware you might want to use. In the realm of digital, the same piece of hardware becomes any or all of these things (at least a decent facsimile thereof), further, each piece of software can be used in multiple positions, for example, if you spring for the Bomb Factory Compressor package (recreations of great UREI 1176 and LA2A compressors) you can have as many of each as you have the power to run. Individual channels, bus compression, chain compression, whatever you need. For the price of a good computer and a few pieces of dedicated software you can get the use of what would have required a multi-track tape machine (don't forget a couple of hundred dollars of tape), a console, some effects and the cables (which probably cost as much as a good computer) to patch it all together. This isn't to say that it's time to give up on the giant SSL consoles in favour of the new G5 when it's time to make your major label masterwork, but for the average musician the new G5 (or PC if you really insist!) is around a quarter of a million dollars more likely to fit the bill for your equally brilliant personal masterwork.



Damn, I Forgot My Singing Boots

vocals

Apparently *Canadian Musician* was so desperate to find someone to write an article on vocals ... the best they could do was me! LOL! [Ed. *Funny, I seem to remember Alec asking to write on this subject matter...*] Well surprise, surprise, it turns out that Alec the techie/producer guy is also a closet singer. Actually, (I am not positive about this one) I believe I have sung on every project I have ever worked on. So, I thought that I would pass along ALL the secrets that I know about studio vocals ... and then write 800 more words so that it looks like I wrote an article (Don't tell the editor, I don't think that he actually reads the articles anyway).

So without further delay, let me don my producer hat and start with "The Pep Talk."

Tone ... people don't buy records because of tone (at least not a lot of them). Finding a microphone and preamp that compliments the character of your voice is important. But keep in mind that there are "immortal" recordings that captured moments on gear with less fidelity than a Shure 57 and an old cassette 4-track. You're a vocalist, not a lead guitar player, so don't worry about all the wrong things. When you're locked away, all alone, in that little room with inanimate people staring unnervingly at you, from the other side of a pane of glass, keep in mind that PERFORMANCE is what you are after. Just like an Olympic

athlete, it is all the many hours of practice before the big day that should be taking care of the "mechanics". In other words, if you have practiced hard at your craft, when it comes time to put on those foreign feeling headphones and sing passionately in the somewhat sterile surroundings of the recording studio, you should be able to forget about technique. It is time, in some ways, to forget about everything you have ever learned. Not to say that you should no longer think about breathing, pitch, phrasing, etc. but rather, the training you have done in a lifetime of practice should take care of those mechanical elements. The more important task is to look at the lyrics and think about how the song makes you feel. Find a way to emote those feelings so that they can transcend the recording medium. A performance like that, even (and sometimes especially) if it is flawed in its mechanics, will grab the listener. So, go ahead and disappoint your vocal coach, maybe you'll sell some records.

So, having thrown "The Pep Talk" at you, here are some things that I have found over the years that make my life easier when singing in the studio.

Here is a super simple one to get more control over notes: loosen the belt or restrictive waistband. I don't have a belly; and I don't exactly have the chiseled stomach that you will find gracing the cover of a box of underwear either, but I have found in the past that when I seem to be having inexplicable trouble over air-control, more often than not,

I am wearing a belt which is restricting my ability to fully breath-in.

Pitch problems ... I often find that inexperienced studio vocalists always want their vocals too loud in their headphone mix. I am not an expert on psychoacoustics (and that might even be the wrong field), but my guess is that the louder the headphone mix, the harder it is to discern pitch. If you have ever

heard a recording of a live concert that you were at, it is sometimes amazing how pitchy the vocals are coming back off tape; yet when you were there, you didn't seem to notice it as that bad. It could have been all the alcohol of course, but in my experience, much like there are "equal curves of loudness" that describe the non-linearity regarding the EQ of our ears, there is some kind of curve that must express the ability of our ear to discern pitch. The louder the source, the worse our ears are at discerning pitch ... I wonder whether Edith Bunker would have sounded good singing "Those Were the Days" if you turned up the television really, really, really loud?

To help with singing on key, I like to pull one headphone slightly off of one ear so that I can hear my voice acoustically in the room; it doesn't sound big and full in the headphone mix, but I am generally pretty sure that I am going to sing on key when I do this. And as I mentioned before, in fact, more than mentioned, it is about the performance, not the tone!

Which brings me to a last tip for the studio, don't be afraid to have some kind of "studio quirk"; just like NHL players have a favourite pair of socks, or an order in which they need to dress for a big game, the same can work for the studio. I have experienced the following: (none of these are mine) "Damn, I forgot my singing boots ... I need to go get my singing boots"; "Hang on, I need to put on lip gloss before we start on keeper vocals (she wasn't suffering from chapped lips)"; and my favourite: "Do you have a full length mirror that I can sing into?" Not only do we expect studio quirks from vocalists, but they seem like they are necessary to add to the mystique of capturing an immortal performance.

Alec Watson is a West Coast-based Producer/Engineer who is co-owner of Vinsynch Productions, oddly enough, located online at www.vinsynch.com.



by Alec Watson

generation



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World Radio History

NELLY FURTADO

Inside a Songwriter's Head

If Nelly Furtado is feeling tired, she is hiding it well. It's mid-November, three weeks away from the release of her sophomore album *Folklore*, and she is ensconced in a Toronto hotel, near the end of a long day of interviews.

"At least it's warm in here," she says gratefully. Furtado has spent the last two days shooting a music video outside in the early winter weather. Didn't anyone provide a trailer for her to take refuge from the chill? "I felt bad for everyone who had to work, so I didn't use it. I stayed outside and had a good time," she replies.

Energetic and down to earth, Furtado seems completely unfazed by the multi-platinum international success of her first album, *Whoa, Nelly!*. Then again, she has much more on her plate this time around, what with the birth of her first child in September, not long after she finished recording *Folklore*.

Wildly diverse and eclectic, *Folklore* reflects Furtado's desire to create a modern folk record, an expression of her life and heritage, present and past. The album was written and recorded in an amazingly short three months with *Whoa, Nelly!* producers Track and Field (Gerald Eaton and Brian West), a 12-song snapshot of her life as the daughter of Portuguese immigrants, being the centre of a media whirlwind and a fan of dancing, break-beats and having fun.

"It was fast, but fun for us, we like working that way" she says. "The songs felt a lot more natural this time – we didn't mull over it too much. I felt the pressure to be different, to be fresh and cutting edge. I felt like people looked to me to do something

original because the first record broke some ground with the pop sound and street influences. I was a little nervous that it wasn't going to be original."

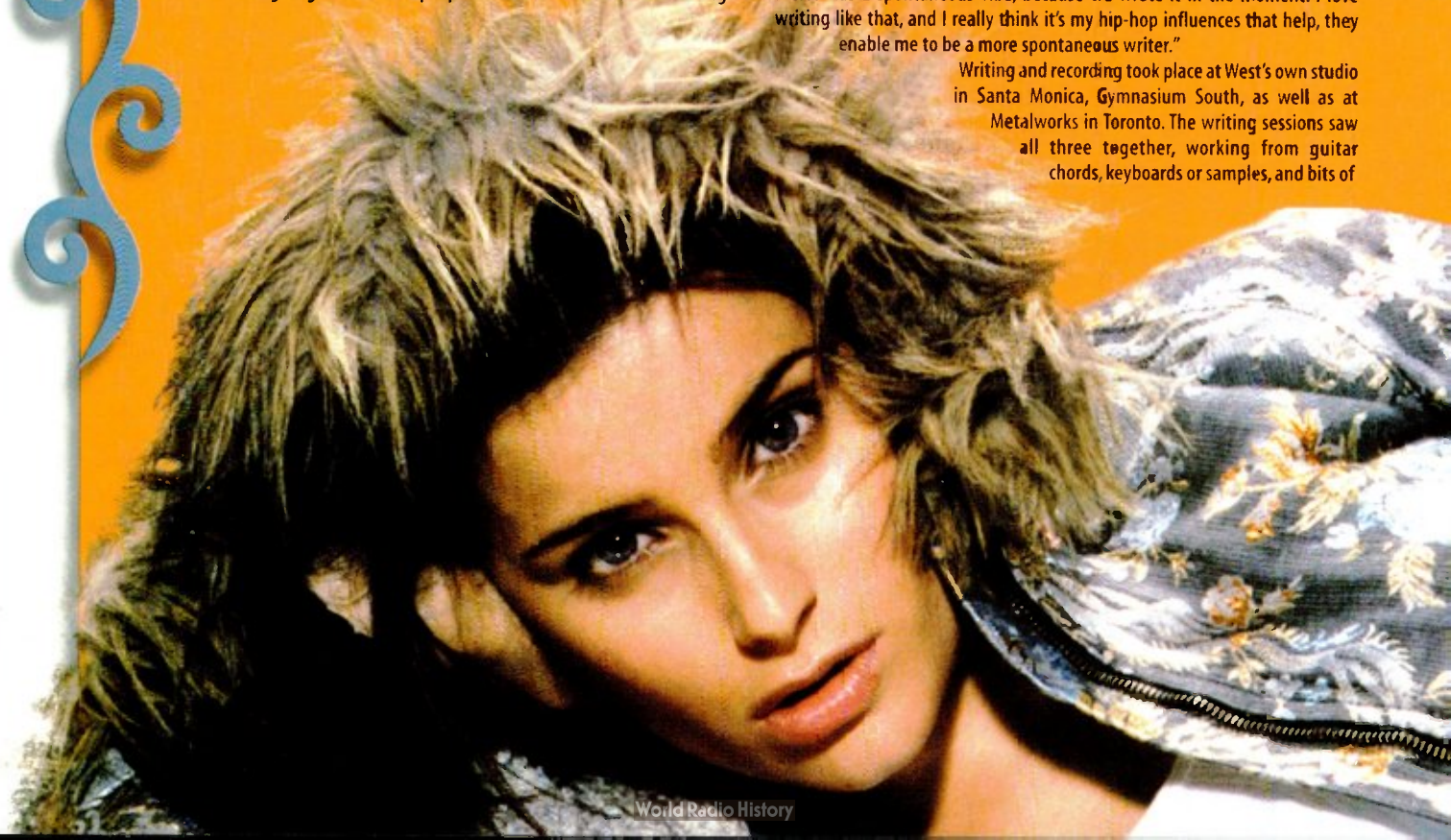
She shouldn't have worried. The pop is still there in heaping doses, but this time around it is tempered with sensitive arrangements and unexpected instrumentation. Rather than rehashing previous successes, the Nelly Furtado/Track and Field team has crafted a new standard in "folk" music.

"I have so much fun making music with them," she says of the collaboration. "For me, if I'm not having fun, I can't do it. I'm a really bad faker. We hooked up and it was like magic again. They're great guys, there was no ego, and we can always tell each other if something sucks. We've worked with each other since my first demos, and when you've been together that long, it's all good."

Unlike the recording of *Whoa, Nelly!*, where samples were meticulously edited and mixes were tweaked infinitely, *Folklore* was recorded with a more relaxed, natural vibe. "Brian and Gerald were just learning to be producers, and I was just learning to be a recording artist, so it took a long time," she says of her debut. "We got stuck in a lot of ruts with technology, there's so much to offer and it's hard to know when to stop. I'm proud of Brian on this record, because there were vocals he could have been anal about, but we realized that not everything needs to be mullied over and tweaked. That's not what music should be about."

Songs developed spontaneously, often undergoing drastic revision before and during recording. They made a conscious effort this time to work in a looser, more immediate manner. "Most of the lyrics I wrote on the spot," says Furtado. "A lot of these songs were written in 10 minutes. Every song on the record has a spontaneous vibe, because we wrote it in the moment. I love writing like that, and I really think it's my hip-hop influences that help, they enable me to be a more spontaneous writer."

Writing and recording took place at West's own studio in Santa Monica, Gymnasium South, as well as at Metalworks in Toronto. The writing sessions saw all three together, working from guitar chords, keyboards or samples, and bits of



FURTADO

by Rod Christie

melody or lyrics brought in by Furtado. "I play some rhythm guitar, but I don't play very well, I'm more of a lyric and melody person, so Brian plays guitar and I would write to that. Some songs we work up from a track, get a beat happening and embellish it, then I would write to that."

"For the track 'Explode', I initially wrote a whole different song, a whole different melody, and all that ended up being the same was the chord structure," she admits. "Gerald was sitting at the organ and started playing some chords for the chorus. But once we got to the studio, I didn't like the verse anymore. That day, we had Mark Eisinger (guitarist from Incubus) come in and flesh out some sounds. At that point I was still singing the old verse, and when I went back to cut some vocals, I totally changed it. I went into my little book where I'd been collecting lyrics on the road and I dropped a whole new rhythm and melody over the same verse groove. We tend to write in a disjointed manner a lot of the time."

They opened themselves up to a huge range of sounds on *Folklore*, gleefully mixing styles and genres with Furtado's simple and catchy melodies. The first single, "Powerless", began life as a break-beat, before being morphed into something completely different. "I had an idea to write a song with a simple break-beat," she explains. "I had just seen a show with a trio of turntablists, a Jam Master Jay tribute, and I loved the rawness of the break-beats – how heavy and powerful they were. I had already written lyrics, so I dropped them over the verse and it became 'Powerless'."

"I thought the idea of that with a banjo would be cool, so we messed around with that and fell in love with it. Gerald was skeptical at first, but now he loves it. We were so excited, we thought we had tapped into something really cool, so we continued with little banjo inflections, like on 'One Trick Pony'." They enlisted the help of banjo genius Bela Fleck for some of the tracks.

"Bela played on 'Força'," says Furtado. "He blew us away. He's just one of those really gifted people. We're all about good instrumentalists, and we just think they're the stars of the show anyway, so we got as many diverse players as we could. 'Força' has this cool, folkloric melody and harmony to it, so we brought in a Portuguese accordion player as well, and on 'Island of Wonder' we got Caetano Veloso, one of my idols, to sing on it."

"I have most of Caetano's albums," she says of the popular Brazilian singer.

"I didn't want to send him the demo of the songs at first, but Brian convinced me, and he loved it! I

had to phone him and explain what to sing. He couldn't come up here, he was recording in Sao Paulo, but I'm still in shock that he's on my album."

"We just hear things," says Furtado, when asked how she accounts for the diversity of sounds on *Folklore*. "In a song like 'Childhood Dreams', there's an organ and a vibraphone, a real classical feel to it." To get the right ambience, they decamped to a Santa Monica church, and recorded everything there, including the full pipe organ, as well as harp and tablas.

"We thought we should have a tabla in it, and make it even more universal and spiritual. Someone just throws the idea out and we jump on it," she says. "Sometimes, though, we try it and it doesn't work. On 'One Trick Pony', I thought we should add a drum kit and fill out the space a little bit. That never worked, but in the process we found it needed some backing vocals. I also wanted to add some vocals at the end of 'Fresh Off The Boat', because I thought it sounded empty, but what it needed was some scratching to bring it all back down to earth, fill in the space and give it that extra information."

"Brian has cool ideas a lot of the time. He's good with textures. In 'Powerless', he found a Brazilian sample and some sitar to sit in between the banjo and the break-beat and give it a modern feel." It may sound like a dog's breakfast/kitchen sink approach to making a record, but in fact it works. There is enough diversity in the styles and simplicity in the songwriting to avoid being labelled gimmicky.

"Our approach was less scientific this time, more heartfelt," she says. "Every song on this record we can play with guitar and vocal, or organ and vocal. I would sit on the couch and sing, Gerald would sit at the keyboard and Brian would play his guitar, and we would spend a lot of time arranging. We figured out a lot of subtle changes in arrangement. On 'Childhood Dreams', it seems simple, a 6/8 feel, but if you listen to it, the way the bars change is an odd number, and we spent a lot of time figuring out how that would flow to make it original. Sometimes a song can be simple, but to take it over the line of originality you've got to mess with the chords or the bars."

