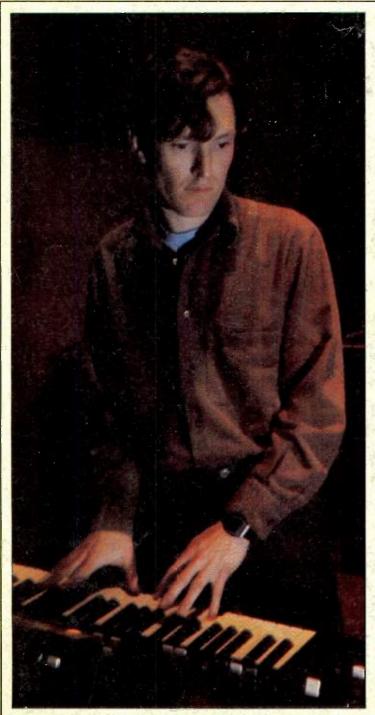
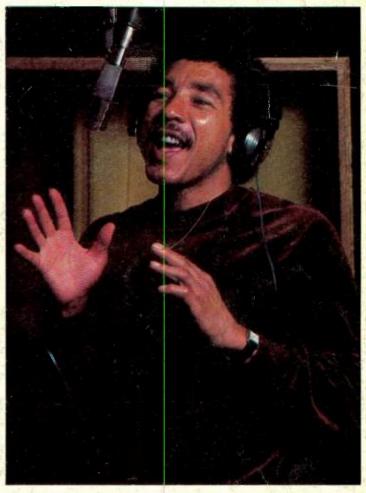


Steve Winwood

Smokey Robinson





Robert Fripp Toto Ian McLagan New Products

HOLD IT BEFORE YOU BUYA COMPRESSION DRIVER.

Before you choose one of the "old standard" compression drivers, consider this — Yamaha's advanced technology and years of experience have produced a new standard—the JA-6681B high frequency compression driver. Engineered with subtle improvements that make a not-so-subtle improvement in performance and durability.

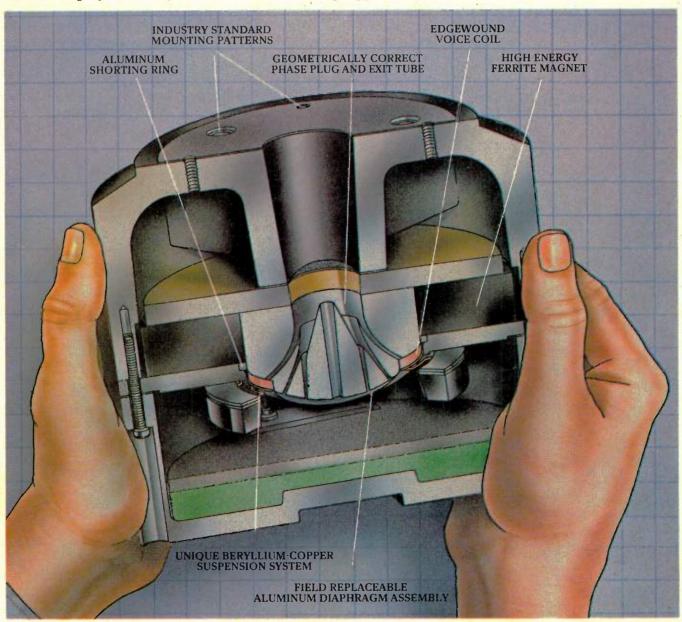
Yamaha's exclusive suspension consists of beryllium-copper fingers bonded to a rigid, pneumatically

formed aluminum diaphragm whose low mass yields optimum response and low distortion. Since extreme excursions cannot cause the suspension to "take a set," sound quality remains excellent throughout the driver's lifetime.

To deliver more sound per watt and long-term reliability, we use a very powerful ferrite magnet which retains the driver's high sensitivity through thousands of hours of severe use. An aluminum shorting ring prevents magnetic flux modulation at power levels, further reducing distortion.

These are just a few of the reasons Yamaha outperforms and outlasts the others. For the whole story, write: Yamaha, P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA 90622.* Or visit your Yamaha dealer and hear the difference. You'll be glad you held out for a Yamaha.

Because you're serious.



*Or Yamaha Canada Music Ltd., 135 Milner Ave., Scarborough, Ontario M1S 3R1





MUSICIANS' INDUSTRY

6

In his all-too-short life, **Bob Marley** was not only reggae's most prominent voice but also one of the leading innovators in popular music. Bruce Dancis highlights the ups and downs of Marley's unforgettable career.

Every once in a while a musician comes along who can sing, play virtually every rock-oriented instrument, engineer, produce, and even build his own studio—in other words, **Steve Winwood**. In a wideranging interview with Dan Forte, Winwood talks about his entire career from the Spencer Davis Group, Traffic, and Blind Faith up through the making of *Arc of a Diver*.



After a period of semi-retirement following the breakup of King Crimson in the mid-Seventies, Robert Fripp has made a full-speed return to the rock & roll fray. Bruce Pilato profiles the articulate and path-finding guitarist/producer.





The emergence of lan McLagan as a solo performer is welcome news to those who have followed his work as keyboardist for Small Faces, Faces, Rod Stewart, and (occasionally) the Rolling Stones. The frank and funny McLagan takes Bruce Dancis along for the ride.

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Melodie Bryant manages to get **Toto's** keyboardists **David Paich** and **Steve Porcaro** to remain stationary long enough to talk about their backgrounds and state-of-the-art equipment.



Smokey Robinson has written, sung, and produced among the most memorable songs of the past several decades. Now celebrating his 25th year as a performer, the Motown star surveys his peaks and valleys with Bruce Dancis.

Sound Reinforcement Supplement:



In a behind-the-scenes look at Journey, one of rock's most successful touring bands, Hillel Resner examines the people and equipment responsible for the group's dynamic live sound.

Speck Check: DeltaLab DL-4 Time Line ...54 Sound-On-Stage: Show Production55

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David Gans surveys leading retailers of sound reinforcement equipment to get their advice on selecting PA systems, ranging from the most basic to the most sophisticated.

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Musicians Industry Magazine

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Smokey Robinson by Neil Zlozower



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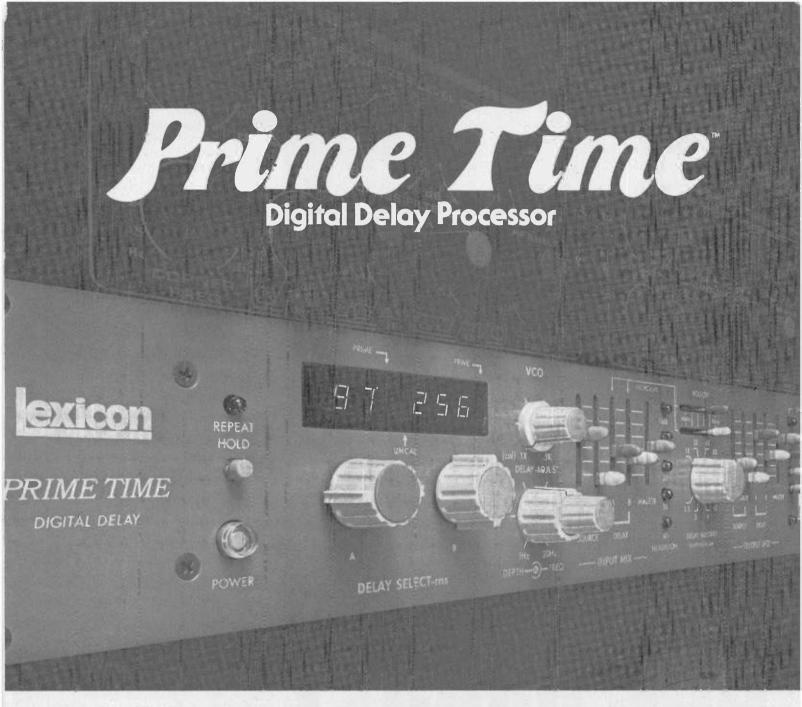
Traffic Ellen Goldstein In the trendy, ever-changing world of popular music, where this year's model often becomes next year's has-been, only a relatively small group of musicians has shown the ability to adapt, grow, and remain relevant and popular. Perhaps what is most remarkable about Smokey Robinson and Steve Winwood, the artists featured on M.I.'s cover, is that after coming to widespread public attention as teenagers they have maintained the highest creative standards throughout the intervening years. Similarly, guitarist Robert Fripp and keyboardist Ian McLagan, both of whom emerged on the British rock scene during the 1960s, are currently making some of the finest music of their lives.

Just as our featured artists have never stood still, neither has the equipment available to today's musicians. In this issue Toto's synthesizer whiz kids, David Paich and Steve Porcaro, discuss their continuing search for new and improved keyboards. And in a special Sound Reinforcement Supplement, M.I. examines the state-of-the-art equipment and road crew behind the live sound of Journey, and asks several expert sound retailers to recommend P.A. systems for musicians working at various levels within the music industry.

Changes have taken place within M.I. as well. In addition to having a new editor, we have added several new writers and features. David Gans, our new Technical Consultant, brings a wealth of knowledge and experience garnered from his eleven years as a professional guitarist and from his work as a contributing editor for California's BAM magazine since 1976. As well as putting together the article on P.A. systems (p. 56) and checking out new signal processing equipment (p. 54), beginning with the next issue David will be writing a regular column called "Technically Speaking." We are also pleased to welcome guitarist Rick Vito and his new "Working Musician" column (p. 61). Rick, who has played with John Mayall and Paul Butterfield, currently leads his own group in addition to being a member of Bonnie Raitt's band. Lastly, Seymour Duncan, who has written our "Pickup Selector" column since March, 1980, expands his scope with a new column, "Guitar Workshop."

One thing that hasn't changed is M.I.'s commitment to writing about the artists, equipment, and other matters of interest to active musicians (and to non-musicians who want to read serious and informative articles from a musician's perspective). We'd like to hear your suggestions—and complaints—so that M.I. can better serve our readership. Send letters, questions and quibbles to Editor, M.I. Magazine, 2608 Ninth St., Berkeley, CA 94710.

- Bruce Dancis Editor



professional quality delay plus special effects



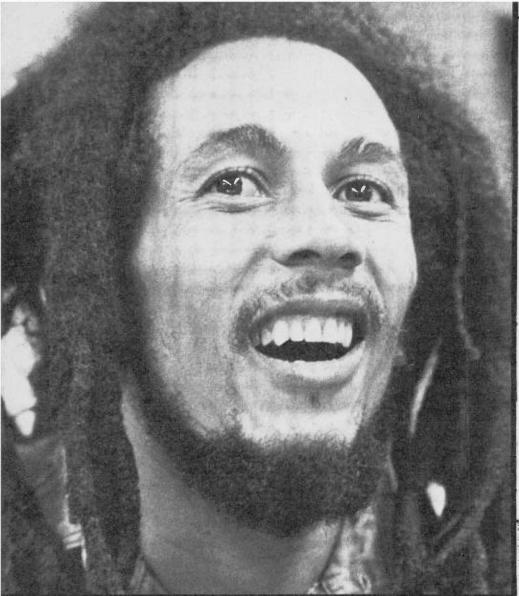
Lexicon's new Model 93 "Prime Time" digital delay processor gives recording studios and entertainers an easy-to-use professional quality time delay with special effects and convenient mixing all at a price you can afford. It combines a degree of flexibility and versatility never before offered in equipment of full professional quality.

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(1945-1981)

by Bruce Dancis

Bob Marley, who died of cancer on May 11, 1981 at the age of 36, occupied the same position in reggae music that John Lennon did in rock & roll. Reggae had existed before Marley's rise to international prominence, but more than any other individual he shaped both the sound of the music and its political and cultural commitments. As reggae's most prominent voice and leading innovator, Bob Marley's stature was unparalleled—throughout the world he was viewed as the virtual embodiment of reggae.

Born in northern Jamaica's St. Ann's province, Marley was the son of a Jamaican mother and a retired British army officer who left Jamaica before his birth. As a young teenager, Marley quit school and moved from his rural parish to Kingston's Trench Town. Like

many Jamaicans, Marley kept his ears tuned to the music emanating from New Orleans, and his first recordings, in 1961 and 1962, found him covering American popular songs such as Brook Benton's "One More Cup Of Coffee."

By the mid-Sixties Marley had gotten together with Peter Tosh (then Peter MacIntosh), Bunny Livingston, and several other vocalists in a group known as the Wailing Wailers. As a quintet, and later as a trio with Tosh and Livingston, the group had a number of hits in Jamaica by combining the vocal harmonies of American soul music with the lilting rhythms of reggae and the youthful, style-conscious rebellion of what was known as the "Rude Boy" phenomenon. In those days, local hits did not translate into economic viability, and Marley ended up moving to Wilmington, Del. with his mother, where he

worked the night shift at an automobile plant for several months.

Returning to Jamaica in 1967, Marley reconstituted the Wailers. It was at this time that he converted to Rastafarianism and his songs began to carry its distinctive religious and political message. The albums the Wailers (now a complete band with the addition of some of Jamaica's finest musicians) recorded with Jamaican producer Lee "Scratch" Perry, featuring classic songs such as "Trench Town Rock," "Soul Rebel," "400 Years," and "Small Axe," changed the entire direction of reggae music.