They took a three-headed approach to putting this album together, allowing their respective talent room to work more effectively. "We do get into arguments about the ways we work," says Furtado. "Since the last record, they've produced a lot of stuff, and sometimes you trick yourself that there is only one way to work, when it's really not that way with music."



PRODUCER PERSPECTIVE: BRIAN WEST



Brian West

Brian West is on the phone, calling from Gymnasium South, his studio in Santa Monica, California, to talk about working with Nelly Furtado on *Folklore*. West and partner Gerald Eaton comprise the production team Track and Field, the ones behind Furtado's breakthrough debut *Whoa, Nelly!* Taking a bigger role in the writing of the album this time around, West shares some of the more technical aspects behind *Folklore*.

"Gerald and I were looking at this as a return to form," he says. "We were also looking at it as a kind of reunion, a chance to get back into the same headspace we left off in the last record and see where we could go. We started with no preparation whatsoever, we didn't know what to expect, period."

"We threw ourselves into the studio to see what would develop," he continues. "It wasn't until we sat down with Nelly the first day in the studio that we drew up a game plan, which ended up being this folk-y roots music and break-beat fusion thing."

The multi-platinum success of the first album didn't really phase them, although West admits there was some pressure. "You can't help but be affected by that," he admits. "We understood that the stakes were high, but for some reason, maybe the fact that she was pregnant, the album seemed more like something we could enjoy making, it really took the pressure off. Some artists get jittery about every single little detail on their second record, but this made us realize that it was only a record, and to make it good, you really have to enjoy the process."

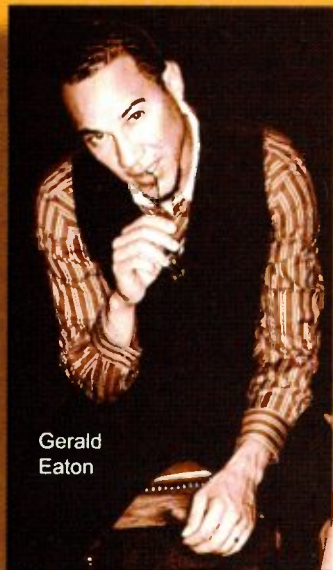
After the success of *Whoa, Nelly!* West relocated to Santa Monica and built Gymnasium South, his own studio by the sea. They spent the first half of their time working there. "It's a very comfortable studio, an inspirational space," West says of his facility. "We're right by the ocean, and it's a private studio where we can really get away from everything."

He recorded on an old Soundcraft board "from the '80s, but we used Pro Tools, a pile of MIDI gear, samplers and a collection of odd keyboards and other weird things that worked their way onto the record. There's a real hodge-podge of new and old gear on there."

West corroborates their working method this time around. They followed their inspiration and tried not to let things sit around long enough to get boring. "We'd generally try and finish songs as much as we can while they were in their gestation period," he says. "When you're writing, the song flows best as a single vibe, and it's really hard to pick up on that later and remember why the songs exists in the first place. Then again, Nelly would always revisit songs and change the melody later."

The album was turned over remarkably fast, from writing to pre-production to recording, mixing and mastering. It was only a matter of weeks from beginning to end. They had a self-imposed deadline to finish, though. "It was a race against time with Nelly's pregnancy. It really had a momentum that brought it all together. Sometimes you can get too inside of a project and end up kicking the life out of it. We had a real vitality this time. Nelly's pregnancy was so inspirational for her, and she was more powerful and stronger than ever. She recorded one of her best vocals on 'Build You Up,' just 10 days before giving birth. It was one of those takes that just floored us."

Nelly recorded with a Sennheiser 451 microphone, one she liked so much she uses it all the time now. "We had a whole selection of microphones, and we ended up using this \$200 microphone over all of these meticulously engineered models," he laughs. "The one we used is known primarily as a trombone or tom microphone. It's a condenser mic, so it automatically condenses the signal, and it's got a good natural scoop for Nelly's voice. She has a very pointy voice, and certain mics are a little too descriptive in the midrange, and this one scoops it out nicely."



Gerald Eaton

West handled a lot of the guitar playing on the album, along with James Brian (formerly James McCollum of the Philosopher Kings, the Toronto group that also introduced West and Eaton). "My main beast was a Martin, a 1980s reissue, as well as a late '50s Telecaster for electric," he says. "The Tele is just a really nice, musical guitar. It's a really nice writing instrument. It just falls into your hands and really influences what you play."

Recording in a church was a bit of a challenge for West and Eaton (on the track "Childhood Dreams"), as they tried to capture not only the ambience, but also the massive sound of the pipe organ. "We moved the whole studio out there for a few days, and recorded everything with a pair of Neumanns. The organ would resonate through your body cavity. Brad Heinel, our mix engineer, came down to record that, and he was instrumental in getting that track off the ground. He spent about 20 minutes just walking around, getting a feel for the sweet spot. The tabla was added later, in Toronto, but it was cool to have those two spiritual instruments, from two very different religions, on that track."

"Brian and Gerald are opposites," she continues. "Gerald is really into spontaneity, the rhythm of things and dealing with the session musicians. He never really played an instrument until recently, when he started playing some piano, which is funny, because he has this incredible confidence telling these musicians what to play, right off the top of his head."

"Brian is a more technical guy, he likes getting the sound just right, tweaking keyboards or being meticulous with vocal takes. Myself, I just like the feel, coming up with melodic ideas, and that means we can butt heads sometimes. It's cool when that's there, though, because you can always resolve a dispute, and it makes things interesting."

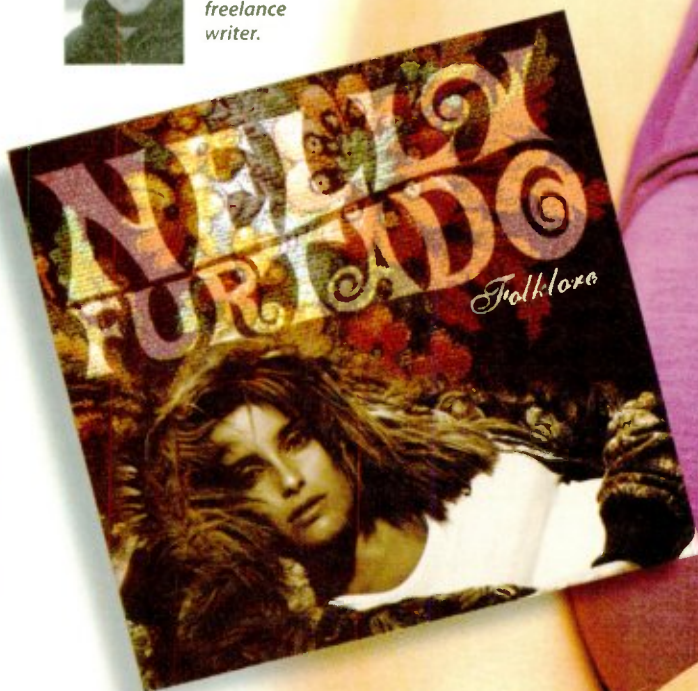
Furtado also collaborated with producer Michael Elizondo (Dr. Dre) on the track "The Grass Is Green," and her DJ Lil' Jazz contributed his emerging production skills to "Island of Wonder," which was given another polish by Track and Field. Brad Heinel mixed the album at Metalworks, where they moved the recording halfway through so that a pregnant Furtado could go home at night and spend time with her family.

While *Folklore* is by no means a "baby" record, there is a different quality to Furtado's voice this time. Perhaps it's the few years of world experiences, more sophisticated and thoughtful arrangements or the physical changes of pregnancy, but her voice hits a broader range of notes than on previous recordings. "I wanted my voice to sound richer and deeper this time," says Furtado. "I've got a nasal quality to my voice and it's really hard in the studio to get that out of the frequency. I wanted to show off my range this time. The mic we used wasn't very expensive, it was an old, \$200 Sennheiser, but it was perfect for my voice."

A representative from the record company pokes his head through the door. Furtado is naturally friendly and talkative, and as a result has been running behind schedule all day. She's clearly excited about her new album, but with expectations high and at the time of writing a few more weeks to go before the official release, she has to conserve her energy. As the tape recorder is turned off and a cup of tea is pushed into her hand, she thinks frantically, trying to remember any other good stories about recording the album. Time is up, but fortunately, *Folklore* is full of good stories, a modern take on traditions and what they mean to a 24 year-old girl from Vancouver. ■



Rod Christie
is a Toronto-
based
freelance
writer.



New York:

Ben Kowalewicz knows he has an unusual voice. He knows it looks like he's hurting himself, when he yelps and snarls, and even affects a calmer faux British talk-style manner; his veins bulge from his neck and his face turns red. He doesn't just do this onstage. He's like that in rehearsal, and even in the studio — just not in person.

The frontman for Toronto's Billy Talent, a pistol-whipping rock act that's powerful, insane and intense, is mesmerizing to watch, and listen to. On the band's gold-selling self-titled debut, produced by Gavin Brown (Three Days Grace, Ian Thornley), he often sounds like a rabid Johnny Rotten. Even the most trained singers worry about nodes or losing his or her voice, but Kowalewicz, who has been on the road with the band since May — Canada three times, Europe twice, America three times — isn't worried.

"I think the problem with people's voices is if you think about it too much that's when the problems start to happen," he says, in the dressing room following the band's first ever New York performance, at Irving Plaza, part of a KROCK presents. "I go to a throat doctor every two months just to get my chords checked to make sure that I'm doing okay. And my chords are fine. I haven't had to cancel a show. I warm up a lot."

He doesn't do anything special. No hot water and lemon. No do-not-talk-to-me-before the show. Just regular vocal warm-ups. "Like I said, if you freak yourself out about it, that's when the problems start to happen," he stresses. "But the thing with me is the way I sing, and the way I perform, I can't change it, so I can't ease back. I took one vocal lesson for one day and I hated the guy. He was a fuckin' asshole. And the things I did get out of it were warming up and taking it easy, when I can take it easy. And so far (my voice) has been there every night."

At Irving Plaza, Billy Talent, first up on a bill with Missouri's Story Of The Year and headliners Jet from Australia, literally win over the tough Manhattan crowd. You can see it happening. Kowalewicz bounds onstage, literally, and people simply stand there at first, watching, curious, perhaps cynical. They watch his neck veins protrude, his face contort, his eye rolls back, or every which way, and as he stalks the stage like a wild animal on a short chain. His bandmates ably supports his antics, guitarist Ian D'Sa, with his gravity-defying hair, bassist Jon Gallant with his soldiering presence, and drummer Aaron Ess as reinforcement. By "The Ex", a mosh pit has formed, even though the place is half full. It continues for "Cut The Curtains" and the single, "Try



• 10823 •

Honesty", and is positively fierce, as guys charge into the open space, and onlookers scatter.

"That's the general consensus with us," says Kowalewicz. "For a lot of places where people don't really know us, the first song is 'What the fuck is that?' Then after about the third or fourth song, it's like, 'Oh, okay!' They get it. Then, by the end of it, everyone's having a good time."

Kowalewicz says its record label, Atlantic, is aware that this is a band that needs to get in front of people to build a following. "That's why we went with them, and if we get dropped in six months, I'll take it all back," he laughs.

In Canada, where Atlantic struck a joint venture with Warner Music Canada to sign and promote Billy Talent, the buzz was building before the album came out. A last-minute Toronto show at the Horseshoe in August saw fans lining up down the street for hours. The Opera House gig the day of release, September 16, was also jammed.

"Every show is sold out in Canada," Kowalewicz notes. "Playing with Sum 41 (in June) at the Croatian Cultural Centre, a 1,500-seater, we were standing there saying, 'We'd love to sell out a place like this,' and a couple of months later, it was sold out in two days."

"Canada is my dream come true," he adds. "America is an uphill battle. We've only toured the country once, with the Buzzcocks, and we just finished our second run by ourselves, doing headlining shows for radio things. So I'd say 7 out of 10 shows were sold out. People are just catching on here."

• • •

It's taken a decade – of hard work, focus, re-examination, rehearsal, sacrifice, self-criticism, open criticism, open minds, and outside help, not necessarily in that order. The four originally started under the band name Pezz in 1993, when they were still in high school, in Streetsville, ON. They released a few independent cassettes, and a full-length CD, *Watoosh*, produced by Brad "Merlin" Nelson, who has worked with the Headstones and Alanis Morissette.

In late '99, they decided to changed their name to Billy Talent after a character (Billy Tallent) in Bruce McDonald's film adaptation of Michael Turner's 1993 book *Hard Core Logo*. The new moniker was also a reflection of the band's new sound, more aggressive emotional punk, according to D'Sa.

In 2001, Jen Hirst, now A&R at Warner Music Canada, was visiting a friend at Toronto's Edge 102 FM, where Kowalewicz worked as *Live On The Edge* producer. She had seen Pezz play several years ago. He told her the band had changed its name and sound and wanted her to check out its North By Northeast showcase in June at the 360.

Hirst, who had recently lost her job when independent label and distributor Song Corporation went bankrupt, went

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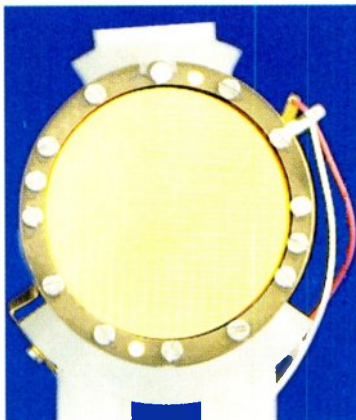
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Talent

to the gig and says she was blown away by Kowalewicz' energy. "He definitely drew me in at first and they were doing something that not a lot of people were doing. The closest thing at the time, I guess, was At The Drive-In."

She saw the band several times after that and became its champion. When she was interviewed for the A&R rep position at Warner Music Canada in August, she mentioned Billy Talent when surveyed about what unsigned Canadian acts she liked. "They were on the top of my list when I got here," she laughs. Her boss, head of A&R, Steve Blair, was also in her corner after he heard them.

"We had expressed interest in giving them money for a demo, but unfortunately there were people that were working at the company at the time who were holding us back a little bit," she says.

Meanwhile, while Hirst waited for the higher-ups at Warner to approve the demo deal, she took Billy Talent's newly released four-song CD EP, *Try Honesty*, to Toronto entertainment lawyer Chris Taylor (Nelly Furtado, Sum 41, Avril Lavigne).

"Through talking with Chris and getting ideas of different producers that could work with them on some demos, Gavin's name came up," says Hirst.

Brown, a local musician, producer and songwriter, who has played with everyone from Big Sugar to Skydiggers, and co-produced Danko Jones's Juno-nominated EP, *My Love Is Bold*, wanted to be involved with the band's demo recordings.

"They have a raw energy," Brown says. "It's reactive and very potent." But he also had to wait to see what Warner decided. Wanting to move ahead, he approached Michael McCarty, president of EMI Music Publishing Canada, to which Brown is also signed.

"He came to me to see if I could lend him the money to take them into the studio," reports McCarty, impressed that Brown was so excited about the act he was willing to do that. "I said, 'Let me hear it.' I said, 'Well, this is great. Maybe I'll want to sign them. To hell with lending you the money.' They were rehearsing that night so I went and thought they were amazing, talked to them and it seemed that nothing was going on with the Warner deal, so I said, 'I'll sign you.'"

"They have amazing energy and really great songs and Ben, the singer, I think is a star. They are onto something that is fairly cutting edge, combining punk and emo. I thought they were like At The Drive-In with better songs."

Not soon after, some major personnel changes happened within Warner Music Canada. "That's when it was full steam ahead to pursue them the way that I wanted to," says Hirst.

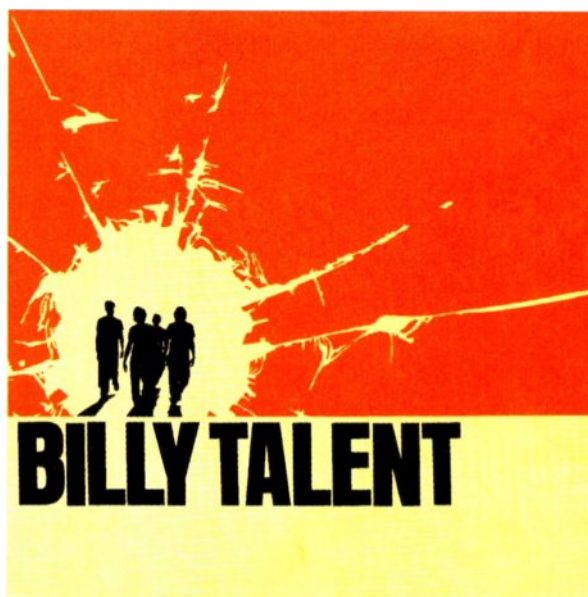
The label kicked in some money on top of what EMI has provided. "What happened is we ended up signing with EMI Publishing and Warner offered us an extra amount of money to help us do the demo and we ended up taking it," says D'Sa.

Next, Billy Talent went into pre-production with Brown to work on some of the song arrangements, and

booked studio time to record at Vespa Studios and EMI Publishing's in-house studio to cut the new demos, including "Cut The Curtains" and "Try Honesty" from the EP.

But before recording was completed, Atlantic A&R executives Kevin Williamson and Tom Storms happened to be in Toronto to sign Slurpy Mundae (now called Idle Sons) and received a last minute call from the late Steve Hoffman, then manager of The Tea Party, Matt Good and Rush. Hoffman was at the rehearsal space in downtown Toronto checking out Billy Talent for the first time, for potential management. After witnessing a short high-octane set, he was suitably impressed to call his colleagues and insist they come down too.

The band did a repeat performance, with Kowalewicz bounding around the tiny confines, again like a wild demon, deftly avoiding smashing into the walls, his band or the big wig spectators. Who wouldn't be impressed? Both Williamson and Storms left with a copy of *Try Honesty* and asked the guys to send over the demos as soon as they



were done. They also put a call in to their friends at Warner Music Canada.

That night would kick the interest into high gear, especially after the new Brown-produced demos were completed a few weeks later. Billy Talent did the requisite rounds of the labels, meeting with Warner Music Canada affiliates in the States, as well as a few others, but came back to Atlantic, which cut a co-venture agreement with Warner Music Canada.

"Atlantic has the rock background and they've been known to break cutting edge rock bands," says D'Sa. "And we're a little bit different. We're not your average rock band. And everyone from the guy working the door to the top of the company seemed really enthusiastic about the music and seemed really genuine."

"They were letting us use Gavin as a producer and we feel that Gav was making those demos for EMI Publishing, has contributed as part of Billy Talent's formula, as far as how we sound. And we wanted to work with an American label, just for the fact that we don't sound like anything in Canada and we felt like we have more of a chance in the US."

Next, Mosaic Media Group's Scott Welch (Alanis Morissette, Audiovent) came on board as Billy Talent's manager. He was drawn to their character as people, he says. "I'm at a point in my life where that's what I'm looking for when I sign things. I don't care how good they are, if they don't have character, and they're not decent human beings, I'm not working with them. Life's too short. And they impressed me, not only their musical talent, but just

their character as people."

After spending five weeks recording in Vancouver at Factory Studios, the band emerged with 13 songs, six of which are new. Twelve ended up on the final album. The band agrees that working with Brown took the pressure off the reality that it was recording its major label debut.

"It was fairly easy because it was like the demos," says D'Sa. "The six songs that we did for EMI publishing were a rough sketch for what the album would be like, because that's what everybody reacted to and that's what we loved. They're the best recordings we ever made and they provided the foundation for what we were doing in the studio, so it really wasn't that much pressure at all."

Adds Gallant: "For us, we've always recorded things over a weekend or something like that, so we've learned to work really fast and do everything the way we're doing it. So it was quite an adjustment to sit around and wait to get the exact drum sound and spend days if we needed to, to get a particular sound. So that kind of stuff was an adjustment sometimes. It felt like we weren't doing anything, but really, we were."

And Kowalewicz? "Look at how ugly my friggin' fingers are," he laughs. "I've never really noticed that before [Laughs]. Little polish sausages - I was listening. Of course, I already listen - What was the question? Working with Gavin?"

He continues: "When we first signed, they [the label] always tell you, 'Oh we can get this guy and we can get this guy, who's done this, and he's grade A.' I was like, 'Wow!' I can see how easily it would be for some bands to fall into the allure, but we already found somebody who understands our music, understands our direction and he's up-and-coming as well, so it's kind of exciting for everyone."

"It's not just a guy who walks in and says, 'Oh, it sounds like shit, turn it down.' He kind of understands. We've all formulated a personal relationship with him. He understands the music and where we want to take it and with his insight and with the music. It just all works. So if it ain't broke, don't fix it! We kind of fought for him with everyone and we laughed last. And now having heard the stuff, I think the proof's in the pudding."

Just one song, "When I Was A Little Girl", didn't make the album. "Just because there are other, better ones," says D'Sa. Those include "How It Goes", which Kowalewicz wrote when he was driving in Toronto on College Street and saw a painting of an American flag with water running down it. "It was all kind of smeared," he explains. "And it said, 'Everyone is tired and poor.' And I picked up on just having bad luck nowadays, getting dealt with a shitty situation and just dealing with it."

It seems to be a theme. "Cut The Curtains", he explains, "is about a guy and a girl who get together and their relationship is going in the shitter, so they decide to go away on vacation. 'Let's go on vacation. Maybe that will help!' and it doesn't really work at all."

The band also did little writing, while at The Factory. The music was all done, but D'Sa and Kowalewicz wrote some of the vocals, such as "River Below". "It's about a crazy person who, from the time he was born, was damned," Kowalewicz explains. "Then he just gets shunned by everyone and he decides to make a weird little contraption and blow up everything. It's more commentary on what's going on in the United States, as far as sniper shootings and the Timothy McVeighs, so it was kind of written about that."

Kowalewicz chucks up the last-minute in-studio lyric writing, which includes "Nothing To Lose", "Lies" and "Standing In The Rain" to "the lazy singer." He laughs.

"The lazy singer hasn't finished all the lyrics," he says. "The way that I write. I have a disorder, I think [laughs], where I'll be lying in bed and it will be four in the

morning and I can't sleep and I'll think of an idea and I'll sit up and I'll write and then I'll go to bed," he says.

"And when I was in [the studio], after hearing all the songs and hearing the stuff that we'd been working on, there was just so much there, and it took me a while to kind of get a headspace of what to write about and what to write and Ian and I have a really good way of working on lyrics and coming up with ideas."

"Sometimes it just plays itself out and it just figures its way out. I was really nervous actually - really, really, nervous actually because I was going, 'Well, the music's there.'"

About 90 per cent of the album is finished when Billy Talent returned to familiar ground, EMI Publishing's studio, to put the finishing touches on the songs - a guitar solo, some vocals.

It's early 2003 and Brown is comping vocals, meaning he's taking the best-performed, recorded segments and compiling them on one master track. He plays back "The Ex".

"My heart turned black/then the sky turned grey," Kowalewicz is firing from the speakers.

"My heart turned blond - that's gonna be the remix," he later jokes.

As Brown plays back "Cut The Curtains," "River Below," and "How It Goes," Kowalewicz, who is wearing a woolen toque with a giant pom-pom bobs his head kinetically. The bauble moves accordingly. Much like he is onstage, he can't stay still.

He describes "How It Goes", in his subtle, silly humour, as "a loud number," and a ballad "Nothing To Lose", for which he still had to cut the vocals, as "an evil dreary song."

Also captured for the heck of it are hilarious takes of D'Sa singing snippets of AC/DC lyrics. "I can do a good Axl," he also reveals. The guys are a blast to be around.

"The four of us have known each other so long that watching the four of us together is like watching a Seinfeld episode, but it doesn't translate to music for some reason," says D'Sa.

"It comes from a different part of your personality than what you expose everyday," believes Gallant.

"And I have about 26 different personalities," Kowalewicz interjects with a laugh.

He ain't kidding.

Toronto-based music journalist Karen Bliss is the Canadian news correspondent for Pollstar, www.rollingstone.com, and "Lowdown" on canoe.ca/jam.



Billy

The band did a repeat performance, with Kowalewicz bounding around the tiny confines, again like a wild demon, deftly avoiding smashing into the walls, his band or the big wig spectators. Who wouldn't be impressed?



Talent

On a rather dull, damp and grey Sunday afternoon I roll up to the front steps of Convocation Hall, on the University of Toronto's campus to meet Ken (Jesse's publicist). Seconds later, Jesse arrives with his show clothes strewn over his shoulder. One small problem though. We can't seem to find an unlocked door into the venue. "No problem," Jesse says. "We'll just go find somewhere to hang out for a while." Making our way across the grounds Jesse and I get acquainted in between taking calls on his cell from friends who will hook up with him at tonight's show, the second of two sold out nights in his hometown of Toronto. After already having started his tour in support of his fifth and latest release, *Nomad*, it's always a busy time when a musician returns home. Family to see, friends to visit, laundry to do, (*ahem*) meet press for interviews and put on a great show, but Jesse is cool about it and is happily taking it all in stride.

Nomad marks the first album Jesse didn't produce and engineer himself as well as, of course, write and perform. Globetrotting to exotic locales such as Cairo and Madrid has brought an even more multicultural flavour to Jesse's music. The album plays out like a musical journey that highlights some of the adventures Jesse has experienced for the past two-and-a-

What spawned the idea of travelling as much as you did to make *Nomad*?

It wasn't part of my master plan. I wanted to work with Simon Emmerson, producer for the Afro Celts (formerly Afro Celt Sound System). For the last four records I produced everything myself, engineered everything myself and I wanted to get some other type of creative input on the production end of things to see where that would go. So we called up Simon and he was totally getting where I was coming from. In fact, he invited me to play on their new release and agreed to co-produce a couple of tracks on my record so I flew over to England to work with his whole team. All of the same musicians from the Afro Celts end up collaborating on every project he does. During that recording process he (Simon) brought in Hossam Ramzy (Led Zeppelin, Peter Gabriel), an Arabic percussionist, and Hossam convinced me I needed to go to Egypt to record authentic Egyptian strings. Hossam said, "For the vibe you need you've got to come to Cairo." I was thinking – Cairo! That could be a huge headache – way too much work and way too expensive. Hossam made it really easy for us. Hossam continues, "You can come stay at my place. I have these friends who will work with you on this track and you're just going to love what they can do." So I copped up some airmiles and went to Cairo.

What were the various studio set-ups like, in Cairo for example? Actually the sessions in Cairo were incredibly professional. It was

JESSE COOK

by
Chris
Taylor-Munro

half years. With some familiar names such as Danny Wilde (Rembrandts) returning to sing for a track (Danny sings lead on "Fall At Your Feet" from Jesse's previous release, *Free Fall*) and new guests such as The BoDeans, Flora Purim, Montse Cortes and Maryem Tollar, *Nomad* is evenly split with vocal tracks and instrumentals, another first for Jesse. From the opening track, "Prelude", one can't help but get the impression this album is much more "worldbeat" than previous albums. The East meets West, meets traditional flamenco with Jesse's fabulous guitar flurries dancing upon all the musical genres. With so many talented, diverse, not to mention famous, collaborators, *Nomad* more resembles some of the recent popular compilation releases i.e. Buddha-bar. By the way, you can find Jesse's music on those as well. Drop *Nomad* into your CD player, hit play and prepare for a great body of emotionally dynamic music (The Flora Purim track is an instant personal favourite) that really does take you to far off lands. Perhaps far enough away from the harsh Canadian reality we call winter.

Upon entering U of T's Hart House, Jesse and I wander the hallways like lost freshmen opening door after door hoping to find an empty room without disturbing the deadly silence of students with their heads buried into books. "Can you tell I wasn't a student here?" whispers Jesse. "A-ha! The cafeteria." We shrug our shoulders and grab a table at the back.

kind of ironic. I was worried they weren't going to have their act together and not know how to deal with digital files, formats and Pro Tools, etc., but they had a full-blown Pro Tools rig and a really competent engineer. The musicians were really fast and really good because they're recording strings every day all day – very professional.

[The London sessions were recorded at Britannia Row, the old Pink Floyd studio.]

How did you deal with fatigue and getting the best performance from yourself while travelling?

I find studio recording and engineering isn't in any way physically taxing. I mean you can pretty much be on your deathbed and still engineer a track. The only thing is when you're producing, engineering, writing and being a musician on the track you lose perspective.

How do you keep perspective while producing and playing your own parts?

As a guitarist I end up taking a back seat to Jesse the composer/producer guy. Jesse the guitar player ends up not getting enough time to practice ... not getting enough time to get his material together. I think if I were hiring myself just as a musician I would probably give myself a lot more respect and the kind of time that I need. I sort of take my own part of the project for granted. [Laughing] It's awful! I'll go for weeks without practicing and then



blow the dust off my guitar and record a part. So that is also why I wanted to work with Simon. By having somebody else in the room I could spend a little bit more time thinking about what I wanted to say with the guitar and not what I wanted to say with the entire track.

What do you do to maintain such a high level of playing?

When I'm at home, not touring, I practice all the time, which is great. It's nice when I get those periods to focus on things other than what I'm going to be playing for tonight's show. These days I'm working on a great book of Tomatito Falsetas I bought in London. I've been working on them for about the last six months. I think you spend your whole life studying and chipping away at this enormous thing called "music."

Any style you haven't experimented with, but wish to?

Traditional Flamenco (Puro) is a vast and constantly evolving music form. There are a lot of incredible guitarists that I listen too and I feel like they're kicking my butt everyday so I am constantly trying to keep up with what the "kids" are doing. [Laughing]

Do you study or collaborate with other guitarists?

There are local (Toronto) players that I play with all the time. One of them, Nicholas Hernandez, is touring with me now and he's a great traditional player.

Your music has a rich organic sound – how do you balance the real instruments with the technology so nicely?

Working with the Afro Celt guys was a real eye opener because I had always wondered – always admired they way they were able to have traditional East Indian, African and Irish percussion instruments sound so punchy and locked in. It sounds like a huge groove, but doesn't have that sort of sloppy, live feel. They start from the groove, the organic beat of the live instrument that's being played and if there's any supplemental programming that goes in it's all based on where those original beats fall. They're not quantizing the original line, but building around it. That's why the Afro Celt stuff sounds so big and not that electronic, off the shelf sound.

The song "Beloved" is a compilation of out-takes from various sessions in Cairo – how often does this method result in an album track?

It's not something I do much. Again that was something the Celts like to do. I usually start with a clean slate and start adding instruments. With the Afro Celts there's a continuum of material from the past archived and catalogued so they can use it at a later date.

[Jesse takes his laptop with him wherever he goes, running Logic to record and arrange his material.]

Did you have most of the songs for *Nomad* chosen at a pre-production stage?

No pre-production! I never do pre-production. The first recording will be in some hotel room on the road recorded as a file on my laptop and that file will continue to grow and grow. There's never a point when I get the guys (band) into a room and workshop an idea for a week or two although it would probably be a good idea. It might speed up the process. This album took me two and a half years. Instead I just bring people in, as they need to be, go where I need to be to record something and work it out as we go along.

How relevant is the locale to the track?

Toronto is a very diverse city culturally speaking. You may find an Egyptian violinist, but to get a whole string section and get the vibe you have to go Egypt. Like with Montse Cortes, this incredible Gypsy singer from Madrid. If I had flown her to Toronto, put her



up in a hotel, had her in a studio with everyone speaking English she would have felt completely out of her element. Maybe we would have recorded a "nice" take, but I'm not sure we would have got the take we have. I went to Madrid, worked in her favourite studio, with her favourite engineer, her family was there playing all day ... there was a vibe there that day and she sang beautifully because she was comfortable. And besides it's fun for me ... any chance I get to go to Madrid...