By the early Seventies, the Wailers were the most popular band in the Caribbean. but they remained largely unknown in the rest of the world. This changed in 1972, when the Wailers signed with Island Records; given the financial resources to make high quality recordings that could be accessible to international audiences, Marley and the Wailers quickly began to gain worldwide attention. Their first Island records, Catch A Fire and Burnin' (the latter featuring the reggae anthem "Get Up Stand Up" and "I Shot The Sheriff," a Number One hit for Eric Clapton), together with the movie The Harder They Come, established reggae as the most influential new form of popular music in the world. Within a short time, rock groups as diverse as the Rolling Stones, Paul Simon, and Brinsley Schwarz, in addition to Clapton, were jumping to reggae rhythms.

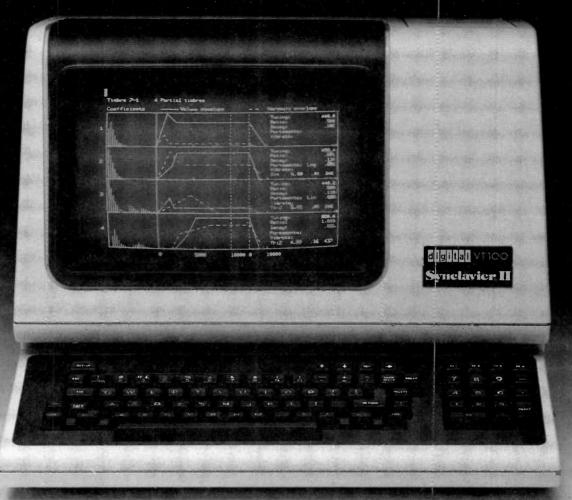
In 1975, Marley and the Wailers released their masterpiece, Natty Dread, which remains the finest reggae album I've ever heard and the most formidable merging of eloquent social protest and musical brilliance since Bob Dylan's epic recordings a decade earlier. Alternating tunes of sensuous beauty with songs carrying unforgettable anger, Marley, in a phrase—"Them belly full but we hungry"—or in an image—"Cold ground was my bed last night, and rock was my pillow too"—embodied the condition of his people like few musicians have ever done.

Following another monumental album, 1976's Rastaman Vibration, Marley was wounded during an assassination attempt in Kingston, shortly before he was to appear at a concert backing the candidacy of Prime Minister Michael Manley. Marley subsequently left Jamaica and said that he would no longer be involved in what he called "commercial politics," which had become "too heavy." Marley's exile coincided with a clear deterioration in his music. Both Exodus and Kaya, his two subsequent albums, lacked the compelling drive and energy that saturated his earlier work.

After wandering in the wilderness for two years, Marley returned to Jamaica and his roots. The resulting album, *Survival*, reaffirmed his commitments and replaced with a renewed dynamism the disappointingly laidback arrangements and dispirited vocals that characterized *Kaya*. And Marley's last album, 1980's *Uprising*, found him still at the peak of his creative powers.

Marley was a genuinely gifted live performer. On stage he was a bundle of kinetic energy—in constant motion, dreadlocks flail-

Introducing Synclavier Il's Terminal Support Package.



The Terminal Support Package provides a completely new method to access Synclavier II's computer. The Terminal Support Package consists of three items: (1) Graphics, (2) Script, a music language, (3) Max, a programming language.

GRAPHICS

The Graphics Package allows the user of Synclavier II to have a readout of numerical data printed out on a computer terminal screen. With the depression of the return character on the terminal, the numerical data is changed into a graphic display. A clear depiction of the volume and harmonic envelopes are drawn out on the screen. The relative volumes of each sine wave, comprising the sound whose envelopes are currently on the screen, is also displayed.

The graphics display provides an extremely valuable visual tool for programming new sounds and for thoroughly analyzing sounds which have already been programmed for Synclavier II.

SCRIPT

Script is a music language. It can be used as a composing tool to write musical performances into Synclavier II's computer without playing anything on the keyboard.

Precise polyrhythmic melodies can be developed which would be difficult or even impossible to play on a keyboard. Composing with Script gives you up to 16 tracks to record on.

All the real-time changes available with Synclavier II's digital memory recorder can also be programmed through a terminal with Script. This includes dynamics and other musical accents.

Any composition created with Script can be stored on a disk, and then loaded into Synclavier II's digital memory recorder. All compositions created with Script can be made to play back in perfect sync with a multi-track recorder.

Another feature which is extremely helpful for musicians is the editing feature of Script. This allows you to edit existing compositions through the terminal. You can cut apart, reassemble, or tailor in any manner a composition without ever risking a loss of any of the original elements.

MAX

Max is a complete music applications development system. It allows you to control all of New England Digital's special purpose hardware, i.e., the computer, analog-to-digital converters, digital-to-analog con-

verters, and other devices like a scientific timer which can be programmed to be SMPTE compatible.

Max comes complete with documentation for the Synclavier II hardware interfaces to enable a programmer to design his own software program. This language is for people who possess a much more sophisticated knowledge of programming computers. Basically it is a superset of XPL, the software language New England Digital uses to program Synclavier II's computer.

Max is designed to permit the owner of Synclavier II to take greater advantage of New England Digital's powerful 16 bit computer. Up to now, all software had to be written by New England Digital. The Terminal Support Package with the Max language gives you the opportunity to explore new ground on your own. The ways in which Synclavier II's hardware can be used by Max is virtually limitless.

All of us at New England Digital feel we've only begun to explore and tap the awesome potential of the Synclavier II digital synthesizer. The Terminal Support

Package is just one more step in an exciting journey toward this realization.



Since its introduction Synclavier II has outsold all ot

Synclavier II creates sounds never before possible from any synthesizer.

In April of this year New England Digital Corporation introduced a stereo LP demo record to illustrate some of Synclavier II's incredible sounds. After hearing this record, many people called to say they couldn't believe all the sounds on the demo could possibly have been created by any synthesizer. However, after seeing and hearing Synclavier II for themselves, they were amazed at more than just the absolute realism of its instrumental sounds. They were awed by the infinite variety of tonal colors. unique sounds, and special effects so easily created by this incredible instrument. We might add, many of these people now own a Synclavier II.

Synclavier II not only produces sounds no other synthesizer can produce, it also offers more live performance control than any other synthesizer.

Synclavier II gives you an extraordinary ability to change sounds as you play them. Using Synclavier II's real-time controllers you can accurately recreate many of the subtle changes real instruments make during a live performance.

Here are some of the real-time controls that have made Synclavier II famous: Attacks can be individually altered both in length and brightness for each note. Vibratos can be brought in at different times. Vibrato depths can be changed at will. Individual notes and entire chords can be made to crescendo and decrescendo smoothly and naturally. Final decays of percussive sounds can be made to ring out longer for low notes than for high notes. In strummed chords, some notes can ring out longer than others to compensate for the differences between open strings and stopped strings. Individual notes and entire chords can be pitch bent up or down. The overtone content of any sound can be completely varied from one note to the next. Up to four different rates of portamento can be performed on the keyboard at one time. Some of the harmonics of a sound can remain stationary while other harmonics of the same sound slide against them. And the list goes on.

The possibilities for programming new sounds with Synclavier II are limitless.

Although Synclavier II comes preprogrammed with over 128 preset sounds, it does not lock you into these preset sounds. All of these presets can be modified any way you wish. The possibilities for creating sounds from scratch are limited only by your own skill and imagination.

Synclavier II can store an unlimited number of sounds.

Any sound created on Synclavier II can be permanently stored on a floppy disc with



just the touch of a button. From 64 to 256 separate sounds can be stored on a single mini-diskette. The number of mini-diskettes you can use with Synclavier II is unlimited.

All of this is just a glimpse of Synclavier II's enormous potential. The real potential of Synclavier II can be more completely understood by taking a close look at Synclavier II's super advanced hardware and software. The capabilities of Synclavier II's hardware and software extend far beyond any demands currently being made on them

Synclavier II is controlled by the most powerful computer available in any synthesizer made today.

New England Digital Corporation leads the field in the development and use of hardware applications for music synthesis.

New England Digital uses a powerful 16 bit computer that addresses up to 128k bytes of memory. Other digital manufacturers design their systems around microcomputers. Microcomputers are simply not powerful enough to control large numbers of voices on the keyboard at one time. Most current digital systems are limited to 8 usable voices. When these systems try to control more than 8 voices at once, the speed at which these voices can be played on the keyboard slows down considerably. So, for musical applications, more than 8 voices can not be played on the keyboard at one time.

These microcomputers are also not fast enough to permit extensive real-time control of a sound while it is being played on the keyboard. A few real-time features are available while other important features are deleted because of speed limitations of the microcomputers.

New England Digital Corporation designs and builds its own 16 bit computer, as well as the Synclavier II synthesizer.

New England Digital's 16 bit computer and Synclavier II synthesizer are so unique, New England Digital has been awarded three basic patents on their design, and has several others pending.

The speed of Synclavier II's computer is unmatched by any other digital synthesizer system on the market today. Synclavier II's computer can easily control up to 32 voices on the keyboard at one time without slowing down. No other digital system in the world comes close to this kind of control.

While some synthesizer manufacturers consider a "voice" to be one separately controlled sine wave, one voice of a Synclavier II synthesizer consists of the following: (1) 24 sine waves, (2) a volume envelope generator, (3) a harmonic envelope generator, (4) very sophisticated digital FM controls, (5) an extensive vibrato control, featuring up to 10 different low frequency wave forms, (6) a portamento control that can be either logarithmic or linear, (7) a decay adjust feature, permitting lower notes to have longer decays than higher notes.

n just one year ago, her digital systems combined.



Synclavier II's 16 track digital memory recorder is more sophisticated and has more features than any other synthesizer recorder or sequencer in the world.

Synclavier II's digital memory recorder has enormous capabilities because its computer is fast enough to perform the millions of math computations necessary to make all these features operational at one time.

For example, Synclavier II's digital memory recorder enables you to set independent loop points for each of its 16 tracks. So, you could have 8 notes repeating on track #1, with 64 notes repeating on track #3, and 2 notes repeating on track #7, and so on. All 16 tracks can be looping independently at the same time but still be in perfect sync.

In addition, you can transpose each separate track individually. Track #6 could be transposed up a 4th, while track #8 was transposed down a 5th, and so on.

Other recording features made possible by Synclavier II's ultra fast computer.

Sounds can be bounced from one track to another. You can overdub on just one track, without losing the material already recorded on that track. You can change the volume of individual tracks. You can change the speed of the recorder without changing the pitch. You can punch in and out instan-

taneously. You can fast forward or rewind just as you would on a 16 track tape machine. You can instantly erase any number of tracks in the recorder.

You can change the scale of a piece of music already recorded in the recorder. For example, if you had a piece recorded in the key of C, you could change it to the key of B flat minor without rerecording a single note in the recorder. Or you could change a piece of music already recorded in the recorder from a tempered scale to a microtonal scale, without recording a single note over again.

You could keep the notes of an instrument that was recorded on one of the tracks in the recorder, and assign a new instrument to play the previous instrument's notes. For example, if a flute were playing on track #5, you could assign a guitar to track #5 and have it play the flute's notes automatically.

Synclavier II's computer is not only the fastest and most powerful computer available on any synthesizer today, it's also enormously expandable, with A to D converters, D to A converters, real time clocks, printers, modems, and alphanumeric and graphic CRT's

The New England Digital Computer has had 5 years of proven production and successful sales to scientific end users for real-time applications. This history of steadfast reliability has been a major part of Synclavier II's unparalleled success in a market place choked with new products.

Synclavier II has the fastest and most accessible software available in any synthesizer today.

Synclavier II uses an extremely high level structured language called XPL. XPL has proven to be an extremely fast language which has continually provided the means to add new features to Synclavier II on a regular basis.

Other synthesizers are still using languages too limited for our purposes. Assembler is a good example. It is by far a much slower and more difficult programming process to use than XPL. Software improvements made by Assembler language could take months. But with XPL we've been able to add totally new features to Synclavier II in a few days.

New England Digital can add new features to your Synclavier II synthesizer through the mail.

During the 10 months since the introduction of Synclavier II, New England Digital has issued four software updates to the owners of Synclavier II synthesizers. Those updates were mailed out to Synclavier II owners automatically. They included new software that customers had asked for. The updates also included new features and improvements that New England Digital felt were a strong enhancement to the operation of Synclavier II.

Software updates ensure the Synclavier II customer that his system will always be state-of-the-art.

When you buy a Synclavier II, you will automatically be sent new features as they are developed this year, next year, and for years to come.

The Synclavier II synthesizer is not a temporary answer in a technological world moving at warp speed. It is the answer. When you buy a Synclavier II, the instrument improves as fast as our technology improves. Since we're already leading the field of digital synthesis, we feel you are comfortably safe in assuming Synclavier II will be your companion for a long time to come.

When you own Synclavier II, you will never need to sell your "old" system in order to buy a better one. Your Synclavier II system becomes better automatically.

For further information and a copy of Synclavier II's stereo LP demo record, send your address plus \$1.00 to either of the following:

Dept. 10, New England Digital Corp Main St., Norwich, Vermont 05055 (802) 649-5183

Denny Jaeger Creative Services, Inc. 6120 Valley View Rd., Oakland, CA 94611 (415) 339-2111



The only synthesizer that can improve on Synclavier, II <u>is</u> Synclavier, II.