[He says with a tongue in cheek business tone.]

Vocals are much more prominent on *Nomad* – was that a conscious goal for this album?

Yes. That was one of the few things I decided I was going to do from the beginning of the record. On the last two records I had a vocal

track on each and as much as I enjoyed those songs they always seemed like a bit of an anomaly. They were on a record of instrumental music and then, Boom! You get to the end and there's a vocal track. For a long time I've admired the Gypsy Kings. With them it would be vocal track, vocal track and then an instrumental and repeat. There was a flow back and forth. I thought that if I'm going to do vocals I should make them more an integrated part of the whole texture of the record.

How do you choose the musicians you take on tour?

The economics of it is that you can't afford to bring all the original people on the road so you find people who are flexible. Fortunately I have a great violinist, Chris Church, who also sings very well and he can cover quite a few of the vocal songs for me. On the Canadian tour we brought Maryem Tollar along. Not only did she record the Arabic tracks; she will be covering the Spanish track, "Toca Orilla", originally sung by Montse Cortes on the record.

[Jesse's touring group consists of world-class musicians all based in Toronto: Paul Antonio –

drums/percussion, Art Avalos – percussion, Chris Church – violin and vocals, Collin Barrett – Bass, Nicholas Hernandez – guitar, Maryem Tollar – vocals. Jesse also invites various musicians up to play, as special guests so be sure to catch a live performance.]

Are there songs that pose difficulties for live performances?

We're not doing "Maybe", the Flora Purim track, because we couldn't find that Flora vibe. Also in concert you want to cover a lot of the new record, but people want to hear some of their favourites from the previous records. You can't play them all.

[Jesse's performances run two hours plus encore with a brief intermission – well deserved by all the musicians on stage – this band cooks! Pardon the pun...]

Do you change certain songs for live performances and if so does that allow them to grow?

When we travelled to Asia we only went with a four-piece band, but I still wanted to do the Montse Cortes track so Chris just played her vocal line on the violin. It's still music at the end of the day. It sounded beautiful and if you didn't know the song you wouldn't miss it. Personally I feel much more flexibility than maybe my audience would. Sometimes when people go to a concert they want to hear exactly what's on the record and they get frustrated. With us, because we're all musicians we like to change it up. The best shows for us as performers are when we screw things up and start changing things left, right and centre.

Do you perform best in a studio or a live setting?

Playing live the audience has an impact on

you. They can fire you and the band up in a way you can't get in the studio. Live is immediate. The second you've played it, it's over. There's no time to edit. But! In the studio you can really hone into every second of the listening experience.

As a guitarist, how have you evolved over the course of each album?

Little by little from the first record, which is primarily rumba flamenca, what I've been hearing as each record comes out is more and more traditional Flamenco techniques. Which isn't to say I'm actually doing traditional Flamenco. You hear more alzapua (thumb technique), more falsetas. On *Free Fall* I did Fandango de Huelva, which is a different flamenco form. On this album I play a "liberal" approach to a Bulerias (lively Spanish Gypsy dance) on the Montse Cortes track.

Do you have "guitar fans" and then regular fans?

Oh yeah! For sure! You'll be at a show with all these couples in their romantic head space and then there will be the guy in his Iron Maiden T-shirt yelling, "Jesse!" [Arm and fist raised in the air], sitting just to my right so he's got a good angle on my left hand. [The night I attended Jesse's performance a fan called down from the balcony asking Jesse

to please turn toward the left side of the room so they could watch his technique – halfway through the next piece Jesse obliges and gets a good round of applause.]

How intensive will the touring be in support

Kong. Now we're working our way across Canada from Victoria to Montreal and then in January we'll tour the Maritimes.

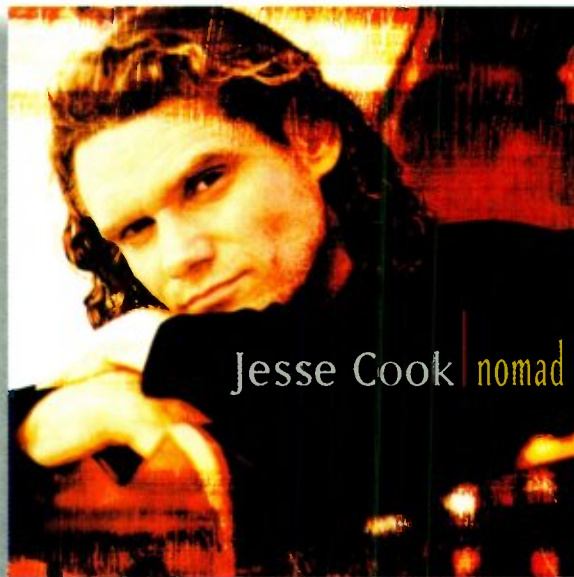
What's next? Are you starting to plan for the next album once the tour is over?

Ummm. I'm not, [Laughing] because when you work for two-and-a-half years on a record you enjoy the fact you don't have to think about your next recording. I'm trying to avoid the thought that sooner or later I have to go back into the studio to start something new. It's just nice to get out and play for a while ... we'll see how long that lasts.

Any cities/studios you would like to record in/at in the future?

It's not so much the locations – it's always driven by the musicians. If there's somebody you want to work with, you go to them. Once in a while I'll fly someone in – like Danny (Wilde) came up to Toronto to record "Down Like Rain", but it's just more interesting and you get a better take if you go to *them*. It is well within the means of many signed musicians with the backing of a record company and now that I realize how easy it is to do it's something that I am probably going to do a lot more. ■

Toronto-based musician Chris Taylor-Munro is a freelance writer.



of *Nomad*?

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The most important things for music students and teachers to keep in mind are that it's never too late to learn, it's never too early to start and you're never finished learning or finding new things to impart to other musicians.

by Kevin Young

MUSIC

Beginners of any age must always be made to understand that they can be musicians: They can achieve some degree of proficiency at their chosen instrument, regardless of how daunting the learning curve may seem at first. There is no right or wrong path to follow and never before have there been so many resources available for students and instructors; so many, in fact, that it might be confusing to sort out just where to begin. For younger students the most important thing any teacher can do is to instill in them a love of music that will last regardless of whether they continue studying or not.

It's simply never too early to start this. Young beginners are a joy to teach, primarily because they often approach learning with the attitude that they can learn anything. It's all within their grasp. Oddly enough, it doesn't seem to take long before many people compile a list of things they can and cannot do. And it's nice to catch students before they do. There are a host of programs available that are designed specifically to teach children they can do these things. The benefits of taking a group of kids, throwing them together and letting them sing, play, make art and dance are huge. Kids who are already open to such things thrive in this environment and present a fantastic example to those who might be more shy in the self-expression department. At the very least, a summer or after school program of this ilk will give you a chance to find out whether or not your child has an aptitude for, or a desire to learn more about the arts.

Generally, that's a valuable thing to find out BEFORE you enroll them in private lessons with the best teacher, buy the piano, the drum kit, and the violin in an effort to find out if they're brilliant. Of course they're brilliant – they're your kids, after all, but if you're half as smart as they are then you might want to take a bit of time to find out what they actually have an interest in before you mortgage yourself to the hilt.

There is a host of educational aids available now – and *not* just for younger students. From sheet music

through to videos, DVDs, online resources, computer applications and instruments that are tailored specifically for students; keyboards with keys that light up, have built-in recording capabilities, apps and gear that allow students to loop and slow down tricky passages, record themselves and learn to write songs – a glittering panorama of great ideas, some valuable, some a little shabby, but all well meaning and often helpful. It's impossible to rate even a good sampling of them here, but anything that makes the learning environment more exciting and fun for *any* student is valuable.

It can also be scandalously expensive. Remember: You don't have to have the latest and greatest gizmos and programs to learn effectively. Plenty of people found the right piano keys all by themselves and listened to that tricky guitar solo a hundred times before they finally got it right; using just their ears, fingers and brains. The bottom line: take advantage of the technology, it's fabulous, but identify what you or your child actually needs and will use before spending too much.

This also goes for late bloomers – you know who you are. You have a great job; a good life and you're getting on a bit and still want to make that first, and hopefully groundbreaking, record. Excellent – go get 'em ... First though, you need to know how to play, sing and/or write songs. You know, the craft – musician stuff. The most powerful workstations, digital recording rigs and songwriting programs don't write great songs, songwriters do. Having a basement full of the latest gear before you've written anything won't make you a better musician – it will, however, take a hell of a lot of time to figure out and that will cut into your practice time significantly. Take your time, research the options and choose wisely.

Regardless of a student's age or level of musicianship their course of study should be in line with their needs and goals. When choosing a teacher, a school, or any variety of music programs, be certain the student sees how what they are learning is relevant to

EDUCATION

their goals. If they don't, there is a danger of their losing interest quickly. The best teachers and programs will emphasize both disciplined study and self-expression: Striking a balance between traditional theory, technique and performance skills, while still inspiring a student to create their own music and encouraging them to study other genres, traditions etc.

That said, there are fundamentals every student must learn no matter their instrument or goals. Again, there is no hard, fast rule that says you must learn

these fundamentals a certain way, or that you learn them all before you begin to express yourself as a performer or writer. Some methods of learning however may be less suitable for some students than others.

You may not feel the need to understand traditional classical theory, jazz theory as well as the mechanics of contemporary music. You don't have to be able to read and write musical notation or know every scale, harmonic and finger exercise in existence to enjoy making music or be a success as a musician. Plenty of talented, successful musicians are self-taught. Some simply picked up an instrument, learned a few chords and went on their way from there. The more

you do know, however, the more likely you are to be able to work in a variety of settings and the more valuable you are to any given project.

It's pointless to argue the virtues of a directed course of study vs. being self-taught. A teacher will give you immediate feedback and focus in on the little things, as well as suggest shortcuts and provide encouragement. That said; sitting down with an instrument and a record will be the closest you'll get to a lesson from the artists themselves. Only a fool would turn down a course in songwriting offered by Lennon and McCartney. The key is to find out what works for you, or your children, and go that route until you discover otherwise. Much of what you will learn is

Artists Speak

How long should you stay with a teacher? Is this dependent on the age of the student?

Chuck Dailey: That's entirely up to the student and the teacher. What's most important is that the student is inspired to play. If the teacher is able to inspire week after week then the student should probably stick with them. However, if the student changes focus and their teacher is unable to accommodate the new interest, then they should find a teacher that is better suited. Age does not matter.

Sean Kelly: As in all walks of life, there are teachers of varying abilities and skill sets in music education. A student should stay with a teacher as long as he or she is being challenged and encouraged. The optimum situation is one where the student has a long-term teacher with whom to grow, as well as outside tutorial influences that can offer new ideas and approaches. When dealing with young children, it is best if the one teacher is used at the offset, in order to foster a feeling of security within the child.



Do you believe a strict disciplinary program hinders or helps to focus a student to achieve proficiency as a musician?

CD: Music should be fun but at the same time, reading and understanding what you are playing is very important too. The word "strict" never sounds fun does it? But strict discipline does work for many students. It depends on the particular student. Some will do it on their own while others need a program to help with focus and direction.

SK: I believe that the best way to instill discipline in a student is to provide an environment where challenges are presented in a fun, friendly way. If a teacher is able to set a goal for the student that will maintain interest, the discipline will be developed inherently on the part of the student. I don't believe in the process of humiliation or fear-mongering in order to achieve "results" ... these results are often counterproductive to the development of real musicianship.

What range should students be spending on private lessons? Is there a standard price? A sliding scale?

CD: It depends on your teacher and location but generally between \$16 and \$30 per half hour.

SK: Prices should be set according to the teacher's qualifications (both educational and professional). There is a sliding scale and this is usually determined by the aforementioned factors.

Private lessons – how often should students change teachers? Is it standard that a student or their parents be required to sign up for a certain number of lessons?

CD: In my opinion, it's important to have many teachers. Everyone has something new to offer and will approach the instrument differently. For example, if I was studying classical, I would switch to a proficient classical player. The same goes for Jazz, Rock, Country, or Flamenco ... whatever. You should make sure your teacher is great at playing the style they're teaching.

SK: A student should change teachers when they feel that they are no longer being challenged, or if they aren't having fun ... the former point is very important. It is standard that students be required to sign up for a certain number of lessons, as this solidifies a commitment on the part of the student while also financially protecting the teacher.

What should a prospective student or parent looking for a music teacher consider when shopping around?

CD: The teacher should be able to read music, chord charts and understand the art of improvisation and songwriting. Someone with post-secondary education in music is great and even better if they're a performer and writer themselves.

SK: Ensure that teacher will teach you what YOU want to learn while also making sure that he/she has the skills and background to open musical avenues that you might not have considered. My first guitar teacher in North Bay, Brian McDowell, introduced me to the world of classical guitar, but he did it by hooking me with Whitesnake songs!

What should a student look for in a post-secondary music program?

CD: Good teachers. Great players. Something that was missing from my program at the time was music business. The business side of the industry is so important if you ever want to make it a career with your music. I could have saved a lot of time in this business without all of the trial and error.

SK: This is dependant on the desired end result. If you wish to go on to teach for a school board and receive the full benefits a teacher receives, it is necessary to go to a university that offers those qualifications. If the desired end result is to become a performing musician, it is best to look at the musicians that have graduated from that program ... were they successful?

How important were elementary and high school music programs to your choice to continue in music?

CD: Extremely important. It gave me identity in elementary school and high school. These programs kept me going to school everyday. They gave me the outlets I needed to envision where I wanted to be today. I learned a tonne about performing by playing in my high school stage band, jazz ensemble, Dixieland band and concert bands.

SK: My high school music teacher, Neil Kennedy, was a great influence in my musical development. He was responsible for teaching me to read music, and he also opened my ears up to many great artists ... he even went as far as to set up

learned on your own practice time. Self-taught musicians have to start somewhere; picking up an instrument and learning to play and sing songs you like, by ear or by rote are equally valid ways to learn technique, theory and composition. Technically, you are learning from someone else whether a teacher is physically present in the room to help and offer advice, or you're guiding your own study. You are learning from others as well, others who are just as important to the process, whether they are present on paper or in a recording. Most people learn through a mixture of instruction and self-directed study. The influence of the music you've been exposed to over time provides inspiration, as does the

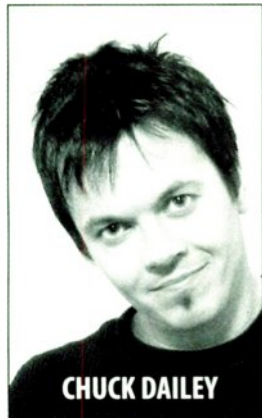
guidance of a teacher, but a teacher also provides context, discipline and advice.

If you're a beginner, or a parent looking to enroll your children in lessons for the first time, choosing a teacher shouldn't be too terribly difficult. There are plenty of private instructors who teach basic musical skills in a variety of ways. Find someone you or your child can get along with, whose teaching methods and training fit your own vision and won't break the bank. Regardless of the material you're learning you'll discover whether or not you wish to continue to study.

Students with existing musical training may find it more difficult to choose. With so many educational paths to take it's best to have a firm idea of what

CM asked two musicians who are also educators to offer their input on music education: Chuck Dailey, bassist for The Salads, and Sean Kelly, guitarist for Crash Kelly.

workshops with artists such as Oliver Jones! He was a patient man and highly musical – the kind of guy you wanted to impress. Music at the elementary level is proven to help students in other areas of study. It also helps to provide a point in the school day for artistic expression, which all children enjoy. My high school music program was a blessing as I had two teachers who knew when to push us, and knew when to have fun as well.



CHUCK DAILEY

Is there an increasing lack of funding for arts programs at the elementary and high school level? What can be done about it?

CD: It appears that way. I have many students who don't have music as an option in school any longer and are missing many fundamentals that the other students come to me with. The weird one is when students take music classes but don't play instruments. What is the point? Music needs to be played in order for you understand it. For starters on what can be done about it visit www.coalitionformusiced.ca.

SK: As a teacher with the Toronto Catholic District School Board, I can definitely say that we could use more funding for our music programs. I am currently looking to music companies to set up sponsorship situations. Speaking with a school's Parents Council is also a great way for a teacher to access funds, as these Councils often have the network to set up fund-raising ventures that can benefit a school music program

As a music teacher, do you still take lessons from someone? Some musicians have been known to schedule "lessons" with musicians of a higher calibre than themselves from time to time to continue their

own education. How are you still learning from others?

CD: Teaching lessons are great for keeping fundamentals in check etc. I learn new things by picking at the other brains of teachers at The Cosmo Music School where I teach. There are many amazing teachers there from all genres that are always willing to share their best stuff with me. Talking with other musicians at gigs I play at teaches me quite a bit – watching and listening to as many people play as possible. In addition, the Internet is a great source for learning more about your instrument – especially the guitar.

SK: With my band, Crash Kelly, I have had the opportunity to tour with such childhood heroes as The London Quireboys, Skid Row, Enuff Z'Nuff and Honeymoon Suite. Whenever I get a chance I try to pick the brains of the people in these bands to gain their insight on a variety of topics. I also endeavour to sit down as often as possible with other guitarists I admire. With each CD purchased and concert attended and musical conversation held, I feel I grow as a player and an overall musician.

Musical training – are you self-taught or did you receive musical instruction or some combination of the two?

CD: I have taken private lessons since I was five years old. Music in elementary school is where I met the guys in The Salads. I took music throughout high school. I also went to Humber College for Jazz performance. I really learned to play by performing with the guys I have played with for the last 17 years. I think it may have been the endless top 40 gigs I did with them for eight years. Four, 60-minute sets a night for many years turned us from a good band into a great band. To really learn though, you need to sit and play on your own and do everything you can to teach yourself something new each day.

SK: I received musical training with a private guitar instructor, and I also studied classical guitar with Eli Kassner at University of Toronto and Michael Strutt at University of British Columbia.

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you want to achieve before choosing a teacher or program: Do you want focus on a particular instrument, a particular style of playing? What do you want to do with all your newfound musical skills – perform? Compose? Play songs around the campfire? Teach? Whatever you want, suss it out ahead of time. Knowing this will help narrow the field of potential instructors and programs.

In time, as a student becomes more proficient, they may wish to change teachers. Sometimes, particularly for children, it's not an easy change to make. Then again, the student might say, I want to learn this and I can't learn it here. That's a good indicator that it is time to move on. A discussion with the current teacher can't hurt either. A good teacher will know when it's time for a student to move on and support that decision.

It doesn't take too long to sort out what sort of direction and discipline you or your child best reacts to. Some of my musician friends swear by strict disciplinarian teachers who rode them hard and chastised them often. For some students this can be just fine. Others,

however, require a gentler touch, but regardless of their style a teacher must be able to compel the student to do the work when between lessons. No matter how you learn there are many elements of study that are time consuming, but need to be understood. This isn't to say that a fuzzy "you only do what you want to" approach won't work, but many beginners find the repetition of scales, finger/vocal exercises and other technique extremely tedious. If you don't have to do some of the things you might find tedious, then you might not do them. A good start and a good early grasp of technique will be invaluable later.

It's also invaluable for a student to be required by their teacher to perform occasionally. Regular recitals and testing, informal or formal, help to build a student's confidence in general. Even if a student doesn't continue in music it will benefit them in other areas. For those who do continue and find themselves in increasingly challenging performing situations it's absolutely necessary. Look at it this way: After sitting in a drafty, impersonal room, playing for some severe looking examiner who sits behind you scratching away with a pencil as you play, stepping on stage in front of a bar full of drunken loogans who've never heard


your original material will seem more like a holiday than cause for stress.

Some students will also benefit from group lessons. This definitely helps ease them into performance, but beware of organizations that push students into this exclusively, charge more for the privilege and actually offer less one-on-one teacher/student interaction.

Whatever method you choose, whoever your teacher is, it does take some time to see results and you should stick with it for a time before moving on. Still, as necessary as it is to commit to a course of study for a period time in order gain full benefit from it, and regardless of the traditions and music you study, it's equally important to be open to other methods of study and genres of music. For a beginner a certain amount of consistency helps to keep them focused, but as a student continues on they will naturally change teachers from time to time as their goals change. The more you put into practice what you study (whether it be in performance or composition) the more you may find it necessary to take a lesson here or there with a very specific goal in mind. Even seasoned players see the benefit in taking lessons occasionally. It's common for professional musicians to seek out help

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when starting work on a project that requires technique they are unfamiliar with or physical demands they may not have had placed on them before.

Elementary and high school music programs are fantastic places for budding musicians to find out just how much they wish to continue in music. For some it's their first opportunity to play with others in an ensemble or to play at all. For those with some previous training it may be an opportunity to learn another instrument. These are all invaluable opportunities. Something to look at if you are able to choose the school your child will attend. And something to donate to that will make a difference for your kids and others – arts programs in public schools are chronically under-funded. Sad, particularly given the sheer number of players who say that it was a school program, or teacher, that inspired them to continue on.

For those determined to make music their life and hoping to make it their livelihood, both the choices of whether or not to study music at a post-secondary level, and if they do, where to study, are extremely important. Research the programs you intend to apply for thoroughly:

How much do they focus on your area of interest? The genre of music you wish to specialize in? How much do they

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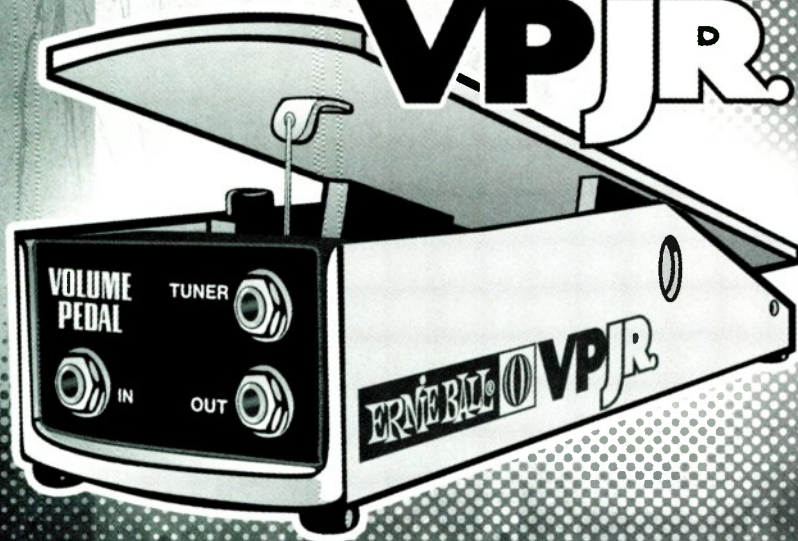
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MUSIC EDUCATION

focus on performance vs. composition? Have a good look at the facilities ahead of time: How much practice space is there? What gear do they have? What ensembles and venues do they have for performance opportunities?

If your interest leans to recording: How do their labs/studios measure up against one other? Is the gear relatively up-to-date? Better yet, is it industry standard and regularly updated?

Check out the range of experience of their instructors and how much choice you may have between them for private instruction.

Finally, take a good look at the campus – as a music student you'll be spending an obscene amount of time there.

If you are determined to focus in one area, be certain the schools you consider will allow you too. If your needs are more general, be sure the program is versatile and covers the areas of study you wish to pursue.

Okay, this next bit is for those among you who want to be: A) Fabulously wealthy rock/urban/country stars B) Celebrated jazz greats, or C) Composers and/or performers of great works of timeless beauty. It's just my opinion, but if you fall into category B or C – You probably want to look seriously at a music program, the best you can get into and afford. There is so much to learn and assimilate that a directed, exhaustive course of study is almost essential. Only the best and brightest get the most prestigious gigs. A diploma from a really fine school can't hurt to get you work when Wynton Marsalis decides you might not be exactly what he's looking for. Or, when the New York Philharmonic Orchestra implies you might be more comfortable in the Hoboken, New Jersey Wind Ensemble.

If you fall into category A, however, the waters get a tad murkier. There's always been a bit of a debate about whether formal training – particularly post-secondary training – enhances your chances of making a living as a professional recording artist. Having four years or more of intensive training and the time to hone your chops can't be a bad thing. The more versatile you are, the more adept you are at learning and retaining large amounts of material, how fast you are on your feet in a recording session; the better your chances of getting and keeping good, and hopefully lucrative, gigs. School helps. Formal training certainly hasn't hurt any of the

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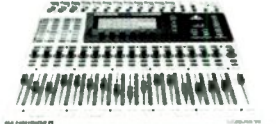
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MUSIC EDUCATION

musicians – particularly the sought after session players/hired guns for touring acts – I've met over the years, but it can be painful and it certainly isn't for everyone. There are many successful and celebrated players and songwriters who never had extensive formal education. Some might even argue that it might actually have interfered with their ability to succeed. The choice is very individual. Whether you go to school for music or not, people who want to "make it" as recording artists have

a great deal to learn that many traditional university/college programs don't cover. The best way to become a fantastic performer is to see a lot of artists and perform at every opportunity. The best way to learn to write great songs is to listen to great songs and write your own as often as you can. The best way to learn how the music industry works is to thrust yourself into it, to work in it, to learn all you can about how your particular talent is best presented to the powers that exist to promote you and your music.

The bottom line is, regardless of your education and goals, there's a great deal of learning you will most likely have to do

on your own if you want to become a working musician. At every stage in your education ask yourself what you want to learn now, and next. Consider this whenever you're choosing a teacher or program. While it's important to allow yourself to be guided it is equally important to ask yourself what you want to learn and select a teacher, a program and method that encompasses your interests. It's not an easy road and it is not uncommon for musicians to become terribly discouraged with themselves or, on the other hand, arrogant; showing blatant contempt for those they perceive to be less accomplished than they are. A word to the wise: There will always be someone better than you. There will always be someone who has yet to reach your level, but may yet surpass you. Confident, competent and gracious players are far more welcome in any situation than a fantastic player who makes it their business to be the resident expert in every gig.

Versatility, grace, people skills and shameless self-promotion are key. Most working musicians don't make their living exclusively from performance. They teach, they do session work; they write with and for other artists, they produce...

They are multi-talented and opportunistic – learning your instrument, honing your voice and songwriting chops are the most important things, but aren't necessarily enough. The pace of change in the music industry is quick. As important as it is to master your instrument, write great songs and to learn as much as possible about current and evolving technologies, if you're hell bent on making your living in music, you also need a thorough understanding of the business of music as it pertains to the segment of the industry in which you wish to work. Get busy. ■

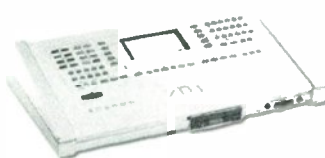
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The Vulnerable Side of Tricky

Canadian Musician recently had the opportunity to see what went into the creation of *Vulnerable*, the newest collection of music from one of the industry's most undervalued craftsmen, Tricky. The album has been hailed as his most honest effort to date, with 13 tracks that explore the depth of an artist that has been seamlessly melding his unique combination of hip hop and rock for over a decade.

The name of the new album is *Vulnerable* and you've said it is you breaking free and being yourself again. Previously did you feel pressure to create music a certain way? In a way that wasn't yourself?

No, I didn't feel pressure to create music a certain way. Before *Blowback*, I felt pressure paying bills as I was broke and Hollywood Records heard demos two years old and offered me very good money ... and even though I knew I shouldn't be on that label, I did it for the money (and the first time I went to the Disney offices, I saw the Seven Dwarfs holding up the building and thought this would be GREAT to get stuff for my kid!)

How did you tap into that honesty and put it on this record?

About seven years ago, a woman said to me,

"Your music is in my life and in my children." A few days later a young boy came to me at a concert and told me he'd been in a coma and his family played my music to him. Just remembering things like this, and remembering the people who bought my music through the good and bad times, I promised myself while touring *Blowback* I would make an album (I don't like to use the word fans, I would rather say "like-minded people") for them and to touch people's souls.

What would you say to other musicians who are concerned that their music is being diluted by the "MTV sound" and they aren't making music true to themselves.

Don't do a video, or do one that is artistically credible ... and it won't get on MTV anyway. And if artists aren't making music true to themselves, go work at McDonalds. I just heard that Justin Timberlake has applied for a position there as a fry cook and Eminem will be taking the orders. "I how do you like your Chicken McNuggets sir?"

Did you take any intentional steps to make sure that this album displayed who you are, or was it just made and happened to come out that way?

It just came out that way. I never have a concept for a record and I work very fast. I'm more concerned with vibe, and don't mind leaving my mistakes. I'm still learning every time I make an album. Hopefully I'll continue to learn.

You make the statement in your *Vulnerable* movie/interview that you may not be the most talented, but you are the only artist around now with their own sound. Do you think that there is a direct connection between originality and talent - can originality be quantified into a talent?

Only originality can be quantified as talent, because originality is risk taking, and with no risk taking everything would be the same.

Where do you turn for inspiration in songwriting? Both lyrically and beat-wise. I just love being in the studio and working. And on stage it is the closest you can become to being God, you're asexual, you don't need warmth or cold, you don't thirst or hunger ... it's the deepest form of meditation. That's my inspiration.

What is your creative process? Do you start with a beat track and start putting words down over top, or do you try to

get a feel for some lyrics you've written and go from that angle?

I could be standing at a bus stop and see a girl tuck her hair behind her ears and immediately hear a lyric i.e. "tuck your hair behind your ears, your tears, your silly fears/ For you I'd suffer much pain/Sharp glass migraine/For you I'd lose my focus, I swim a swarm of locust." It could start from a simple action from somebody, which becomes a lyric, which becomes a song. Artists don't make music - music makes artists.

What equipment do you work from/ demo with? Do you use a small digital audio workstation, software, a tape recorder?

If you are a real musician, you should be able to make a song with a saucepan and a spoon. I would record anywhere on any equipment. So basically I don't concern myself with too much technology.

You did all the drum and bass for the album, as well as most if not all of the producing. Do you like the technical side of the music?

If I create the art, therefore I am the producer. So it's not the technical side, I just want my music to sound like *my* music and I don't understand artists who let other people do their art for them because I don't like to be seen as a Muppet.

Do you think that being a little more technically well informed allowed you additional creative control that perhaps some artists surrender unknowingly because they don't have that knowledge? No, I have NO technical knowledge, but I have a very strong personality, so an engineer is going to do exactly what I want him to do. I'd rather have someone push the buttons so I can make the music.

With an album that is such a reflection of yourself, what made you decide to cover two songs? In particular, what made you decide to cover XTC's "Dear God", does it hit a personal note with you? I covered this song because I love the way he wrote it from a child's point of view. If you say to a child that God exists, the child will believe you unconditionally, and then they become old enough to look around and see everything is fucked up. But because Daddy and Mommy confirm the fact there is a God the child still believes. It's like writing a letter to Father Christmas. Nothing's ever come down my chimney.



by Tricky

Good Mixing Habits



Writing on mixing is a difficult task. Try explaining to someone, without actually being there, how to paint a picture, how to play the blues, or how to remove a spleen. These basic few points just scratch the surface of good mixing habits. Bottom line, the best mixes come from well-written, well-arranged, well-played and well-recorded songs.

Getting Started

Paint a mental picture of how you want the mix to sound, then start with a fresh, relaxed attitude. Check your session notes and ideas that seemed to work while tracking and overdubbing. Maybe listen to some of the earlier rough mixes. Sometimes a 10-minute mix at the end of a session can sound better than a 12-hour marathon mix. Rough mixes may be heavier, lighter, drier, more groove. Determine which elements of a favourite rough mix best captures the feeling and aim the boat that way.