New England Digital is the only digital synthesizer manufacturer in the world that completely designs and builds its own computer as well as its own synthesizer. New England Digital's powerful 16 bit computer, along with the XPL language used to program it, make Synclavier II more versatile, flexible, and expandable than any other synthesizer made.

In order to understand how advanced Synclavier II truly is, it's necessary to understand the enormous differences between Synclavier II's hardware and software, and that of other digital systems.

No other digital synthesizer on the market is capable of keeping pace with Synclavier II's XPL language.

XPL is a high level structured language, which offers tremendously fast and accurate control for writing complex real-time digital synthesis programs. Synclavier II is the only digital synthesizer totally programmed in a high level structured language.

Other digital systems are programmed in much simpler languages, like Assembler. Using Assembler language, it's very difficult to write complex programs with any

degree of speed or accuracy.

XPL language uses a compiler. The compiler automatically translates the way we think into the way the computer thinks. Assembler doesn't use a compiler. So the programmer has to do his own translating from the way he thinks into the way the computer thinks.

For example: If you wanted to express the equation A = 2 + 5 in Assembler, you would have to go through the following

instructions:

 Find a register in the computer that is empty.

(Let's say it's register 0)

- (2) Assign register 0 to contain A.
- (3) Load register 0 with a 2.
- (4) Add to register 0 a 5.

In XPL, the programmer just types in A = 2 + 5. That's it. The compiler automatically translates that equation into a series of instructions that the computer can understand.

If you wanted to compute the square root of five in XPL, you would simply write A = SQR(5); the compiler would automatically generate a set of instructions to communicate that equation to the computer. In Assembler, the programmer would have to write almost 100 instructions all by himself in order to get the same result.

The more complicated a program gets, the more XPL pays off. The inverse is true for Assembler. The more complex a program gets, the more impossible it is for the Assembler programmer to keep track of all the enormous details all by himself.

Synclavier II allows software changes to be made quicker and more accurately than any other digital synthesizer.

It's no small wonder that Synclavier II offers more than five times the features found on any other digital system. Synclavier II's XPL language is the most advanced programming process currently being used to program a digital synthesizer. XPL offers solutions to digital programming that other languages can't offer.

For example, one big problem encountered in programming is how to change one small function of a synthesizer system without changing something else in the process.

A change such as this is not always so easy to do in Assembler language. In order to change the function of just one button in Assembler, the programmer would have to rewrite the software program for practically the entire synthesizer. This is an extremely difficult task because the programmer himself is totally responsible for keeping track of every detail of the software program. Making a software change with Assembler is like having to tear down a finished house and rebuild it from the ground up, just to add a new window.

This tearing down and rebuilding process required by Assembler takes an immense amount of time, not to mention money. Furthermore, the chances are very great that the rebuilt "house" will have more variations on the original structure than the one change the programmer intended to make.

Using XPL to add a new feature to Synclavier II doesn't require the programmer to start over from scratch. The programmer can specifically address the one feature he wishes to change and let the XPL compiler take care of the rest. The compiler allows the new information to be incorporated into the present software without destroying any part of already existing features.

With XPL, New England Digital can afford to add new features to Synclavier II on a regular basis. In this way Synclavier II can remain state-of-the-art for years and years to come.

Synclavier II is the only digital synthesizer that can make affordable changes in its hardware.

What happens when a digital synthesizer eventually uses up all the computing power available in its computer by adding too many new features or options?

If you change any part of the hardware in a digital system programmed by Assembler, nothing will work at all. The new computer hardware won't know what to do with the old software. In order to make the new computer hardware work, an entirely new program must be constructed from scratch.

This is a far greater project than merely adding on new software feature to an existing program. The time required to redesign Assembler software so it could deal with a hardware change, could take up to a year or more.

The architecture of Synclavier II makes hardware changes easy to incorporate. Synclavier II uses a MOVE architecture computer. Synclavier II's MOVE architecture allows additional computing power external to the computer's central processor itself. This means that the possibilities for implementing new hardware can be done in a modular form.

Synclavier II's software is designed so modular hardware additions can be handled by modular software additions. The use of hardware and software modules gives New England Digital total freedom to create any new operation they want for Synclavier II.

If the constant addition of new features eventually exhausts the computing power of Synclavier II's computer, New England Digital will already have the means to accommodate additional computing power for the Synclavier II system at a very reasonable cost. Other digital manufacturers will eventually be forced into a complete redesign of their systems at an enormous cost.

No other digital synthesizer in the world is capable of improving on Synclavier II's advanced technology.

No other digital synthesizer on the market is controlled by a computer anywhere near as fast as Synclavier II's. In fact, Synclavier II's 16 bit computer is more than 10 times faster than any microprocessor currently being used by other digital systems.

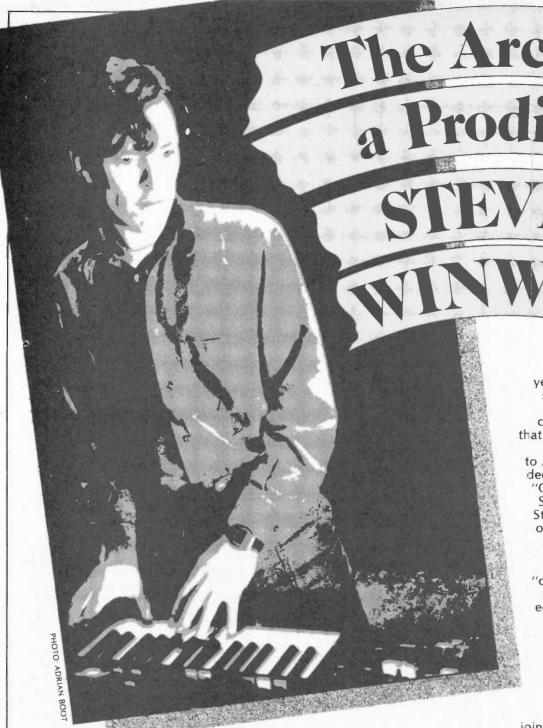
No other digital synthesizer is programmed in a high level structured language like XPL. The likelihood of another synthesizer manufacturer developing a high level language compiler competitive to New England Digital's, is not something to bet your future on. To bring New England Digital's XPL compiler to its present state has required more than 10 man years of development.

Synclavier II not only has the fastest computer and the most advanced software, it also has the only architecture that is flexible and expandable enough to permit serious advancements in its system's design without taking forever.

Synclavier II is truly designed to be a state-of-the-art digital system today, tomorrow, and for years to come. And New England Digital is the only synthesizer manufacturer that can honestly say it has

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by Dan Forte

ake your own record, two songs for four dollars." There was a time when you could actually go into a studio and cut an acetate for under five dollars. In fact, it was an advertisement like the one above that brought Elvis Presley into Sun Studio's Memphis Recording Service in 1954.

These days recording costs for putting out an album usually run well into five (sometimes six) figures. But you can still make your own record, as Steve Winwood proved last year with Arc Of A Diver.

The album was recorded entirely in Winwood's basement studio, with Steve producing, engineering, singing, and playing all the instruments. What began as Winwood's way of trying out his newly constructed recording facility ended up at the top of the *Billboards* charts, where, as of this writing, it is Number 3.

More importantly, the album marked the return of one of England's most gifted rock musicians. Winwood never disappeared completely, but it had been three years since his previous release (a disappointing first solo effort entitled Steve Winwood) and three

years prior to that since the breakup of Traffic, the constantly changing band of eclectics that Winwood founded in 1967.

Winwood's first exposure to American audiences was indeed auspicious—the 1965 hit "Gimme Some Lovin" by the Spencer Davis Group, which Stevie recorded when he was only 17 years old. Ken Emerson (in The Rolling Stone Illustrated History Of Rock & Roll) described the song as "one of the most excited and exciting vocals ever recorded by a white man, let alone a white boy... His yowl seemed to yank him out of his body, and the song was wrought up still higher by

> his wailing organ chords and brother Muff Winwood's hammering bass."

Actually, Stevie had joined Davis' group three years earlier, at age 14. Before that, he and brother Muff led a jazz band while Steve went part-time to music college.

Between leaving Spencer Davis and forming Traffic, Winwood (using the name Stevie Anglo) sang on three tracks by a casually thrown together blues band called Eric Clapton & the Powerhouse. Those three songs, which appeared in the States on an Elektra Records compilation, What's Shakin', hold up today as some of the liveliest, most convincing examples of British blues

It was inevitable that the teenage prodigy playing most of the in-



PHOTO: ADRIAN BOOT

struments, taking all the solos, and handling all the vocals in the Spencer Davis Group would leave to start his own band, but no one could have anticipated the type of ensemble Winwood had in mind. Though he had performed primarily jazz and R&B. Winwood had always listened to a wide variety of musical styles, and that eclecticism formed the basis for Traffic, which he formed with Chris Wood, Jim Capaldi and Dave Mason in 1967. The main idea of the group was that everything would be a collaborative effort, so the quartet woodshedded in a cottage in Berkshire for months, experimenting with various styles and instrumentations. Traffic mixed British folk music, jazz, mid-eastern styles, R&B, country & westernyou name it—and presented it to the rock & roll world. Some of their hybrid experiments succeeded more than others, but their importance as innovators in opening up the boundaries of rock cannot be denied.

In 1969 Winwood joined forces with Eric Clapton and Ginger Baker (shortly after the breakup of Cream) and formed Blind Faith, with bassist Rick Grech of Family. Unfortunately, the expectations the band confronted when people came to hear the original "supergroup" caused

more strain than they could endure, and the quartet dissolved in less than a year.

Winwood then entered the studio to record his debut solo LP, but after enlisting the help of his old cohorts Wood and Capaldi, the resulting album, John Barleycorn, marked the reformation of Traffic. Barleycorn was also one of the first, and most successful, concept albums in rock, revolving around the title song, a traditional British folk tune originating from Berkshire, the county where the members of Traffic all lived.

Throughout the Seventies, Traffic's personnel changed with nearly every album, with Winwood, Capaldi and Wood the only constant fixtures. With albums like Low Spark Of High Heeled Boys and Shoot Out At The Fantasy Factory (which was recorded at the Muscle Shoals Sound Studio in Alabama using the house rhythm section), Winwood returned to his jazz and R&B roots, but with a more contemporary approach.

By the mid-Seventies Winwood had seen enough touring (he was by now all of 26), and Traffic was put to rest for good. Winwood retreated to his cottage in the country, and would not resurface until 1977, with

a self-titled solo album on Island Records. But without a touring band, the LP was quickly overlooked, and it was another three years before Arc Of A Diver. In the interim Steve kept active by backing friends on album projects—including George Harrison's self-titled LP and Marianne Faithfull's trium phant comeback, Broken English—and by building the studio where he would eventually record Diver.

At 33, while rock journalists sit in amazement at the musician's numerous achievements, Steve Winwood seems mildly amused by his past. In interview, he is articulate, witty, more than accomodating—altogether charming. "I consider myself a musician, not a star," he says. Indeed, he is one of the best.

M.I.: I should probably start by asking you what you've been doing for three years.

Winwood: Yeah, I guess you should [laughs]. Not just making the record—that's not the only thing I've been doing. I spent a lot of time forming some writing relationships with different people. I also spent some time working on other people's records—George Harrison, Marianne Faithfull, Mike Oldfield. And I built a studio in my house.

M.I.: Where did you get the technical know-how to engineer your own album?

Winwood: To a certain extent I picked it up over the years, I guess. But I basically picked it up whilst I was doing the record. I'd had an 8-track machine and a small board for, I suppose, seven or eight years. But I bought an old board from Island Records, a bigger 16-track [Helios], and converted the old studio into a control room and made a bigger room next to it into the studio.

M.I.: So it isn't exactly ultra-modern. Winwood: No way.

M.I.: Is the board temperamental at all?

Winwood: Yes, it's fairly temperamental. It wouldn't be possible to, for instance, rent it out, because things go wrong so often. I had to borrow maintenance men off people.

M.I.: How was the actual room designed?

Winwood: See, I had this small room, which was about 20' x 12'— which I'd always worked in. And I had an 8-track machine and all the instruments, and I'd play and record in there. But whenever more than two people got in there, there was a terrible chaotic mess of wires and leads, and you couldn't move—there wasn't room enough to swing a

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cat let alone play. So I decided I'd make that into the control room and build on a fairly large room. I had the building there—it was an old barn—next to where this room was. So I thought it was going to be rather easy to convert this barn into a studio, but, as it happened, the building was a bit unsafe when we got down to it. We had to do lots of extra work. But I made sure there was a big room, to accomodate a

which is the way records are usually made. I think that's important then, because you can easily lose track of what you're doing, you get so immersed in it. The producer is the one who sees it as it will be. But because of the way I work—continuous, steady work—I could see that myself. And the amount of work involved was so great that I could spend time working on another area and then come back a week later PHOTO: SHERRY RAYN BARNETT



Steve Winwood with Traffic at the Fillmore East June 1970

fairly large band—if the time ever arose.

M.I.: And instead you played all of the instruments yourself.