Set up, label, and double check the signal flow of all your needed reverbs, delays, or harmonizers before you start. Set all compressors, limiters and gates to unity gain. If applicable, go through all tracks and erase any unwanted noises such as coughs, instrument sounds, etc. Activating the playback machine's loop mode allows the uniform repetition of the song to help get into a flow for the mix. Like the musicians who played the song, the mixer can get into a "creative groove" as well.

Levels

Run the console at its optimum operating level. Pushing fader levels all the way up adds unnecessary noise. Keep all the gain trims as low as possible, and the master buss level at zero for clearer, more transparent mixes – crucial on budget consoles when distortion increases as gains are boosted. Plus, with the master fader always set at zero, you know if it has been moved or not, and lets you know where to return after every fade.

Turn down, not up. Before changing a track's level, see if you can turn something else down to make the track jump out a bit more. Continually raising certain tracks because they are getting lost means there may be an equalization problem. Check to see if frequencies are overlapping, or if any frequencies could be pulled rather than added.

Try this: Set the volume at a reasonable level. Plug your ears with your fingers, close

your eyes and listen to the track. This seems to give a different perspective of levels, and is a good method of checking the vocal and snare drum levels. But sometimes you just lose the groove in the levels. Pulling all the faders down and re-setting levels doesn't take long and may help you regain perspective as you bring each instrument back into the mix. Once you have your levels set where you like them, leave them.

Mix at lower volume levels. Lower volume protects your valuable hearing and the sounds tend to be more accurate. Plus the loud levels might wake up the producer.

The Groove

The groove is the defining entity of the song, the central core of what keeps it going. Create movement throughout the mix by slightly changing panning, effects, processing and track levels. Enhance the groove and preserve the emotion by bringing the best things forward in the mix. Identify one or two fundamental elements and accentuate them.

Create layers by bringing in one instrument at a time. Give the listener a little at a time as the song progresses, rather than everything at once. Make the song more like a staircase, building as it progresses. And what if a part just doesn't fit? Don't try to make it fit. Cut it and be done. Each element must be solid, not wishy-washy. For example, if you have three guitars playing roughly the same thing, either clean them up or use only one of the tracks as a main one. In the long run, each remaining instrument will have more impact. Of course, don't eliminate parts unless you are authorized.

As Time Goes By

Take a silence break every few hours. Ears need time to relax and rejuvenate every few hours. Your ears are organs, not muscles – overuse does not make them stronger. If that were the case, I would have a liver of steel.

As with the recording process, don't go solo too often. It's great to have the solo button to get a basic sense of an instrument, or to zero in on a problem, but get in the habit of changing equalization with the rest of the tracks in the monitor mix. When you can't hear the other tracks, you can't effectively equalize a track to fit in, yet stand out. Don't spend too long on any single instrument. Get a basic

sound, then move on, tweaking each instrument as you mix.

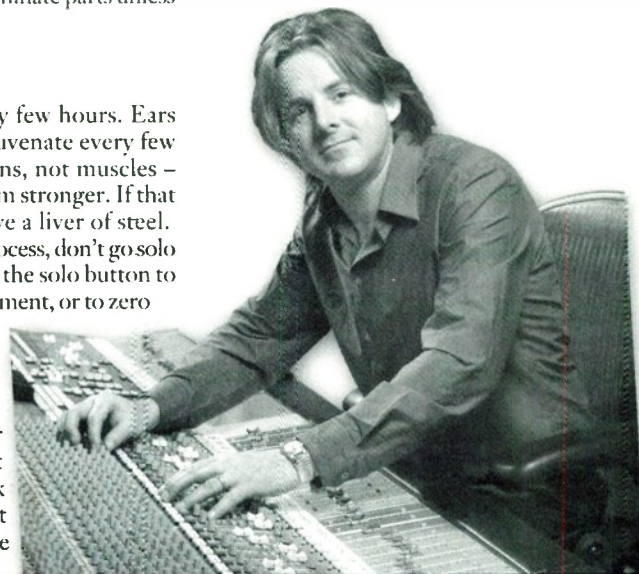
Occasionally, listen to the mix through headphones to catch any buzzes, clicks, pops, hums etc. Tiny flaws sometimes not evident in the monitors can come through loud and clear in the headphones. At low levels, headphones may help give you a true feeling of the placement of all instruments. Many listeners enjoy their music through headphones.

Long hours benefit no one. Spending 20 hours on a mix will not make it twice as good as spending 10 hours on a mix. At some point, the best has been done, and continuing on is fruitless.

Finally, and most important, when deciding which instrument takes precedence in the mix, make the guy who signs your cheque sound best!

This article is excerpted with permission from Tim Crich's new book Recording Tips For Engineers. He also wrote the bestseller Assistant Engineers Handbook. He has over 20 years of experience in the recording studio and has worked on records by the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, John Lennon, KISS, Billy Joel, Bryan Adams, Cher, Bon Jovi and many more. This book is available at Music Books Plus, 1-800-265-8481. www.musicbooksplus.com.

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by Tim Crich



In-Ear Monitoring – Refining Your Mix

Today, I want to enlarge on the topic of IEMs, with a focus on ways to enhance the experience for the performer while protecting their ears as much as possible.

It's important to remember that IEMs are not only an excellent way to hear onstage; they also provide ear protection when used properly. However, the opposite is true as well: exposure to poorly set-up IEMs can accelerate hearing loss. An example of this is when you see vocalists performing with one of their IEMs pulled out. A closer look at this phenomenon is a good starting point for our discussion.

This situation is really the “worst of both worlds” and should be avoided. The musician has, for reasons I'll explain, removed himself from the protective in-ear environment and is trying to get comfortable with a blend of the in-ear mix and the sound on stage. The problems are three-fold: the in-ear mix is now essentially useless, the onstage sound has probably not been set up for their vocal mix, and there is an increased risk of hearing damage.

Usually, the performer removes one of their monitors because the mix they are getting is completely out of whack, taking them out of the music rather than engaging them. Like a swimmer coming up for air, the performer does the one thing he knows will help. If you see this happening with your group, you need to take a look at your mixing techniques. First of all, allow time at sound check to set up a proper instrumental blend in their mix. The vocalist needs enough support from the instruments and other voices to get a tuning reference, but not so much that their voice gets lost. Ask the performer which instruments they usually



by Fred Michael

gravitate towards for a tuning reference and start your sound check with an emphasis on those. Remember, this is all about getting them comfortable in the IEM environment; that doesn't necessarily mean you are building a CD-quality mix; rather, you are starting with the essential elements for the performer to feel comfortable and stay in tune. For some, this means a bare bones sound with dominant vocals, others want everything; experience will tell you what is needed.

Another factor that tempts performers to remove their monitors is the subjective feeling that the mix inside their head is very artificial sounding, removed from the “real” sound onstage. Again, the performer feels isolated and pulled out of the music. Most IEM engineers use ambience microphones to help their musicians stay connected to the stage sound. Usually, this is a matched pair of microphones, placed at stage left and right, and aimed in such a way to get a representative room sound. This is then blended into the mix, making it much more natural sounding. While you may not have the resources to purchase dedicated ambience microphones, any decent-quality stereo recording microphone will approximate the effect. Play with different locations until you have a couple of options to choose from.

Finally, avoid mixing to a level that irritates the performer; this is an alarm saying, “Turn it down!” Properly fitted IEMs, whether custom or generic moulds, can reduce the ambient volume by 15-20dB; this gives you all the latitude you need to build a comfortable, satisfying mix while minimizing risk of hearing damage. Never let your performer use standard ear buds as replacements for IEMs; they do not provide the isolation required for safe use of this technology in the live concert environment.

Fred Michael is President of Rocky Mountain Sound Production Services in Vancouver, BC. Fred can be reached at fred@rmsound.com, or via the Rocky Mountain Sound Web page, www.rmsound.com.

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Synchronization Licensing For Film And Television

The views and opinions expressed in this article are not meant to substitute for legal advice, which should be sought in each particular instance.

Introduction

We normally receive at least one license request per day for use of our client's music in a film or television production. This article outlines some of the items you need to consider when dealing with these licenses.

Two Licenses Required

When a film or television production company wants to license a song for use in their production they must secure two synchronisation licenses: one for use of the master *and* a second license for use of the composition. Normally the master owner/record company retains the right to license the master recording for the desired usage (License #1) and a publisher/songwriter will grant the license with respect to the composition (License #2). The same individual can issue both licenses if they own the master and they wrote the song for example provided they have not assigned this right to someone else.

For example: "Oh, Pretty Woman", performed and written by Roy Orbison was used in the movie *Pretty Woman*. The film production company needed to approach the master owner to secure the master rights (License #1) and approached Orbison's publisher to secure the rights to the composition (License #2).

Consider what would happen if the film production company wanted Van Halen's version of the same song. The film production company would need to approach the owner of the Van Halen master for the master rights (License #1) but would still need to approach Orbison's publisher to secure rights to the composition (License #2).

You will notice that sometimes film or television companies will use "knock off" or cover versions of popular classic songs to avoid paying the higher costs of original masters.

Fees

Fees vary widely from \$0 to hundreds of thousands of dollars. The fee will depend on a number of factors including the following (i) The music budget for the project. In most cases if the budget for a film is substantial the music budget for the film will be substantial as well. If there are well known

actors or executives associated with the production this would tend indicate a larger budget. (ii) Whether it is a background or foreground use. If your song is in the far background on a jukebox while dialogue is happening over top of your music, the chances are your fee is going to lower than a foreground use. A good example of a foreground use would be where Tom Cruise sings "Old Time Rock n' Roll" by Bob Seger in *Risky Business*. This is clearly an integral part of the scene and would lead to a higher fee. (iii) How long the song is featured in the project. If the song is playing for a long time or if it reoccurs in the production your fee will tend to be higher. (iv) Whether worldwide/perpetual/video rights are required. Often the production company will request "worldwide/perpetual use" or "video rights" to allow themselves the most flexibility in exploiting the production; however, these are negotiable terms which will impact on the upfront fees paid. (v) Bargaining power. Every negotiation is subject to bargaining power. A higher profile artist will often demand higher fees than an unknown artist in need of exposure. (vii) Trailer/commercial rights. Production companies may desire to retain the right to use the song in the trailer of the production or use it in the advertising campaign. This will normally attract an option extra fee.

Production companies will often argue that the promotional value for the artist should be taken into account when negotiating these fees in addition to the performance fees (discussed below). This is a fair point; however, consider how to maximize this "promotional value" by perhaps requesting special screen credit to draw attention to your song. Many television shows are highlighting artists by providing special credits or actually playing an artist's video while end credits scroll by. Other artists, rather than taking cash, might barter for the production company's services in making a video or negotiate rights to use part of the production in an actual music video.

Often the fee for the master license is the same as the fee for the composition but that is not always the case.

Performance Fees

Many production companies will point out that the performance fees from usage can often outweigh the upfront synchronisation fees they pay for use of a composition. The Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN) collect and distribute monies collected from

broadcasters who report their usage to SOCAN. Money is also collected when music is used in a theatrical release.

For example, if you license a song to a Canadian television production for \$500 you might see more money from SOCAN following the dates the actual program is aired. These monies are tracked and paid for years and years on a worldwide basis.

(See www.socan.ca for more information on this topic).

Soundtracks

Many licenses do not involve a soundtrack component. This aspect is often addressed in separate agreement that we might review in a future article.

Conclusions

It is very hard to skilfully negotiate the terms of these agreements unless you are familiar with the industry standards and the parameters for these types of deals. It is important to know the relatively small circle of players in this world in order to maximize the opportunities. An experienced music publisher or, of course, a music attorney can be a valuable asset to review and negotiate these terms.

A great, in-depth review of this topic can be found in Jeff and Todd Brabec's book, *Music, Money and Success*.

Chris Taylor is a music lawyer with the law firm of Sanderson Taylor and works with Avril Lavigne, Sum 41, Nelly Furtado and Sam Roberts among others. Find him online at www.sandersontaylor.com.



by Chris Taylor, BA, LLB

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- 1979**
- ☐ March/April - Burton Cummings, Murray McLauchlan, Shopping for a Synthesizer, Recording Studio Design, Notables' Stereos
 - ☐ September/October - Domenic Troiano, Prism, Irish Rovers, Moe Koffman, Canadian Recording Studio Guide, Keyboard Combinations
- 1980**
- ☐ January/February - Trooper, Segarini, Ronnie Prophet, Andrew Davis, Managers, Vintage Organs
 - ☐ March/April - Triumph, Jerry Doucette, Ginette Reno, Tom Mawhinny, Show Playing for Guitar - Part I Record Piracy
 - ☐ July/August - Dan Hill, FM, Henry Cuesta, Powder Blues, Radio Airplay, Show Playing for Guitar - Part III
 - ☐ September/October - David Clayton-Thomas, Downchild Blues Band, Nash the Slash, Hearing Loss, Canadian Recording Studio Guide, Jazz Clubs
 - ☐ November/December - April Wine, Dianne Heatherington, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Bobby Edwards, Troubleshooting Your Gear Part I, Bass Players' Choice
- 1982**
- ☐ May/June - Chilliwack, Shari Ulrich, Daniel Lavoie, Performing Rights - Part I, Songwriters' Market Guide
 - ☐ September/October - Diane Tell, Doug Bennett, David Wilcox, Linda Manzer, Anvil
 - ☐ November/December - Loverboy, Andrew Hermant, Wayne Rostad, VE J.I., Canadian Recording Studio Guide
- 1983**
- ☐ March/April - Rough Trade, Rob McConnell and the Boss Brass, Dick Darron, Terry Crawford, Sam Moon, Do it Yourself Percussion - Part I
 - ☐ May/June - Liona Boyd, The Spoons, Rafi, Do it Yourself Percussion-Part II
 - ☐ September/October - Bruce Cockburn, Ian Thomas, Lydia Taylor, Image - Part I
 - ☐ November/December - Oscar Peterson, The Lincolns, Wildroot Orchestra, Jarvis Benoit Quartet, Image - Part II
- 1984**
- ☐ July/August - Triumph, Aldo Nova, Uzeb, Chilliwack, Grokking Electronics
- 1985**
- ☐ May/June - Corey Hart, Murray McLauchlan, L'Etranger, The Electronic Drum Jungte, The Canadian Musician Lighting Guide Part I
 - ☐ September/October - M + M, CM Lighting Guide Part III, Electronic Percussion Accessories, Spotlight on Vancouver, Vancouver from the Air, Bruce Allen, Idle Eyes, Network Records, Headpins, DOA
- 1986**
- ☐ January/February - Jon Mitchell, Loverboy, Creating That Buzz, The New Music, Focus on Pro Keyboards
 - ☐ July/August - Luba, 54-40, Musicians' Money, Cover Bands, Computer Music Revolution
- 1987**
- ☐ July/August - Bryan Adams, Gowan, How to Work Overseas Markets, Focus on Recording
- 1988**
- ☐ September/October - Red Rider, Art Bergman, Jeff Healey, The State of the Guitar
 - ☐ November/December - Disaster Proofing Your Band Part I On the Road Anne Murray, k d lang, Live Sound
- 1989**
- ☐ March/April - 10th Anniversary Edition, The Artists, The Business Selected Artist Index, The Equipment
 - ☐ November/December - David Wilcox, 54-40, Kevin MacMichael, How to Avoid Getting Ripped Off, Putting a Sound System Together
- 1990**
- ☐ January/February - Jane Siberry, Daniel Lanois, The Scramblers, A&R Directors What are they looking for? Life After Music Education
 - ☐ March/April - Rush, George Fox, Oliver Jones, Booking Agents What Makes Them Tick?, Keyboards in the Nineties
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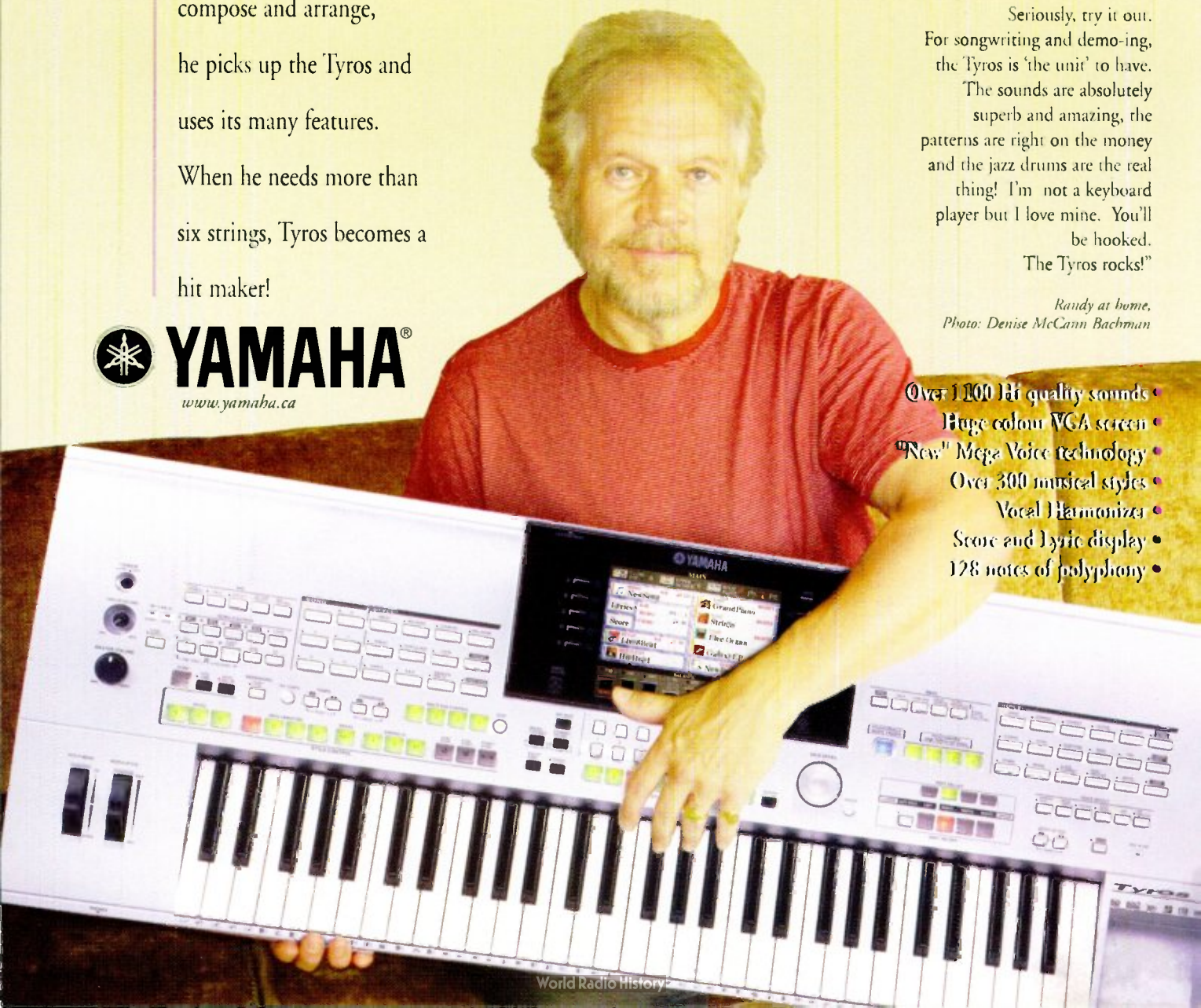
*Randy at home,
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Starpik