Winwood: I couldn't resist having the opportunity of having the studio there. I couldn't resist the temptation to just do it all on me own. Because that's really the only way you can do that, with a facility like that. You can't really do it in a commercial studio.

M.I.: So in the three years between solo albums your time has still been primarily consumed by musical ventures.

Winwood: Oh yeah, I haven't been farming or fishing or anything like that.

M.I.: When you're working on an album all by yourself is there a problem of staying objective? Where do you get that "other ear" if you're the only person there?

Winwood: Well, I think that's necessary when you have short bursts of long hours in the studio—

and see very clearly and objectively what I'd been doing a week before. It is a problem, working on your own, but I think in this particular project, just by virture of the huge amount of work, it was possible to actually leave a vocal or a bass line for a while and come back and see that, yes, that track was completely wrong, or, what was I thinking about-that vocal is okay after all. The only thing I did find to be a problem was maintaining the enthusiasm for a track or a tune sometimes. It then became necessary to keep altering it.

M.I.: Did you actually sit down and say, "I'm going to do a solo album and play all the instruments and record it in my own studio"? Or were you just working on songs initially? Winwood: That was basically it—I was just trying out the studio. I thought, well, I'll overdub a few tracks and see how it comes out. But, of course, at some point it was necessary to say, I am doing this

album like this.

M.I.: When you decided that you were making an album, did you have an idea of what the end product was going to be like, or did that change along the way? A lot of albums, whether good or bad, seem to have little or nothing to do with the original conception that brought the artist into the studio.

Winwood: That's right. I think you might find that that's true of far more people than would care to admit it. Because, basically, making music and writing songs is an improvisational medium. It's like film-it's only when it comes to be cut that it actually falls into place. and you use what you've got and make the best of that. I think making records, especially this way, is very much the same thing. I had an idea in the beginning, but I deliberately went along with things, and tried this or tried that. Until the final mix, which is really using what you actually have to its best possible advantage.

M.I.: At that point I would think you'd be in the best possible position to do a good mix, because whatever instrument you turn up or down was played by you.

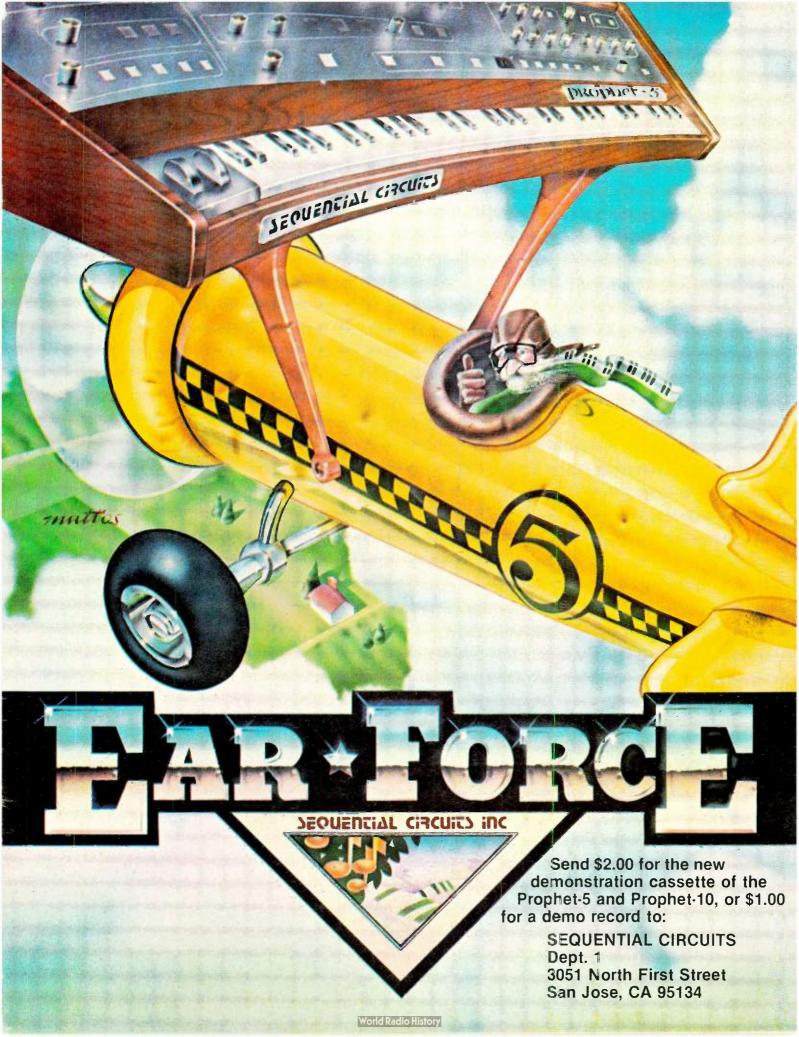
Winwood: Yeah, that's right. With bands, during the mix everyone's trying to push their own track up. The bass player wants more bass, the drummer wants more drums. That's always a problem. The mix should really be done by one person, someone who's objective or knows exactly what he wants. The right mix can totally bring something to life, and a bad mix can ruin an otherwise good track, because there are so many variables—just the balancing, let alone the EQ sounds. It's infinite.

M.I.: At what point into the project did you start collaborating with the lyricists on the record?

Winwood: Fairly early on. I used to write with Capaldi, but he emigrated to Brazil in 1970. Viv Stanshall I'd worked with on the last Traffic album and on my first solo album in 1977. And once you write with someone—I just realized this recently—you never stop writing with them. George Flemming, he's never written any songs; he's been writing a novel for some time. Will Jennings, of course, is the opposite; he's kind of an established lyricist. It was great working with him.

M.I.: Why every song a collaboration? Do you ever write songs completely on your own?

Winwood: Yes, I've written in the past—some of the songs with Blind Faith, a couple of Traffic songs, like "Empty Pages." But I find I'm not so prolific. I used to work with Capaldi,





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who was primarily the lyricist; I'm just used to working that way. I can turn things out quicker—they don't hang around so long.

M.I.: Is there any method to your writing songs, or does it vary depending on which lyricist you're work-

ing with?

Winwood: Not only does it vary depending on who I'm working with. it also varies within a particular relationship as well. Sometimes it can start with a tune, sometimes with complete lyrics, a lyrical idea, a chorus, sometimes I'll have a lyrical idea. I don't really believe in formulas for writing songs; they never seem to work much.

M.I.: What about formulas for playing all the instruments on a track?

Where do you begin?

Winwood: There again, no real formula. Some of the songs were written before I started putting anything down on tape, but in fact some of them weren't written until I'd already started recording. "While You See A Chance" I did with a tambourine loop, and then I just did the piano, the drums, the bass, organ and some synths. A couple of tracks, I used a rhythm box and then overdubbed the drums. On "Arc Of A Diver" I used a sequencer and went on from there.

M.I.: How do you approach playing several different instruments?

Winwood: There's usually some sound I'm looking for on a particular instrument, but eventually one has to say, either think guitar or think keyboard. On the album, I used that initial enthusiasm to lay down certain things—particular instruments I'm not that good at, like drums, I had to practice on drums. I tried to catch it in the first or second takes. because I don't have the ability or stamina to play drums for long periods.

M.I.: Did you ever get tempted to say, "Well, I'll play most of the instruments and call in a drummer for

a couple of takes"?

Winwood: I did, but not so much with a drummer, because that was something I was determined to get right. I was a bit stubborn about that. I did at one point think it would be fairly easy to call someone, but that was so late on into the project I figured I might as well continue.

M.I.: What instrument did you take

up first?

Winwood: Piano. I come from a musical family, so there was a piano in the house. In fact, there were lots of instruments in the house. My grandfather on my mother's side used to play lot of instruments - fiddle and organ and tin whistle. He played in the church and also folk

[Celtic] tunes. And my father was a musician most of his life, and he'd play different instruments to get gigs. One time there was a double bass in the house, he was a sax player, there was a kit of drums in the house when I was a kid, which I played on in the garage. I used to pick tunes out on the piano, and then I was sent to a local man to learn theory, and I learned to read and write music very early. There was a bit of a gap, and then I started picking up guitar, because my brother [Muff] was playing guitar by then. I went part-time to music college while I was in school, when I was about 12 or 13. That didn't last too long, because the way the education system is in England they don't tolerate any kinds of music other than European classical, and I was fairly adamant about the fact that I liked other kinds of music. So whenever I was asked what kind of classical music I liked, I'd always go for the weirdest thing I could think of-Hindemith or Stravinsky, who were fairly avant-garde. But, basically, at that point I wanted to know about blues and rock & roll and iazz.

M.L.: Where could English kids in the early Sixties even obtain American blues records?

Winwood: It was a bit of a clique of people who were discovering this wonderful music that people were making. There was a kind of comradery between the people who collected, swapping albums. You'd get to meet people. Where I was brought up, around Birmingham, there were less records available, because it wasn't a port town, so we'd travel oftentimes to London or Liverpool to record shops. The Spencer Davis Group particularly, I think, thought they needed to bring this kind of music that people didn't know about to a wider audience.

M.I.: Who were some of your favorite American blues artists during

your early development?

Winwood: Well, coming through jazz, the first blues people I heard were people like Ray Charles and Louis Jordan. The band Muff and I played in was kind of a mish-mash we tried to play all these things. We used to go and play the art colleges and meet people who collected blues records. One of them was Christine McVie [laughs].

M.I.: Were you listening even then to some of the influences that would show up in Traffic — Jamaican music

and things like that?

Winwood: Oh yeah. Growing up in Birmingham, that's where all the Jamaicans were.

organ?

Winwood: In the Spencer Davis Group. As soon as I could afford one, I bought a Hammond.

M.I.: What organists did you listen

to?

Winwood: Oh, people like Jimmy McGriff. I must say a great influence was Bill Doggett. "Honky Tonk"—I listened to that a lot.

M.I.: Was it frustrating being in a band where you were obviously the main focal point and creative force and soloist, yet it was called the

Spencer Davis Group?

Winwood: I suppose. I guess that's why I left and formed Traffic, I also wanted to work with guys more my age.

M.I.: But between the Spencer Davis Group and Traffic were the Eric Clapton and the Powerhouse ses-

sions, right?

Winwood: That's right. That was Paul Jones on harp, Eric on guitar, Jack Bruce on bass, Pete York on drums, and this guy called Ben Palmer, who's now a farmer, on piano. I just sang.

M.I.: With so much attention paid by the media to your age, it seems now you almost have to compete with your own youth. A recent article in New Musical Express called you an

"underachiever."

Winwood: I have a much harder time with the English reviewers, generally, than other critics. But then the English music scene is a funny thing.

M.I.: It seems a lot more closed

minded...

Winwood: Insular [laughs]. They have this sort of "flavor of the month" thing. What can you do?

M.I.: You've earned a reputation, whether deserved or not, as some-

what of a recluse.

Winwood: Well, I moved out to the country about fifteen years ago, basically to be able to rehearse without complaints. And I like living in the country. I consider myself a musician, not a star. And I think if vou turn down interviews, particularly in England, you get that image. Around '73 to '75 I did kind of drop out a bit.

M.I.: There seem to be a lot of cases of people who become successful at an early age who later become rock & roll casualties, because of all the adulation so quick. You seem to

have survived that intact.

Winwood: I'm glad you said that [laughs]; I thought you were going to say I was a casualty. You're dead right, and I think it does have something to do with all the attention early on, which can really be a problem. I think I was lucky in that it was M.I.: When did you start playing a kind of slow process of success. At

the time that we had a hit record. with the Spencer Davis Group, I was doing the same thing I'd always been doing—sitting in a van on the motorway on the way to another city to play a gig. And in those days success was judged by how many nights a week you worked. So all that was happening was that the places were getting slightly bigger and we were travelling farther afield. I didn't sort of go to sleep one night as a poor, broke nobody and wake up a rich star — that never happened to me. M.I.: When you formed Traffic what

was the musical objective?

Winwood: We had very definite ideas about the musical objective. We sat down and talked it outeven while I was in Spencer Davis we were discussing it. We started with the idea of it being a collaborative band—all the material we did, we'd all sit down and write by com-

M.I.: Was that as difficult as it sounds like it must have been?

Winwood: Yeah, but it was good fun actually. Whenever we worked as a trio-Chris, Jim, and I-we always



worked like that. The only person who didn't want to work like that was Dave Mason; he'd say, "Here's my tune; I've written it, and no one's going to fuck with this" [laughs]. He wasn't happy with the situation, so he quit. Also, we didn't want to be just a rhythm and blues band. We wanted to draw on other influences—classical, country, folk and combine different kinds of music. We set out to carve something that was our own, not just borrowed from black American music. M.I.: In hindsight it seems that Traffic was one of the first British rock bands with a very obvious and selfconscious English influence.

Winwood: That's right. We used to listen to folk music and Celtic things and play it to an extent.

M.I.: Did it start as a trio?

Winwood: It started as a quartet. Dave Mason left before the first album was finished, because he didn't want to collaborate.

M.I.: But is he on the first Traffic LP? Winwood: He's on it all [laughs]. But when the record was licensed to America, the record company [United Artists] decided to just have the trio pictured on the cover.

M.I.: So how did Dave Mason end up

back on the second LP?

Winwood: Okay, we were a trio with this impending American tour coming up. We'd never been to the States, so we figured, sod it, we'll go as a trio. So we went as this strange trio with keyboards, drums and flute. When I played guitar, Chris would play bass or organ. We used to work it out somehow. It was more like a musical circus. And it seemed to go down fantastically. Of course, the audience was probably all stoned on acid [laughs]. Everything seemed to be going well, and then Dave Mason saw us and asked to come back-because there was never any bad feelings. He still didn't want to collaborate, but the material he was now writing was more the sort of thing we would have written if we had collaborated - more Trafficy things.

M.I.: What made you quit while Traffic was a pretty successful group and join Blind Faith?

Winwood: I think what happened was Dave Mason left again [laughs]. We figured that leaving with him was material like "Feelin' Alright" and "You Can All Join In."

M.I.: Blind Faith was hyped as being the first "supergroup." Did you guys

see it that way at all?

Winwood: No, we didn't. It was totally innocent. We just got together and wrote a couple of tunes, rehearsed a bit, cut a few tracks. It wasn't until we came to play on stage that we realized what was going on. Suddenly there's thousands of people with these expectations of what they wanted to hear. It didn't make any difference what we played like-they thought it was great. It was a bit off-putting, in a way, and disappointing.

M.I.: Did you play any guitar in

Blind Faith?

Winwood: Oh yeah.

M.I.: Even with Eric Clapton in the band?

Winwood: Oh yeah. M.I.: On the record?

Winwood: [laughs] Yes. See, I'd known Eric for ages-we were friends, you know.

M.I.: Did you ever play guitar with Timi Hendrix?

"I didn't go to sleep one night as a poor, broke nobody and wake up a rich star — that never happened to me."

Winwood: No [laughs]. I never did. I'll tell you what I did play; I played drums with Hendrix. On a session! I was supposed to do a session with Jimi, and the drummer never showed up-it was just Jimi and I and Chris Wood.

M.I.: When Traffic reformed after Blind Faith, what personnel changes

took place?

Winwood: Jesus. Well, then it all started. We got Rick Grech in at some point, on bass, and Rebop Kwaku Baah, Jim Gordon. Then came the Muscle Shoals chapter, which was, in a way, one of the best. They're fantastic musicians. It was one of the most total experiences I think I've had working with bands. After that, there was Rebop, Jim, Chris and I, and we got Rosko Gee who played bass on When The Eagle Flies. At that point I decided we'd come to the end of the road. Also, I knew I didn't want to see a hotel or a dressing room for a while.

M.I.: What about Live At The Canteen?

Winwood: That's right—that's another version, because Dave Mason came back. He just came back and said, "I want to play with you guys." What do you say? We were already a nine-piece band [laughs]—what difference is it going

to make? M.I.: Could you give a rundown of the keyboards and guitars you used on Arc Of A Diver?

Winwood: I used an old '53 Fender Strat, which I've had for quite some time, and then I played a Gibson "The Paul" model, which is very nice, through a little Peavey amp. I played an Ovation acoustic, an Ibanez mandolin on one track, a Steinway grand piano, and a Hammond C-3 organ—which is the same,

I think, as a B-3, but the case is different.

M.I.: What kind of bass did you use? Winwood: On the record? All of it's keyboard—Multimoog.

M.I.: What kinds of synths do you have?

Winwood: Well, I always used a Minimoog, basically, but now I use a Multimoog for the solos and the bass, and I used a Minimoog patched up to sequencers. On the album I also used a Polymoog, although I don't have it anymore—I traded it for some more synths. I used a Prophet 5 that I rented. And I played a Yamaha CS-80...I reckon that's it. I've since got a Roland J-4, but I didn't use it on the album.

M.I.: Does your music reading ever come into play these days?

Winwood: Well, strangely enough it never does, because musicians these days don't like to read—particularly English musicians. Present something to them and they laugh at you. But, personally, I like to read, and I keep it up by reading organ music, because it's very complex stuff, with four lines. And on the album I'd work out parts on a small tape machine, and also jot down lines on staves; I found it easier to do that sometimes.

M.I.: Do you have any desire to work with other musicians in a band context again? And do you want to per-

form live again?

Winwood: Yeah, very much. Basically, it would be my band; I'm going to start auditioning musicians. I won't tour for more than three months out of the year, but I do want to get back to playing live, getting that instant response.

M.I.: Do you still listen to blues

records much?

Winwood: Yes, I do. Lately I've had a much greater interest in Southern music, country music. But, yes, I do listen to blues.

M.I.: There seems to be somewhat of a blues revival happening in England, with groups like the Blues Band and Rocket 88.

Winwood: Unfortunately, I'm not sure it has quite the depth that it used to have.

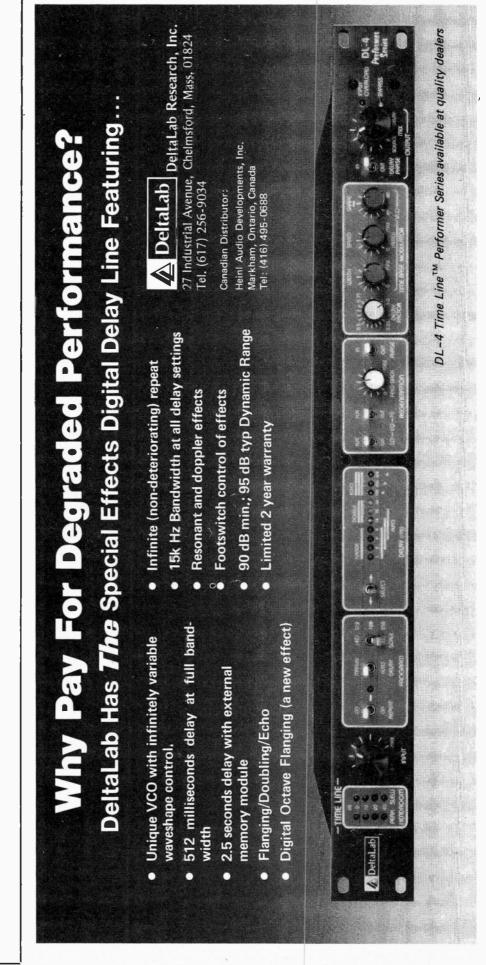
M.I.: Do you ever get an urge to just get together with Clapton or some other musicians and play some blues?

Winwood: Oh yeah.

M.I.: A reunion of Eric Clapton & the Powerhouse.

Winwood: Maybe that's it. That's the best suggestion yet [laughs]. Everyone's been saying, "When are you going to reform Blind Faith or Traffic?" Eric Clapton & the Powerhouse—that's the best suggestion I've heard yet.

M.I.





keep from falling apart."
Ozone level? Not rowing with both oars in the water? Beyond help? No...not really. Because once you've weeded through the dramatics of Fripp's formalized and futuristic jargon, his concepts are rather simple. But what really helps, however, is the realization that the mind of Robert Fripp is not void of a sense of humor.

Besides being one of the most organized and structured in-dividuals in rock & roll, Fripp is a warm and congenial fellow. He is constantly concerned that things be done properly and that others' rights are not infringed upon. "Do you think," he said with a lengthy pause at the onset of a poolside interview I once did with him, "that our talking here will disturb these other people?" I said I didn't think it would and it didn't appear to, yet throughout our talk Fripp insisted

that I lower my voice to a near whisper. I did.

"Obligations must be fulfilled," he told me upon our first encounter. That was in July of 1979. Fripp's first solo album, Exposure [Polydor], had recently been released and he was conducting an experimental Frippertronics tour playing for audiences of 50 to 300. During the previous year, Fripp had begun his first three year campaign, "The Drive To 1981."

"I can see for a period of three years," he told me. "I can commit myself to a venture for three years. It's short enough that I can come to terms with it. Five years is too long: two years is too short to do very much; consequently, one has the three year period. That happens to end in 1981. There will be a second three year campaign after that, but it will have a different characteristic, so I needn't concern myself with that at the moment."

The Drive To 1981 is now over. In those three years Fripp has worked nearly non-stop. Aside from producing and/or playing guitar with The Roches, Blondie, Talking Heads, Peter Gabriel and David Bowie, among others, he has recorded and released two solo albums, done several tours, written a monthly column for Musician, Player & Listener, and most recently, assembled a New Wave instrumental band called The League Of Gentlemen. Continued on page 22

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The new campaign is only in its infant stage and the only definite plans are for yet another band (more on that later), a new and different type of Frippertronics LP, and a possible album and continuation of The League Of Gentlemen.

"I always work to my capacity," Fripp said. "I go the whole hog, including postage." He takes his work extremely seriously, emphasizing the fact that no artist can expect to reach or even approach his or her potential without a great deal of hard work. "My belief is that anything good will always do well. But it has to be very good, not quite good. It has to be incredibly good. And then," he tells me with just the slightest smile, "you earn a living." Fripp continues, "There's always flukes, but my belief is that the biggest commercial records are generally the best; such as the Beatles, for example."

Fripp, age 35, first recorded in 1967 with Giles, Giles & Fripp. That band grew into King Crimson, the group which Fripp led until 1974 and for which he is most noted. Crimson is generally credited as being one of the founders of the British progressive rock movement from which such groups as Genesis, Emerson, Lake & Palmer and Pink Floyd emerged.

The first version of King Crimson included an adolescent friend of Fripp's named Greg Lake. At the time Fripp asked him to join the band, Lake was cleaning toilets and washing floors in a factory. "Greg brought to it a sense of rock & roll that wouldn't have been present without him." recalled Fripp.

"There were three performing King Crimsons. There would be two that I consider to be King Crimson—the first and the last (which featured Bill Bruford, John Wetton and David Cross), and that period from 1970 through the middle of 1972 was a transition from one to the other."

For Robert Fripp, that interim period was "personally very painful. Everything I was going to do was to be wrong, yet it still had to be

done." It was a time when Fripp and group lyricist Peter Sinfield engaged in a hostile fight over control of the group, and more specifically, its name. Obviously, Fripp won out.

The last version of Crimson, which performed from mid-1972 until the end of 1974, was the most popular and musically advanced. However, just as the group was about to become, in Fripp's words, "colossally" successful, he left and they collapsed. "I broke it up because I had other work to do, said Fripp, explaining the end. "My proposal was with Ian McDonald [from the original 1967 line-up] coming in to replace David Cross, in order to give the line of descent from the first King Crimson. I would be replaced by a guitarist, another guitarist, so that King Crimson would continue without me. I felt that wholly viable; I think that would have worked." Yet the group's management, according to Fripp, "wasn't prepared to handle a King Crimson without me present in

After the demise of Crimson, Fripp virtually dropped out of the music scene, making only two experimental albums with former Roxy Music member Brian Eno. In 1975 the guitarist enrolled in the International Academy for Continuous Education at Sherborne House in London to study with British philospher J.G. Bennett. (Fripp has since edited and published over 23 of Bennett's lectures, with over 100 more in preparation.)

t wasn't until the winter of 1977 that Fripp re-emerged. Peter Gabriel had left Genesis eighteen months previously and he asked Fripp to contribute some guitar work to his first solo album and tour. Although Fripp enjoyed working on the album, he was not ready to appear publicly, choosing instead to perform each night of the tour from the wings.

"I don't consider the Peter Gabriel tour or album to be Robert Fripp," he said matter-of-factly. Well then, who was it? "It was a friend of Peter's by the name of Dusty Roads. He's a Fripp clone. You see, I don't consider I did anything as Robert Fripp until the end of July, the beginning of August 1977, which was the Heroes album I did for David Bowie with Brian Fno."

In 1978, Fripp began his Drive To 1981. After turning down an offer to tour with Bowie he chose to do some producing. His first two projects were at opposite ends of the musical spectrum: Peter Gabriel and pop vocalist Daryl Hall.

Gabriel's second solo offering was much along the same lines as his first, though a little more experimental, thanks to Fripp. Unfortunately, like its predecessor it didn't sell in the monumental numbers that Genesis albums had. Fripp, in addition, did not want to use his name on the LP, saying it was Dusty Roads who actually produced it. Atco Records, however, was not impressed and according to Fripp, "considerable pressure was brought to bear" and his name was used. Looking back on Peter Gabriel II, Fripp said, "There were one or two parts that were pretty nice but still, I had considerable reservations about

What happened with the album he did for Daryl Hall was even more of a hassle for Fripp. As a producer, Fripp gave Hall a sense of musical freedom which the singer was not used to, allowing Hall to make the musical statement he had always wanted to make. RCA, Hall's label, felt differently and refused to release the album, Sacred Songs, on the grounds that it was not commercial enough for Hall's fans. Fripp tried fruitlessly through Hall's management to get the album out on RCA or another label, but they refused to budge. It wasn't until Fripp, through interviews he gave in. 1979, urged fans to write and call

PHOTO: CHESTER SIMPSON





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RCA that the label finally backed down and put it out. Released last year, the record sold as well as most Hall & Oates records and even yielded an AOR hit, "4/4 Time."

Fripp spent the rest of 1978 working with artists ranging from Blondie to Janis Ian to The Roches. He also completed his first solo album, a record that took over two and a half years to complete. Released in March, 1979, Exposure is generally regarded as the essential Robert Fripp album. Aside from being hailed by many critics as one of the best albums of 1979, it is a powerful artistic statement virtually without musical boundaries.