After two and a half years of designing and critiquing his invention, Glenn Hautamaki has introduced the Starpik: a multi-functional guitar pick that possesses a different thickness on each of the four points.

"I put four of the average pick thicknesses on one pick. The thicker ones are moulded one across from the other, as are the two thinner ones, so when you're playing guitar and you want to change your tone or pick for the next strum, you're always close to one that will work," explains Hautamaki. The carrying card that comes with the Starpik can double as a case for guitar players who always seem to lose their picks. "They can keep them in their wallets or purses because as we all know, guitarists hardly ever have a pick. Now they will know where to find it." Hautamaki has the fortunate opportunity to work with musician Ray Lyell through this two-year process to bring the Starpik this far and Lyell, being the Canadian icon that he is, was able to get samples out to other stars such as Bruce Springsteen, Eddie Van Halen, Tom Cochrane, etc.

For more information, contact: Starpik, 823 Hwy. #6 N., Hamilton, ON L8N 2Z7 (905) 389-4033, www.starpik.com.

SONAR 3 Producer Edition



Cakewalk recently released SONAR 3 Producer Edition, which is designed to help creativity with quick, intuitive controls that capture inspiration.

SONAR 3 possesses over 100 new features and refinements including streamlined UI with Track and Console views, universal bus architecture, gapless effects patching, VST/VSTi support, enhanced MIDI routing and synth layering, MIDI Groove Clips, multi-port MTC/MIDI sync transmission, confidence recording of audio, MIDI and automation, Vsampler 3.0 Dxi, Ultrafunk Sonitus: FX Suite and Lexicon Pantheon Reverb.

For more information, contact: Thinkware, 109 Woodbine Downs Blvd., #12, Etobicoke, ON M9W 6Y1 (416) 798-4293, FAX (416) 798-1755, salescnd@thinkware.com, www.thinkware.com.

Sony C-38B



Sony has recently released its C-38B microphone to North America. When it was introduced in 1965, the original C-38 model was the world's first Field Effects Transistor (FET) mic.

"The C-38 has been one of Sony's most popular condenser mics," said Paul Foschino, senior manager, professional audio, for Sony Electronics' Broadcast and Professional Systems Division. "In addition to receiving high marks for vocal quality, it is ideal for recording wind instruments, electric guitar or bass, as well as all types of drums thanks to its 140dB SPL. Today, there are more than 65,000 units in use globally." Updated in 1969 to model C-38A with a change in the windscreen design, and again in 1971 to C-38B adding phantom power (9 V battery or external DC 24 V to 48 V), the mic has provided countless artists with great vocal quality. "There is a great deal of interest in this 'classic' Sony large-diaphragm mic," Foschino said. "We're very pleased to finally make it available in North America."

For more information, contact: Sony of Canada Ltd., 115 Gordon Baker Rd., Toronto, ON M2H 3R6 (416) 499-1414, FAX (416) 499-8290, general_inquiries@sony.ca, www.sonybiz.ca.



BLUE's Bluebird and Digidesign Product Bundles

BLUE Microphones and Digidesign proudly announce the launch of a new bundling partnership, featuring the new Bluebird microphone. The Bluebird, manufactured by BLUE and tailored to fit the needs of the Digidesign end user, will be available only as part of future Digidesign product bundles. Both companies recognize each other's unique position within the marketplace and believe this synergistic alliance will deliver unprecedented value to their end users worldwide. The Bluebird mic will also be featured in Focusrite bundles in North America, where Digidesign is Focusrite's exclusive distributor.

The Bluebird is a large-diaphragm cardioid condenser, utilizing BLUE's capsule technology and a Class-A discrete circuit. In a departure from its normally application-specific designs, BLUE engineered the Bluebird to be as versatile as possible, with applications ranging from vocals to electric and acoustic guitars, close-miking of drums, drum over heads, percussion, piano, horns, strings, and any other application where crystal-clear sound quality and detail is of the utmost concern. In addition to the microphone itself, the Bluebird bundle also includes the Bluebird Accessory Pak – BLUE's high-definition 22-AWG Blueberry mic cable, a specially designed shock mount, the BirdCage, and a metal mesh pop filter, the BirdNest.

The new Bluebird microphone can be found in Digidesign's VoiceMaster Pro Pak, TwinTrak Pro Pak, and the Trakmaster Pak.

For more information, contact: Diffusion Audio Inc., CP 142, St-Sauveur des Monts, PQ J0R 1R0 (450) 227-3818, FAX (450) 227-9477, sales@diffusion-audio.com, www.diffusion-audio.com.



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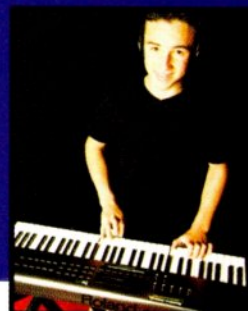
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Roland VariOS Open System Module



Recently, Roland unleashed their breakthrough VariOS Open Module System Module on the marketplace. Based on Roland's new R-Core engine, the VariOS Open System Module can take on totally new functions via optional firmware/software – much like a personal computer. VariOS can be used on its own as “stand alone” hardware, or can be tightly integrated with Windows and Mac OS computers.

The VariOS Open System Module comes with three unique R-Core-powered applications. Pre-installed in the VariOS Module is the V-Producer Audio Toolkit, complete with control software for Windows and Mac OS/OS X computers. Powered by Roland's proprietary VariPhase technology, the V-Producer Audio Toolkit allows musicians to control audio data with the same flexibility as MIDI.

Two VariOS applications are included on CD-ROM as part of the package. VariOS 8 is a powerful polyphonic analog modelling synthesizer fashioned after classic Jupiter and Juno instruments. VariOS 303 also uses analog modeling technology to recreate the much sought after TB-303. Both instruments remain faithful to the original sound and interface design, but also offer modern enhancements such as integrated DSP effects.

To help support the launch of VariOS, Roland has opened a dedicated VariOS web site (www.roland.com/VariOS), complete with video tutorials software downloads, and more.

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

Yamaha Motif ES 6, 7 & 8



Yamaha has recently introduced the Motif ES line of Music Production Workstations. Like the original Motif, the new entries combine the sonic power of a synthesizer, the hands-on quality of a digital workstation, the concept of an Integrated Sampling Sequencer (ISS) for total integration of audio and MIDI, and a user interface which puts power at the user's fingertips.

The 61-key Motif ES 6, 76-key Motif ES 7, and 88-key Motif ES 8 feature the largest and most musical Wave ROM ever provided in a workstation keyboard (175 MB in a 16-bit linear format). At the heart of the ES series is a new tone generator chip, which includes a generous 128 notes of polyphony, new filter algorithms and massive DSP power (16, 3-band EQs, 8 dual Insert effects, 2 system effects and 2 master effects in Song and Pattern Mode).

All three models supersede the Motif 7 and 8 Music Production Synthesizers.

For more information, contact: Yamaha Canada Music Ltd., 135 Milner Ave., Toronto, ON M1S 3R1 (416) 298-1311, FAX (416) 292-0732, www.yamaha.ca.

Gator GP Series

Further expanding their line of percussion case, Gator introduces the GP-12, GP-66, and GP-40 bags for the drummer on the go.

The Gp-12 Deluxe Cymbal Slinger bag comfortably fits eight cymbals up to 22" in diameter and features individual soft protector for each cymbal. Carrying is made easy using either the “slinger” one shoulder backpack design or with the heavy-duty web carry handles. The GP-66 Double Bass Drum Pedal bag is a fit-all bag for the various double pedals measuring in at 10" x 18". Synthetic fur lining and 30 mm foam assure that these cases give the protection needed during transportation and storage of your cymbals and pedals.

The GP-40 Percussion Accessory bag was designed by drummers who know how much extra space is needed for drum accessories. 600-denier nylon makes this a rugged bag, ready to hit the road. The interior features an adjustable Velcro movable divider for separate compartments and the exterior has storage pockets perfect for smaller accessories.

For more information, contact: Erikson Music, 21000 TransCanada Hwy., Baie d'Urfe, PQ H9X 4B7 (514) 457-2555, FAX (514) 457-0055, www.eriksonmusic.com.



Parker Guitars Fly Mojo



Parker Guitars recently launched the Fly Mojo, the most recent addition to the Parker Fly guitar series. Unlike previous models, the Fly Mojo's body and neck are each constructed from a single piece of select mahogany and the guitar is equipped with Seymour Duncan pickups for warmth and midrange.

"The Fly Mojo was created out of the market demand for a Fly model with a richer, heavier tone," says Parker guitars co-founder, Ken Parker. "Combining mahogany's naturally warm tones with the Duncans makes this a very exciting model for Parker players." The Fly Mojo is constructed with a 24-fret neck, made with Parker's trademark carbon glass fingerboard and hardened stainless steel frets. Weighing only five pounds, the Fly Mojo comes with two Seymour Duncan pickups – a Jazz pickup at the neck and a JB pickup at the bridge – as well as a 6-element Fishman piezo. The guitar is also equipped with an improved custom Fishman stereo preamp that provides twice the headroom through a voltage-doubled circuit, 200 hours of battery life, and automatic stereo/mono switching based on the cable used. Each Fly Mojo comes with its own custom hard-shell case.

For more information, contact: Parker Guitars, PO Box 388, Wilmington, MA 01887 (978) 988-0102, FAX (978) 988-0104, www.parkerguitars.com.



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January/February 2004

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- Give us a Call at 1-877-RING-NWC (746-4692)



Casio WK-3000 and WK-3500



Casio recently introduced the WK-3000 and WK-3500 keyboards for public consumption. These two new professional quality touch sensitive keyboards feature SmartMedia Data Storage, Internet Data Expansion system that lets the user configure the keyboard to their specific needs using waveform and other data, advanced ZPI sound source, and more. The sound source has twice the data capacity of previous designs, which makes it possible to provide 56 onboard preset tones. Of these, 300 are 'advanced tones,' including stereo-sampled piano tones that harness the full power of the ZPI sound source.

The WK-3000 features 76 full-size keys, is touch sensitive (with on/off), is 32-note polyphonic and MIDI compatible. The keyboard contains several features and functions that are exclusive to Casio including: drawbar organ, digital equalizer (10 types, 4 brands), SmartMedia, registration memory (4 x 8 bank), synthesizer, modulation switch, mixer and assignable pedal jack.

The WK-3500 has the same features and functions as the WK-3000. It also has a built-in floppy disk drive that supports playback of commercially available SMF data and a line-out jack that can be hooked up to a PA system for stage performances, which the WK-3000 does not have.

For more information, contact: EfKay Music, 2165-46th Ave., Lachine, PQ H8T 2P1 (514) 633-8877, FAX (514) 633-8872, howard@efkaymusic.com, www.efkaymusic.com.

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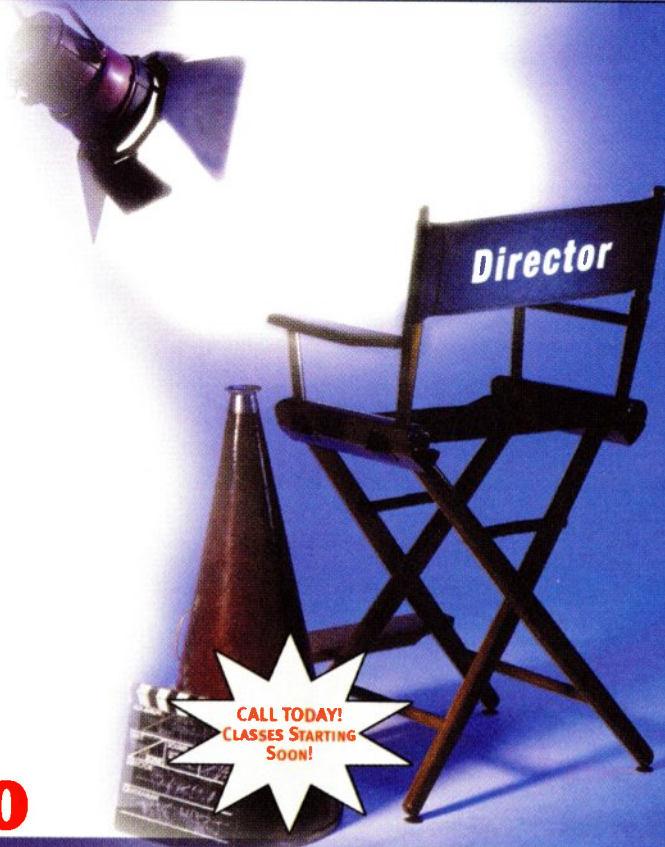
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Software Upgrades

To help you keep abreast of all the recent software updates out there, *CM* has compiled this list of some of the most recent upgrades we've been told about:

BitHeadz; now shipping the latest 3.2.2 versions of Unity Session, Unity Synth Expander 1, Unity DS-1 and Unity AS-1. The update will be free of cost to all current Unity 3.X users and is available for download at www.bitheadz.com.