Exposure features many of Fripp's friends and musical cohorts, including Phil Collins, Peter Gabriel, Brian Eno, Narada Michael Walden. Daryl Hall and Peter Hammill, The songs range from hard core punk to One track, "NY 3," features an argument between an unmarried pregnant teenager and her alcoholic parents. The argument actually occured one hot summer night in 1977 in the New York City apartment across the alley from Fripp's. They to present Frippertronics to his fans. were keeping him awake, so he It is a musical technology decided to stick a mike out his win- developed by Fripp that produces a dow and tape it; later Fripp recorded music to place under it.

told me recently, "if Sacred Songs, Peter Gabriel II, and Exposure were all put together and listened to as a trilogy, it would express my views in terms of, if you like, MOR. It's what I should enjoy from a broad MOR spectrum. Sacred Songs is for me an entirely exquisite album. Well, it took a lot of work from a lot of nice people.'

o promote Exposure, Fripp conducted what he called "the antitour" during the summer of 1979. An alternative to full scale tours, Fripp hit the road with just himself, his guitar and tape recorders, and performed, usually for free, in radio stations, clubs and record stores for small audiences. The tour lost over \$25,000 per month yet was considered an enormous success by Fripp because it fit the concept of "a small intelligent mobile unit replacing the dinosaurs" (Fripp's term for big record companies and mega-

buck supergroups). Fripp's final years on the road with King Crimson put a sour taste in his mouth about the standard method of touring, causing him to arrive at his unorthodox alternative.



"There was a frustration of not spacey Frippertronics to apocalyp- making any real contact with autic Crimson-styled progressive rock. diences. First, there was the large scale event. Second, there was the attitude towards rock concerts as a spectator sport. Third, there was the vampiric relationship between performers and audience."

The essence of the '79 tour was gentle and highly textured sound. Although created on guitar, the end 'From my point of view," Fripp result resembles a keyboard. The process is described more thoroughly by Fripp on the liner notes of his second album:

> Frippertronics is defined as that musical experience resulting at the interstice of Robert Fripp and a small, mobile and appropriate level of technology, vis. his guitar, Frippelboard [Ed: His effects pedal board and two Revoxes. The system by which two Revoxes form a signal loop and layer sound was introduced to me by Brian Eno in July 1972 in his small front room while we recorded what became the first side of No Pussyfooting...

For the Frippertronics tour, in addition to the two reel-to-reel Revox tape decks, Fripp used his 1957 Black Beauty Gibson Les Paul, which he has owned since 1967, and a Marshall 100w head with 4 x 12 bottom. Fripp declined to elaborate on the Frippelboard, but from my observations it appeared to contain a volume pedal, distortion unit and

signal booster.

After finishing the tour, Fripp began work on his second solo LP, God Save The Queen/Under Heavy Manners [Polydor]. It was really two LPs in one, one side featuring the passive music of Frippertronics, while the other side blended Frippertronics with disco. Fripp dubbed this new hybrid, appropriately enough, "Discotronics."

In 1979 Fripp also produced an album for the quirky folk trio, The Roches. Introduced to them by New York Times critic John Rockwell, Fripp exercised a style of producing which he had developed called "Audio Verite."

"Audio Verite," says Fripp, "expresses two things: the commitment to try and capture the essence of performers on record rather than the other approach, which is to say, 'Let's make a record, who can we get to do it?" which is the format in the industry or where the producer is on an ego trip and is determined to make the record despite the artist. That's the first side of it. There's a committment to whatever the essence of the Roches might be through the process of discovery. And secondly is the way of eventually producing it, substantially without equalization or limiting and so on.'

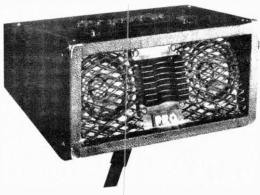
Fripp spent a few weeks in the Spring of 1980 helping Bowie record Scary Monsters. He then returned to England where he formed his first band in five years, The League Of Gentlemen, named after the first group Fripp ever played in as a teenager.

Consisting of Fripp on guitar and effects, former XTC member Barry Andrews on keyboards, British bassist Sara Lee and drummer Johnny Too Bad, the League Of

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Continued from page 24

Gentlemen began rehearsing in a 14th century hunting lodge just outside of Wimball, England in March of last year. After a sold out European swing in the spring, Fripp took the all-instrumental band on a tour of U.S. clubs last summer.

he League Of Gentlemen is a dance band," Fripp said adamantly. "The best way to listen to it is while dancing, and the best way to dance to it is while listening." That is a point that Fripp tried strenuously to get across to each audience during the tour—so much so that Fripp refused to play any clubs that did not allow adequate space for dancing.

When I casually refer to the League Of Gentlemen as "his band," I am stopped abruptly by a somewhat irate Fripp. "There has never been a Robert Fripp band and I sincerely hope there never will be. I am a member of this band; I receive one quarter of any profits they might earn. Anything I say is only my opinion. I am in no way a spokesman for this band."

Fripp, however, still considered himself a solo artist even during the height of the League's activity. "You see, it's a way of being a small mobile and intelligent unit inside a slightly larger small mobile intelligent unit. If Barry Andrews has his own solo career, as he does, and I have my own solo career, as I do, and if Peter Gabriel does end up using the rhythm section, it means all the components within the League Of Centlemen are growing and developing on their own. And when we come together to form another system (to which all the others are subsystems) the whole thing can be stronger." Pausing slightly, he adds, "It's called growth."

"The League Of Gentlemen is a compromise between history and innocence," Fripp continues. "You have my background as being fairly historic, but not really interested in the professionalism or competency involved in that. Barry Andrews obviously has some history in XTC and so on, but wouldn't be considered to be the professional that I am-and that doesn't imply any quality distinction at all. And Sara and John don't have as much experience as Barry, but I don't think that that's a drawback. I think that gives them a whole range of opportunities that I don't have unless I work to find them. To me, something only really happens when you abandon your competency and become incompetent in a certain kind of way. Does that make sense?"

Fripp's original concept for the League was not to release a record unless there seemed to be a substantial demand for it. "We were talking about the way a musician interacts with the audience," Fripp reminded me, "and one of the main things about Frippertronics was that I ask for a certain kind of response from the audience—active listening. For the League, I'm asking for a certain response to the band which we in turn can respond to. If there is a demand for a record we could respond to it. But I don't think we'd do it merely for our health." Whether in sickness or in health, in late March of this year, Polydor Records released a League Of Gentlemen LP.

After completing the League Of Gentlemen album, Fripp helped his friends Brian Eno and David Byrne with their joint collaboration, My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts, and he also finished recording another Frippertronics album. Entitled Let The Power Fall, the album was offered to Polydor, who rejected it for the more commercially viable League Of Gentlemen LP. Let The Power Fall, in turn, was released independently in the U.S. by EG Editions Ltd. (the label owned by Fripp's management company).

nd that, it appears, ends the "Drive to 1981." So what does Fripp have in mind during the "Decline To 1984?" Fripp is reportedly eyeing some producing offers and has, according to a source close to him, "put the League Of Gentlemen on hold."

His first project for phase II of plan seems to be a new group he is rumored to be forming called "Discipline." It is said to feature, in addition to Fripp, his former King Crimson partner, drummer Bill Bruford, and Talking Heads/Bowie guitarist Adrian Belew. The band will also contain a yet undisclosed bassist. The group may tour Europe this summer and America sometime next fall. There are also plans for an album. Musically, they promise to be much closer to King Crimson than Fripp's other recent works.

Although Robert Fripp still talks frequently about the world's steady march towards the apolcalypse, he does show some slight signs of optimism. "There is hope," he told me in our last conversation. "Hope is the increasing conviction that the earth is a benevolent creation...it just got a bit screwed up."

Continued from page 6

ing about, he held nothing back, as if each concert might be the last time he could reach his audience with his message. A true trailblazer, Marley pioneered the incorporation of rock, blues, funk, and disco elements into reggae, and further internationalized the music by bringing his live show to Africa, Europe, and North America. He was also an underrated rhythm guitarist—along with Peter Tosh, who played lead guitar with the original Wailers, Marley had a major role in popularizing reggae's distinctive chuka-chuka guitar style.

Reggae music is strong enough now to survive the death of its leading ambassador. Although the Jamaican originators of reggae still don't get the recognition they deserve, through the efforts of musicians like Stevie Wonder, Blondie, and the Clash, the sound of reggae has been thoroughly integrated into contemporary popular music.

Bob Marley will be remembered as one of the most significant forces in international music in the post-World War II era. At this time, still so soon after his death, it is impossible to imagine a world in which a man of such vibrant energy and vision is no longer around. But perhaps Bob Marley himself gave us the best advice for coming to grips with his death. As he sang in one of his most memorable songs, Natty Dread's "No Woman No Cry":

Good friends we have, Oh, good friends we have lost along the way In this great future, you can't forget your past So dry your tears, I seh

M.I.



PHOTO: DIANE KLEIN

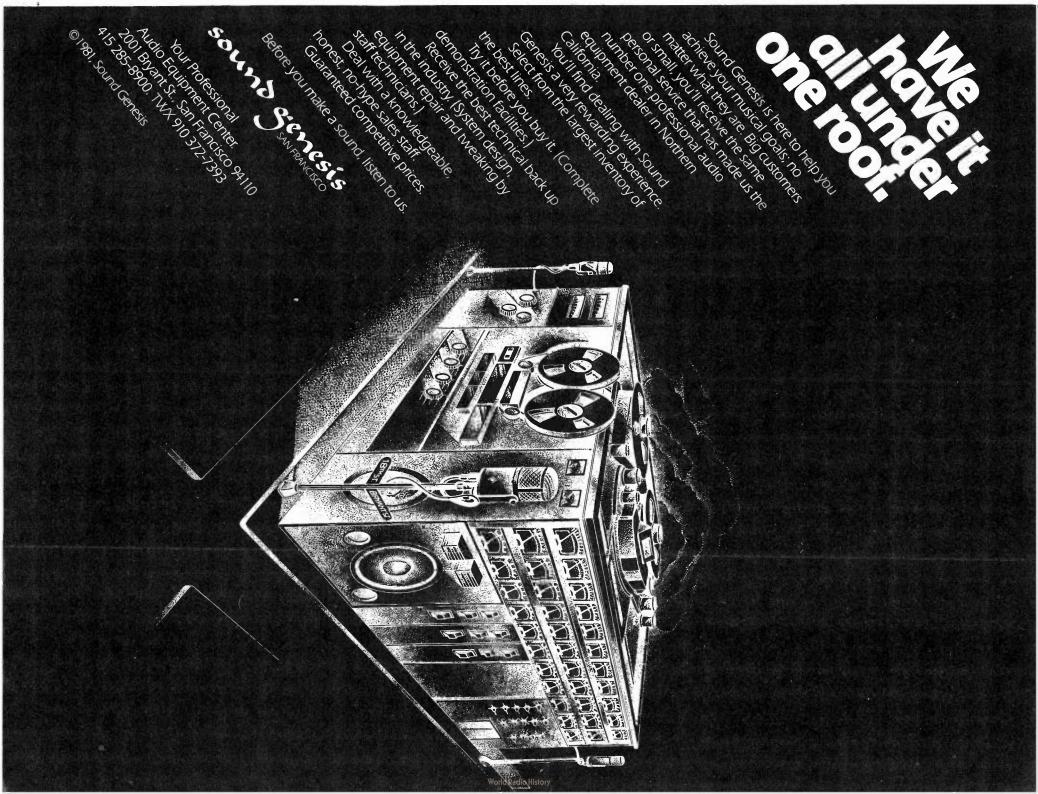




PHOTO: TERRY MILLER

lan McLagan

by Bruce Dancis

Q: How would you describe your playing?

A: Guess work with a lot of confidence.

Q: The Faces had the reputation of being a hard-drinking, rowdy band, didn't they?

A: Yeah. We were all Presbyterians.

Q: What are your future plans? A: I was going to ask you if I could borrow a hundred dollars.

A sense of humor is not a prere-

quisite for a long and successful career as a rock musician. But in Ian McLagan's case, it has helped carry him though almost twenty years of playing with Small Faces, Faces, Rod Stewart, the Rolling Stones, Ron Wood, the New Barbarians, and most recently, as the leader of his own band. Yet beneath the one-liners and self-deprecatory attitude towards his own ability lurks a veteran keyboardist/guitarist whose robust playing and commitment to teamwork has enhanced every group he's ever played with.

That's Mac pounding out those rollicking rockabilly-tinged licks on the Faces' "Stay With Me" and "It's All Over Now." That's Mac on the organ part which lit up Ron Wood's "I Can Feel the Fire." That's Mac on his Wurlitzer electric piano during Mick Jagger's rap on "Miss You" from the Stones' Some Girls. And, of course, that's Mac on keyboards, guitar, and vocals on his second solo LP, Bump In The Night (Mercury), one of the rock & roll delights of 1981.

Like many of his peers, the

West London-born McLagan grew up listening to American rock & roll and blues. When he was young his parents bought him a guitar so that he could play Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly, and Elvis Presley tunes. By the beginning of the 1960s, when Mac was a young teenager, he had figured out some guitar chords and learned how to transpose chords onto the piano.

Ian first encountered the Rolling Stones in 1962 when he was attending art college. The Beatles "Love Me Do" was out, but the Stones first single, "Come On," had vet to be released. "I used to see them every Sunday night at this little pub room," Mac recalls. "I couldn't believe that were white and young." Mac was playing guitar and singing lead with a band called the Muleskinners when he booked the Stones for an art school gig, with his group opening. "Afterwards," says Mac, "I went up to Mick and asked him, 'What's your agent's name, who do you get gigs from?' And he gave me the phone number of their agent, and eventually I got a lot of gigs through that." The Muleskinners "were doing a lot of the things the Stones were doing. We were just copying-me doing an impersonation of Mick Jagger.'

Switching to keyboards, an old Hammond L-100, Mac and the Muleskinners put out a single, which he describes by making a sound of an airplane falling from the sky, before he left to join a "pop-jazz" band with Boz Burrell, now the bass player with Bad Company. He quit after six months-"I was trying to get them to do Otis Redding"-and received a call from the manager of the Small Faces. "They wanted a sort of Booker T. type of organ sound." Mac remembers. This was in November, 1965, after the group had released their first hit single, "Whatcha Gonna Do About It."

During the next three-plus years, Mac and his mates - guitarist Steve Marriott, drummer Kenney Jones, and bassist Ronnie Lanemade the Small Faces one of Britain's most popular rock bands. From 1965-1968, the band scored ten Top 20 singles, their sound evolving from Stones-style R&B/rock to the more expansive studio wanderings of Ogden's Nut Gone Flake. Yet for all their popularity in their native country and in Europe, with the exception of 1968's "Itchykoo Park," Small Faces never made much of an impact in the U.S. For Mac, the main reason was that the band never toured the States. "The Who," Mac recalls about his contemporaries whose early history parallels Small

Faces' in many respects, "came over here and slugged it, like they had done in England in the early days." But when Small Faces were offerred the opportunity to tour the U.S. by bus, they rejected it: "We were travelling around in a fucking limosine in England. Why go on a bus? We should have come over, but..."

The eventual breakup of Small Faces was both a surprise and a disappointment to McLagan. The band had been having internal problems, and then they played a large indoor festival in London. "We were going into 'Lazy Sun,' the last song," explains Mac, "and Steve said, 'I'm gonna vamp out on this bit.' We said. 'OK. Great.' He had invited Alexis Korner up on stage for this iam. We started going into the jam at the end, and Steve just put his guitar down and walked off. And that was it. We just fumbled our way through it. We were a bit angry, says Mac understatedly. Small Faces did some more gigs before breaking up. Ironically, Marriott asked Ian to join his new group, Humble Pie. Mac was already a good friend of Humble Pie's other guitarist, Peter Frampton, but he didn't get along with Greg Ridley and the job didn't happen.

Mac didn't remain inactive for long. Within six months after Marriott walked off stage, Mac, Jones and Lane started playing with Ron Wood. "I had met Woody at Steve's," Mac recalls. "He had been

playing bass with Jeff Beck, so he wanted to play guitar more. That just sort of flowed in. We were rehearsing, and then Rod started hanging around. So we had to ask him to join," Mac deadpans.

Thus began a long and often tumultuous association, in which Mac's keyboards played a major role in the sound created both by Faces, the name of the new group, and Rod Stewart, who started to simultaneously pursue his own solo career. Yet to hear Mac tell it. his piano work wasn't anything special: "It's very bastardized. In fact, everything I do is the easy way out, cause I haven't got a lot of technique. It's more by bullying the keyboards that I get any sound out of it. I'm very heavy-handed and I haven't got much of a left hand, so I just fumble through it generally. Whereas Jerry Lee Lewis or Nicky Hopkins will do something from the wrist, I play from the shoulder. So I have to approach things a different way. I play heavily on the organ, too. I had the action changed so that it's really hard, cause I've got an unsubtle touch." McLagan sees himself primarily as a "team player" "Sometimes I'll go too much in the background," he admits, "[but] I've always been lucky to play with friends, and part of the talent that all of them have got is give and take—an unwritten code of ethics."

The Faces/Rod Stewart relationship was a confusing one, not the



least because the band and Stewart had recording contracts with two different labels. It also caused the musicians involved to play different roles, depending upon whether they were working on a Faces or a Stewart solo album. "I used to be more of a team player on Rod's albums," says lan. "We didn't rehearse-we used to work out arrangements in the studio. But with Faces, if I had any part of the song, I'd have my bit worked out and I'd be pushing for that. We were all sort of elbowing, trying to get in. Faces sessions tended to be a bit more like quesswork, whereas with Rod's sessions, it was one guy and we were all playing to him." Nevertheless, some of the songs that were done at Faces sessions, such as "Losing You," eventually ended up on Stewart's

Much has been written about the bitter and highly publicized split between Stewart and the rest of the members of Faces at the end of 1975, but McLagan's side of the story has not been heard before. Mac may joke around a lot, but considerable resentment obviously remains: "I don't think Rod was that interested in working as Faces as much as making big bucks on his

own. The last tour with Faces was grim, horrible, and angry. We were staying in different hotels. Rod and us. Woody was always fun to play with, but it was no fun looking at Rod on stage. I can't bear to work like that-you know, where you look at someone, look at Rod, and he looks straight through you, with no feeling." Another problem with the tour was that their manager had hired string players for each show. Or as Mac puts it, "Twelve fucking useless string players, scratchy violins that took up half the stage. It wasn't rock & roll anymore and it definitely wasn't fun."

Still, even through Ronnie Lane had left the band two years previously (Tetsu Yamauchi replaced him), and Ron Wood had already toured and recorded with the Rolling Stones and lan knew Woody would be joining them, Mac was very angry when he picked up a newspaper and read that Stewart said the Faces had disbanded. So angry, in fact, that the remaining four decided to do a Faces album themselves. But it never came off.

At around the same time, a British record company re-released the Small Faces' "Itchykoo Park," and it went straight up the charts.



Mac explains: "So Kenney, Ronnie, Steve and I got together again, thinking we'll do one gig, film it, record it, make mega-bucks. It wasn't for fun—the idea of it was just for money, because we were all broke and there was some interest." Lane dropped out shortly thereafter and was replaced by Ricky Wills, now the bassist with Foreigner.

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Despite the mercenary reasons for regrouping, Mac found that he "had never had such fun in ages." Unfortunately, the two albums Small Faces II released didn't sell very well, and the band broke up in the summer of 1978. Although disappointed with their failure, the reconstituted Small Faces gave McLagan a chance to both sing and

write songs, neither of which he had much opportunity to explore in Faces.

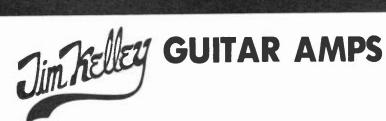
Fortunately for Mac, he wasn't out of work for long before he received a phone call from Ron Wood and Keith Richards. The Stones were about to begin their summer 1978 U.S. tour and had been rehearsing with Bernard "Touter" Harvey, the keyboardist with reggae singer Peter Tosh. Despite Touter's abundant talents, playing rock & roll was not his forte. So, in Mac's words, the Stones "sacrificed the Jamaican side for the English rock & roll side." Actually, Mac had previously played with Wood and Richards on Wood's first solo LP, I've Got My Own Album To Do, and with the Stones on several tracks from Some Girls. Mac describes his role during the Stones tour as "filler." "There were some tunes where I didn't play at first," he says. "I just didn't see a space and I'd have to find a part. Like 'When The Whip Comes Down'-1 skanked through [lan makes a chopping chord sound]." He played organ on only a couple of tunes: "Mick didn't want that sort of sound. He wanted more Wurlitzer piano, more of a rocking sound. He didn't want keyboards taking over."

When the Stones tour ended, McLagan found that "for the first time in my life I wasn't in a band. So I was thinking what could I do now? Maybe the Stones will ask me to join [laughs]. A couple of minutes later I came to my senses. I thought, 'Hey. Maybe I could make an album.'" Encouraged by his manager, Mac started writing songs and decided to move to America. "I couldn't stay in England any longer," he recalls. "It's so small. And the Small Faces the second time was a big nothing—at least that's the way it was looked at."

Moving to Los Angeles, Mac did some demos with Wood, Jim Keltner, Paul Stallworth, and Bobby Keys. He took some time out in the Spring, 1979 to join the New Barbarians (Richards, Wood, Mac, Keys, plus bassist Stanley Clarke and drummer Ziggy Modeliste) on their pillage through major U.S. cities. Mac especially enjoyed the tour because it gave him a chance to play and sing again in public—"All the almost high harmonies and all the high flat notes were me."

Immediately after the Barbarians tour, Mac went straight into the studio to finish his first solo album, *Troublemaker* (Mercury),

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bringing his all-star pals along to do one track, "Truly." Ironically, the presence of Richards et al on the LP credits, from Mac's point of view, "overshadowed the fact that I was doing an album." McLagan notes that one English newspaper reviewed his single, "Little Troublemaker," as a "typical Stones out-take," when in fact no Stones played on that song, which was written by Mac's new lead guitarist, Johnny Lee Schell.

Following that experience, Mac decided to put together a permanent band for his second album, Bump In The Night. The resulting assemblage, known as the Bump Band, includes Schell, bassist Ray Ohara, and drummer Ricky Fataar, who had played with the Beach Boys as well as appearing as George Harrison's alter ego in the Rutles' parody of the Beatles. Mac also wanted to change his recorded sound: "I wanted a lot more clarity than the last album, sort of a live sound. I wasn't going for a Phil Spector sound, you know. Sparcity's good. If you can do it with less pieces, it's more present."

In his search for the proper sound, Mac found a sympatico producer in Rob Fraboni, who had worked with Joe Cocker, the Band, Bob Dylan, and Eric Clapton. Fraboni labored especially hard on McLagan's vocals. According to Mac, "Rob would direct me. I'd have the words written up front of me, and he'd say, 'You've got the book again, huh. That's what it sounds like—you're just reading it!" For one particularly hard-bitten track, "Alligator," Fraboni had Mac sing while looking at an angry, surreal drawing of a guy with a bass guitar for a nose.

Another change was that McLagan either wrote or co-wrote all of the songs on Bump In The Night. In his earlier bands, Mac's songwriting contributions consisted largely of bits and pieces: "I'd have a gem of a little phrase, and I'd work at it for hours and hours until the phrase was gone. There was just this noise; no sort of subtlety left." As he developed as a songwirter, he learned "how to not overdo an idea— just get it down and forget it."

One thing that hasn't changed too much over the years is Mac's choice of keyboards. He continues to rely mostly on a Hammond B-3 organ—"I've never been into synthesizers, and I don't know if I ever will be. If they can make one sound like a Hammond organ, I'll buy one"—and Wurlitzer electric pianos. As for the Wurlitzers, Mac

feels that "there's something about them that Fender-Rhodes hasn't got. They've got more brightness, more attack. It all started with 'What I Say' and 'Chinese Checkers' by Booker T and the MG's. They were flat-top Wurlitzers, really old ones. I've got one of them." Formerly a Steinway artist during the high-rolling days of Faces, Mac now also uses a Yamaha electric grand and a Hohner Clavinet.

The biggest shift equipmentwise is that the veteran keyboardist has returned to playing guitar, both in the studio and on live shows. One reason is that it has been difficult for a stationary keyboard player to front a band: "Yeah, sitting down with that great big lump in front of you." Mac has been using an electric guitar with a Telecaster body and a 1957 Stratocaster neck with a humbucking pickup on it. The guitar has its own special history. which McLagan recounts: "Pete Townshend smashed his guitar once at the Marquee in London-years ago, before the Who had records out. This choke with the humbucking pickup landed in this girl's lap. She was friends with Pete Frampton, so she gave it to him. He couldn't fit it on any of his guitars, so he helped me fit it on mine." Mac has been using Jim Kelley amps: "They're little and they're pokey. They're sort of like Boogie's, but I think they're better, cleaner. And Wurlitzer's sound good through them." For the Hammond, Mac plays through two boosted Leslie's - "That's about as dirty as

you can get."

Asked to assess his own strengths and weaknesses as a keyboardist, the kind of question to which he usually replies with a joke, Mac pauses before offering a thoughful, if overly modest, answer. "I can play the organ sort of in a style of Booker T, and play the piano sort of in a style - and I mean sort of - of Jerry Lee. But I'm not in their class, nowhere near it. Never claimed to be. But I can fill a hole. I can leave holes, too. That's often more important. Playing with other people- being aware of what they're playing. Playing what's needed, not what you'd like to be playing.

That seems to be a good philosophy for maintaining a long, productive career in a high burn-out field. I asked Mac what he thought has kept him going. "I've been playing in the backgound. Nobody knew I was there." Less pressure? "Yeah, that's definitely right. There was hardly any pressure in Faces."

But now, a sideman no longer, Mac finds that he actually enjoys the pressure. "For years I've listened to peoples' songs," he explains, "and tried to do it. And now I'm sort of doing it a bit myself. There are still loads of things I want to do. But they're all sort of within the rules of rock & roll." And since Mac, more than almost anyone else among his contemporaries in what we Yanks called the "British Invasion," has remained true to the classic British rock & roll sound, that is very good news indeed.

M.I.