Fairlight; recently launched new version of 18.2 QDC Operating Software and version 3.1 Dream Series User Interface Software.

Drums On Demand; offering nearly 900 stereo, royalty-free loops (almost 700 Megs) organized into 41 easy-to-use Song Sets with each set including as many as 33 verses, chorus, fill, bridge, break, intro, ending and other loops.

Next Generation Software; recently released NGWave version 2.0, the latest version of their sound editor for Windows. NGWave offers basic editing features, an array of processing functions and many other features.

M-Audio/Ableton; recently released Live 3, a new upgrade of their audio sequencing instrument for Mac OS 9, Mac OS X and Windows.

Octiv; recently released the first audio plug-in available for Apple's iTunes player. The Volume Logic plug-in runs on Mac OS X. Free downloads are available at www.octiv.com.

Edirol; recently introduced the new Panther-read drivers for all current OS X compatible products. With over 150 new features, Panther is the latest in MacOS X.

Native Instruments; recently updated the KONTAKT sampler to version 1.5. KONTAKT 1.5 brings many new features, Mac OS X compatibility and new import capabilities.

Native Instruments; also recently updated the TRAKTOR DJ Studio to version 2.5 fusing live mixing, remixing and performing into a new entity.

Elemental Audio; announced the availability of version 2.0 of Firium, its flagship linear phase equalizer. The software has a redesigned user interface and two significant new features and brings Digidesign Pro Tools RTAS compatibility to Mac OS X and Windows XP users.

SADiE; released its new Version 5.2 software for the SADiE Series 5 range of digital audio workstations. The new software is available for download by existing Series 5 owners. Visit www.sadie.com.

Mel Bay "Private Lessons" Series

Mel Bay Publications recently announced that it has developed a new series of books authored by top professionals and educators including Sid Jacobs, Jimmy Bruno, and Mimi Fox. With 15 book/CD publications already included in this concept driven series, Mel Bay Publications, Inc. is able to offer a variety of specific methods taught in a digestible way for the advanced musician. Each author lends her best secrets to these specific skills and methods so that what can be derived from each publication is advanced understanding and technique.

For more information, contact: Mel Bay Publications, 4 Industrial Dr., Pacific, MO 63069 (800) 863-5229, FAX (636) 257-5062, email@melbay.com, www.melbay.com.

Gibson Hound Dog 60

Gibson Guitar's Original Acoustic Instrument Division recently introduced the Hound Dog 60 resonator guitar, which combines the traditional look and sound of Dobro's classic Model 60 with the affordability of the popular Hound Dog model.

The Hound Dog 60 features a neck with 12 frets clear of the body, available with a square neck and high nut for bluegrass slide-style playing or with a round neck for standard play. It also features two traditional screen-covered round soundholes to enhance clarity and projection. The body is made of laminate figured maple veneer with an original style spider bridge.

For more information, contact: Yorkville Sound, 550 Granite Ct., Pickering, ON L1W 3Y8 (905) 837-8481, FAX (905) 839-5776, info@yorkville.com, www.yorkville.com.



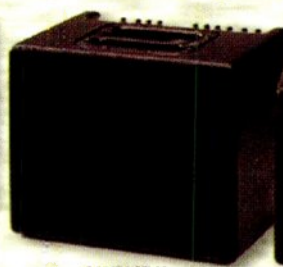
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Pioneer DVJ-X1

Pioneer Electronics recently announced the DVJ-X1 digital audio and video turntable. This product allows users to manipulate and playback synchronized digital audio and video in a way that Pioneer Electronics feels will revolutionize the DJ industry.

DJs will be able to use Pioneer's new unit to manipulate DVD visuals in the same way as they would music. Real-time digital video scratches, loops and instant cues are all possible with the DVJ-X1, while the video and audio streams always stay in sync, even while being reversed and pitched.

For more information, contact: SF Marketing Inc., 6161 Cypihot St., St. Laurent, PQ H4S 1R3 (514) 856-1919, FAX (514) 856-1920, info@sfm.ca, www.sfm.ca.

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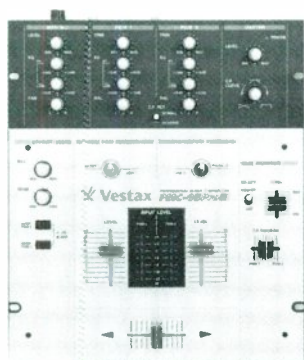
Fender Musical Instruments Corporation recently introduced the newest addition to its Cyber Series amplifiers, the Cyber-Champ. Joining the groundbreaking Cyber-Twin and Cyber-Deluxe amplifiers, the Cyber-Champ offers a number of features of its predecessors in a powerful, yet portable package.

The Cyber-Champ is a combo amp, with Blackface cosmetics, a powerful 65 Watt power section and a premium 23" Celestion speaker. Fender feels that great tones are easily accessed via the 21 presets built on a variety of Analog preamp voicings and a palette of handcrafted DSP effects. The player must store up to seven user presets. The Cyber-Champ also features a new hum reduction circuit, digital chromatic tuner, headphone/line output, MIDI, and more.

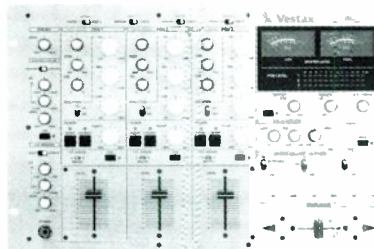
For more information, contact: Fender Musical Instruments Corp., 8860 E.Chaparral Rd., #100, Scottsdale, AZ 85250 (480) 596-9690, www.fender.com.



Vestax PMC Series



PMC-05 Pro III



PMC-CX

Vestax has recently unveiled their PMC Series, a line of DJ mixers that, they feel, offer a remarkable force in the DJ mixer market. These include the PMC-500, PMC-007, PMC-05Pro3 and the PMC-CX.

The Vestax PMC-500 is engineered to high-quality standards and is refined to suit the style of a thousand genres. This professional-level purpose built mixer is flexible enough to be used by anyone in any environment at any time. The PMC-007, like its predecessors (PMC-05Pro, PMC-07Pro) is a 2-channel (PGM) mixer that is perfect for serious scratch DJs who are searching for improved sound quality, control and flexible options that allow them to increase their creativity. This mixer features a sleek battle design with bonnet style ReX (Rapid Exchange) PCV fader system. The PMC-05Pro3 is a solid mixer, and Vestax feels it is perfect for all types of DJs from beginners to professionals. The basic 2-PGM layout lends itself mostly to hip-hop, scratch, drum & bass and other similar performance styles. Looking at previous PMC-05Pro mixers, the PMC-05Pro3 features all of the past innovations and incorporates a new effect routing section, an improved layout and a fresh look. Last but not least, the PMC-CX is a solid and reliable high-quality mixer that Vestax feels that has enough features to allow professional DJs to deliver 110 per cent during every performance. Users from an intermediate level to a touring professional and installation level will find the CX enjoyable and easy to use because of its layout, features, high-quality components and design.

For more information, contact: Erikson Audio, 21000 TransCanada Hwy., Baie d'Urfe, PQ H9X 4B7 (514) 457-2555, FAX (514) 457-0055, info@eriksonaudio.com, www.eriksonprc.com.

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Koch Multitone



Koch recently released the Multitone amplifier, a 50- or 100-watt all-tube maestro amp. The classic styled Pre-Channel houses two channels: Clean and Drive. The Clean channel allows for warm and clean tones while the Drive channel allows you to create a wide variety of classic overdrive tones ranging from clean with an edge of distortion to a harmonically rich overdrive with much singing sustain. The modern Post-channel – with the tone circuitry in the preamps output stage – houses the Gain channel.

For more information, contact: Audionova Inc., 2083 Chartier Ave., Dorval, PQ H9P 1H3 (514) 631-5787, FAX (514) 631-5789, sales@audionova.ca, www.audionova.ca.

Paiste: New Models for Signature & 2002 Classic

Paiste has recently announced the addition of several cymbal models and sizes in the professional class.

The vast program of the Signature series is being enhanced by a 19" Full Crash and 21" Full and Silver Mellow Rides. The Classic series gains two new models, the Power Crash (16", 18" and 20") and the Thin Crash (16", 17", 18", 19" and 20"). Signature and 2002 Classic Cymbals are made by hand in Switzerland using traditional methods that have remained unchanged in over half a century.

For more information, contact: Yamaha Canada Music Ltd., 135 Milner Ave., Toronto, ON M1S 3R1, (416) 298-1311, FAX (416) 292-0732, www.yamaha.ca.

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by Rod Christie

Beautiful Senseless

Who: Beautiful Senseless

Where: Guelph, ON

What: melancholy, atmospheric rock

Contact: Andrew Hopkinson, (519) 763-4982, info@beautifulsenseless.com, www.beautifulsenseless.com.

Stirring and understated, the layered sounds on Beautiful Senseless' 2003 disc *The Warmest Rain* evoke both density and clarity, if such a creature is possible. *The Warmest Rain* is the second release for this sextet, recorded in diverse locations including Dublin Street United Church in Guelph, ON, and keyboardist Andrew Hopkinson's apartment over the course of a year. Shared duties amongst three vocalists, accompanied by mountainous guitars, keyboards and trumpets, as well as the judicious inclusion of guests Lewis Melville on pedal steel and banjo, and Cathy Anderson on cello makes for a dreamy, rootsy experience. The fact that they are from musical hot spot Guelph (Three Gut Records, The Constantines) and write self-assured, hooky pop music should have garnered them much more attention than they have received so far, but their brand of artful subtlety is more about emotional honesty than being rock stars.



Beautiful Senseless

Despistado

Who: Despistado

Where: Regina, SK

What: clever, angular punk rock

Contact: despistadosound@hotmail.com, www.despistadomusic.com.

While the band likes to label themselves somewhat misleadingly as a "traditional four-piece," this excitable young act from Regina accomplish more from their lo-fi, high-energy sound than most bands with budgets. Bassist Joel Passmore describes their sound as "indie, quirky, danceable, post-hardcore," an accurate reading of their six-song debut EP, *The Emergency Response*. Boasting intricate arrangements and a jackhammer delivery, *The Emergency Response* captures the intertwined guitars, counter melodies and complex rhythms of a band railing against the cold Saskatchewan climate. It's all about the music, according to guitarist/vocalist Dagan Harding. "There is a great music scene in Regina with a lot of talented, dedicated musicians that, in our opinion, create quality, unique music. We mostly get off playing live to people. It's where the essence of music lies. We love the spontaneity, chemistry and hopefully mutual relationship between the audience and band."



Despistado

The High Dials

Who: The High Dials

Where: Montreal, PQ

What: post-Pepper flashback garage psychedelica

Contact: info@thehighdials.com, www.thehighdials.com.

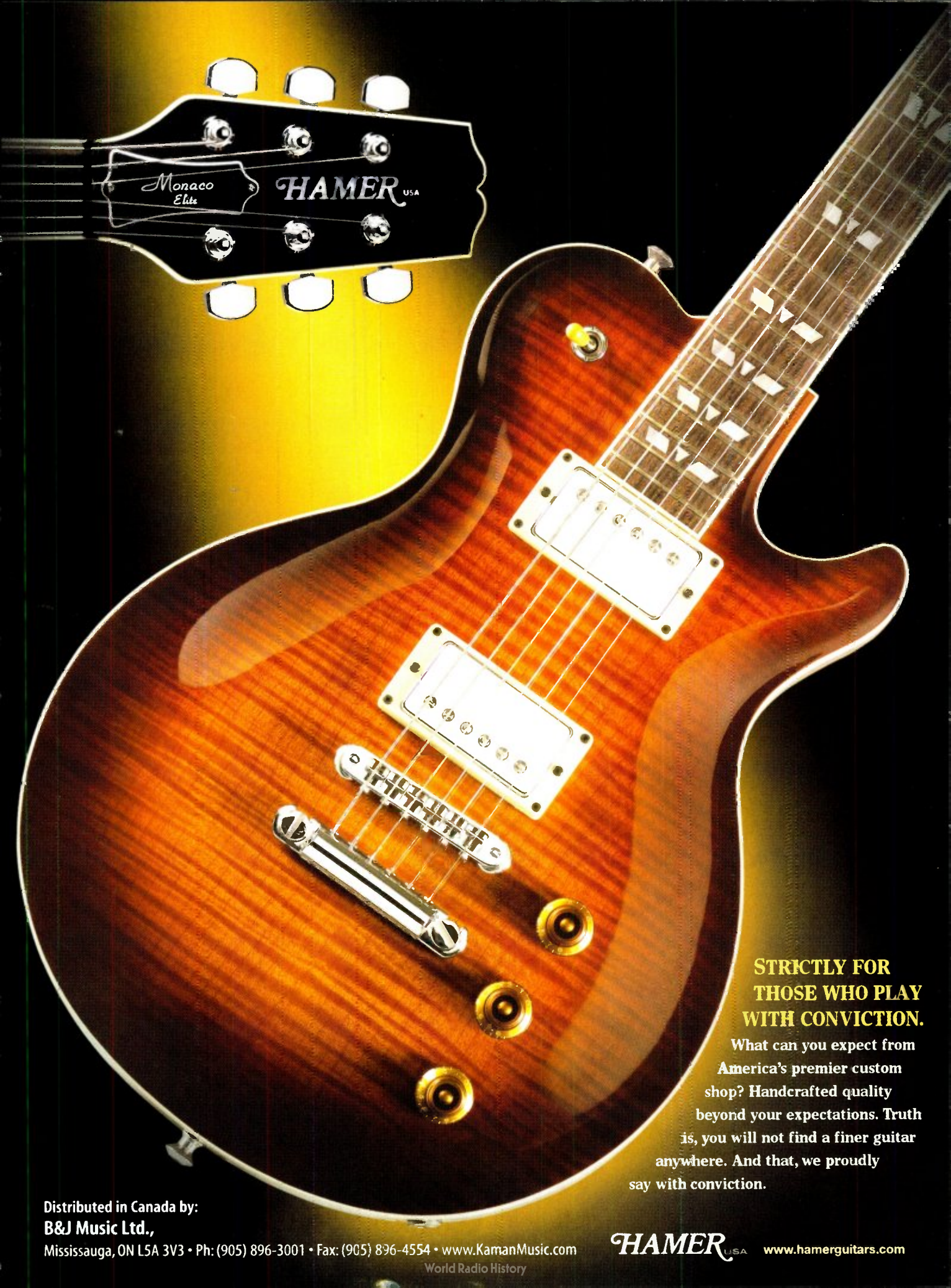
The High Dials announce their latest incarnation (they were formerly known as The Datson 4) with a throwback sound that sparkles and grooves. Their latest album, *A New Devotion*, is a perfect blend of influence and innovation, updating the R&B sounds of the British Invasion with a modern luster. Songwriter and guitarist Trevor Anderson has crafted a Rickenbacher-friendly, 18-track work that has garnered support from none other than Little Steven (The E-Street Band), that stays true to the bands sonic aesthetic of crafted harmonies, danceable beats and open-minded exploration. Says Anderson "I like a good, vapid, pop tune as much as the next guy, but it's the albums — the ones that keep giving up new secrets, they are the ones we hunger for." Recorded at Vespa Studios (Toronto) and Silent Sound Studios (Montreal), the album also features diverse instrumentation that includes flute, tables, violin and a horn section to sweeten up the rock punch. If you enjoy The Kinks, Love, Big Star or Supergrass, you'll certainly get a buzz out of *A New Devotion*.



The High Dials

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