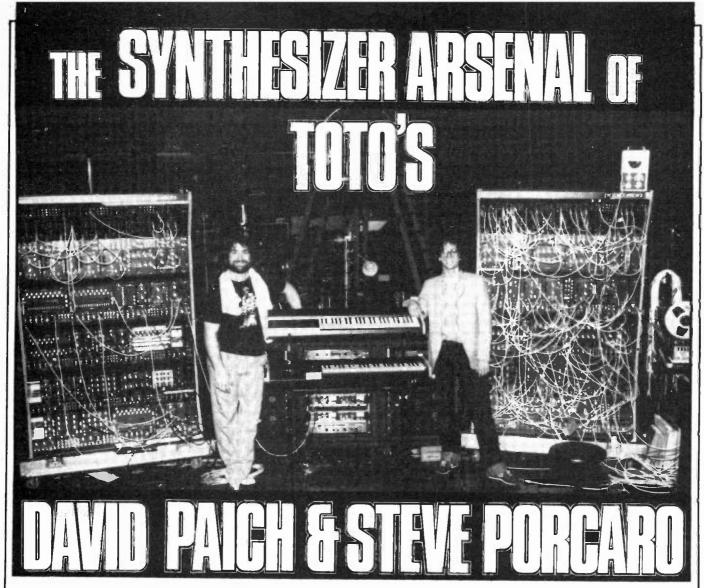
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by Melodie Bryant

eated dutifully in the back studio of their house in the Hollywood hills, David Paich and Steve Porcaro look like a couple of hyperkinetic kids forced to keep still in the middle of a toy store. Ringed by electronic keyboards and synthesizers—some of which stretch from floor to ceiling—they are doing their best to ignore the sensuous hum of electrical current surging around them, and the flirtatious flashing of led's: to sit still, answer the questions, and behave themselves.

You have to give them credit for trying, but it's obviously a task of Herculean proportions. So much so that, unless both are talking at once, the answer of the one is inevitably punctuated by the unconscious foot tapping of the other, and a look of longing towards the equipment reminiscent of a lovesick puppy.

To anyone who has listened to Toto's albums, or seen the band live, Paich and Porcaro's preoccupation with keyboards and electronic

sounds will come as no surprise, for it is largely due to their sonic explorations that Toto's sound has gone from the polished pop of hits like "Hold The Line," "I'll Supply The Love" and "Georgy Porgy" (on Toto) to a full scale expedition into the realm of synthesis (Hydra) and back again with their most recent LP, Turn Back. What began as a relatively modest section of keyboards has now become an arsenal.

But lest anyone assume they were born with a natural understanding of voltage control, Paich and Porcaro are the first to admit that their knowledge has been hardwon. This goes especially for Paich. Reared in the studios of L.A. where he picked up his pointers on piano sitting next to studio regulars like Larry Knechtel and Michael Omartian, he reacted to his first run-in with a Moog with predictable confusion. "The first dates I ever did with a synthesizer," he says, "I'd get called into the studio. I'm a keyboard player and here's a keyboard. They're paying me X amount of dollars and

they've rented this Minimoog and I can't get a sound. I'm turning the attack higher and wondering why I can't hear anything."

If Paich was at first skimpy on technical expertise, he was well grounded where it counts: in musical knowledge. His father, Marty Paich, was and remains one of the busiest arrangers in the business, having worked with everyone from Ray Charles to Glen Campbell. With so much music in the air, it wasn't long before David got involved.

At age five, he began playing drums and studying classical piano. From ten on, he was in the studio at every opportunity, sitting next to keyboard players at sessions and learning what was expected. By age 15, he was getting calls for gigs. By the time Paich entered USC a couple of years later, he found school to be more of a hindrance than a help. "USC was getting in the way of my musical education," he says frankly. "I was missing calls 'cause the phone was out in the hall. And I'd be getting calls at three in the morning

'cause Jackson Browne wanted me to come down to Sunset and record. He'd be saying, 'Where are you?'"

After two years, he dropped out of college to devote full time to studio work, ultimately contributing to that toughest of studio outfits, Steely Dan, on Pretzel Logic and Katy Lied. It was an experience which proved every bit as grueling as its reputation. "I worked on 'Black Friday' and 'Dr. Woo' on Pretzel Logic, and Omartian did the rest. But it was funny because Omartian could play like Donald [Fagen]. He'd write out all Donald's parts. Well, they decided they wanted to have me try and do it. So they're playing there—and I can't play like Donald can. Omartian has him down. He can play it perfectly. So he'd be sitting there cutting the track and they'd say in the booth—very embarrassing—let David try. And I'd be passing him on the way out, and it was like, send me in, Coach. You don't do that on sessions. And I'm saying to him, 'I'll be right out in a second.' And sure enough, I'd get about halfway through and they'd stop and say, 'Omartian, get back in

Paich remains philosophical about the experience. "You have to get over any ego hangups when you work with them," he says, "cause you find out, hey it's cool. You have to be really good to cut their parts." Nonetheless, he says he also learned "to stay away from Steely Dan sessions."

If Fagen and Becker were not the easiest collaborators in the studio, plenty followed who were: Seals and Crofts, for whom Paich arranged; Cheryl Lynn, for whom (with his father) he co-produced a stunning debut LP; and Boz Scaggs, whose most successful album, Silk Degrees, was both arranged and co-written by Paich. He also toured with Scaggs prior to joining up with Toto.

For all his studio experience and his multi-keyboard work with Toto, Paich considers himself primarily a songwriter. And while he now commands a battery of synthesizers, he might never have done so without the aid and influence of his foot tapping alter ego.

B ut if Steve Porcaro is the more technical of the two, it is less out of a natural attraction for the field than that it provided a convenient solution to a ticklish dilemma

Like Paich, Porcaro grew up in a family with close connections to the

L.A. studios. His father, Joe Porcaro, is still active a a studio percussionist. His older brothers, bassist Mike and drummer Jeff, quickly followed in their father's footsteps, carving out prestigious names for themselves in the studios.

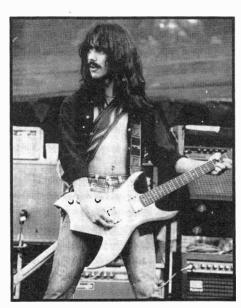
Steve himself began piano lessons at age five, studying with colleagues of his father, which he continues to do, the most recent teachers including Pete Robinson, Clair Fischer and Victor Feldman. He played cello and French horn for a while in elementary school, and because piano wasn't considered an orchestral instrument in high school,

shifted over easily to percussion.

With his family ties and natural talent, it looked as if he had it made. But being a studio brat isn't all it's cracked up to be: there were also expectations. "By the time I was a senior in high school," says Porcaro, "all my friends and brothers had been with all these people. My brother Mike got a gig with Seals and Crofts the second he was out of high school, and he did that with Jeff and David for a while. I auditioned for Mac Davis and didn't get that. Then I auditioned for Tim Buckley shortly before he passed on, and didn't get that. And every-

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Continued from page 35

one was saying, "Well, Steve, what's with you? Are you the runt of the litter?"

A last minute audition with synthesist Gary Wright saved Porcaro the shame of having to complete his final semester in high school, and for two years he played with Wright

HOTO: RANDY BACHMAN

on the road. Steve left Wright to join up with his old friends and future Toto members, backing Boz Scaggs. Then an event occurred which forced Porcaro to define his goals. "I was on the road with Boz, and I had my apartment and my car and I was happening. Everything was shak-

ing and then all of a sudden, Boz decided not to go on the road. There I was with \$200.00 in my pocket—which was what my rent was—and I'd been spoiled because I'd been living with my parents before, and I'd always had brothers who were supportive financially and every other way. So I finally reached a point where I said, 'OK, let's see if we can support ourselves at what we do.' And since I knew something about synthesizers, I began hustling myself as a programmer."

n this area, Porcaro's background gave him distinct advantages: he had studied with the best. "I learned a lot of my basics from Paul Beaver, who was very big in this town as far as renting out synthesizers. My father knew him, so I would go over there, and he was very nice to me. He took me around the first day and showed me some basic stuff. I was just ogling. I wanted to take a picture for my friends so they would believe me. I also learned a lot from a synthesizer player named Phil Davis. When Jesus Christ Superstar was being performed in Los Angeles, my father played drums, and this guy was the synthesizer player. This was



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when I first had my driver's license. I was there immediately. I'd go sweep up and they let me play around with the stuff."

Thanks to a high school buddy who sold his equipment to study classical piano, Porcaro came into some hardware of his own: a Minimoog, an Oberheim DS-2 (a sequencer), and an Expander Module. Armed with that, and an ARP 2600 furnished by his father, he entered the studio world as a programmer ("He was getting gigs in spite of my recommendation," jokes Paich), until he got an offer he couldn't refuse—an invitation to join Toto.

Although he had played with the other band members in high school, Porcaro's status had always been that of younger brother to drummer Jeff. This was official recognition of his musicianship, and to this day, he recalls being a bit starstruck. "They let me in Toto, you know? It was a dream come true."

It proved a magical combination. The band's debut album, which saw Paich and Porcaro collaborating on keyboards, went platinum, and yielded three gold singles. But in the process of making it, they became impatient with the limitations of their equipment.

Initial attempts at solving the problem only compounded it. Says Porcaro, main spokesman in technical matters, "As we got Prophets and [Yamaha] CS 80's and this and that, the more we learned about synthesizers, we went, 'Well if I just had this modification done here, I could do this, and if I have this, then I'll be able to trigger it from across the stage; and then I'll be able to get my trampoline and do this.' The next thing you know, you've created these monsters which are the most customized, modified, hippest things in the world—but they don't ever work..." "...Because," interjects Paich, "they weren't meant to be modified."

Impressed with the demonstration of Roland's Microcomposer at an AES show, Porcaro bought one, as well as two Polyfusion modular synthesizers to run it through.

t's an impressive—not to say intimidating—rig. In-stead of the conventional configuration of two oscillators, a filter, a VCA and two transient generators for each voice, Toto's Polyfusions (affectionately nicknamed Damius and Ramses) have an extra oscillator, three transient generators and a high pass filter for each voice. Because they are modular, they are constant-

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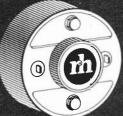
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ly undergoing changes. At the time of this interview, they were set up in a two voice configuration; but when the maximum number of voices is in use with the Microcomposer, they have what they call "the equivalent of eight souped-up Minimoogs." In addition, there are a variety of other modulation sources—anything from sequencers, sample and holds and LFOs to quadrature oscillators (a sine wave sampled at four different points which fade into one another). These can be used for a variety of functions, including phasing and quad panning.

Needless to say, when all of this arrived, Paich, but especially Porcaro, were completely overwhelmed. Recalls Porcaro, "The synthesizers I had worked with, I had used in a very non-technical wayjust using my ears and knowing the knob settings. So all this stuff came, and it was great, but all of a sudden I'm like-this is bigger than Keith Emerson's! I knew how to work digital sequencers, but here I get this Microcomposer, and the manual that comes with it has things in it like [in his deepest voice], 'If the Microcomposer is still not functioning correctly, bring it into your local authorized service center because there's definitely something wrong with it,' and you turn the page and it says 'Unless...' I spent two weeks trying to figure out what was wrong with it."

Although they would have liked more time to work with the equipment, between the two of them enough mysteries were unraveled to complete *Hydra*. An experimental album heavily influenced by goups like Yes and Genesis, more than any of Toto's other albums, *Hydra* played up the role of keyboards, and perhaps for that reason, remains the favorite of Paich and Porcaro.

By comparison, *Turn Back* is a simpler LP, returning to a format of more danceable rock & roll. Synthesizers are used more for sweetening, and instrumentals are kept to a minimum. But that doesn't mean that either of the keyboard players has lost interest in technology. Precisely the opposite is true.

In addition to the Roland and Polyfusion gear, an [Oberheim] OB-Xa and two "Totars" (a custom-made version of George Duke's portable Clavitar, manufactured by his keyboard tech Wayne Yentis), they also have an LM-1 drum computer. Designed by friend and associate Roger Linn, it has a variety of real

drum sounds (stored digitally on computer chips) which can be triggered manually or through an "electronic drumset" (Toto uses Synare). In addition to an internal clock of its own, it also has a synch tone, allowing control of the Microcomposer, effectively acting as a trigger for the entire system. Anyone wanting a good demonstration of the LM-1 can listen to the new Elton John single "Nobody Wins," where Jeff and Steve Porcaro teamed up with Paich and James Newton Howard for the instrumental tracks. No acoustic drums were used.

ut Paich and Porcaro also have plans to integrate synthesis with acoustic instruments, and to illustrate their plans, they proudly point to their "Synch Box." Designed by Ralph Dyck (inventor of the Microcomposer), it allows direct manipulation of the internal clock of the drum computer through manual trigger. Says Paich, finally re-entering the conversation, "Up until now, you've never been able to slow down or stop that clock, or have it humanized. Now, we can make it follow anything. We're writing a symphonic work that we want to debut with an orchestra and we're having an electric eye made so that a conductor can break it with his baton and trigger everything. It's totally controlled parameters."

With all the time they've spent together before Toto, during Toto, and as housemates, you'd think Paich and Porcaro would welcome the opportunity for independent musical activity. On the contrary, what little studio work they do outside of the band, they prefer to share. Nor do they seem to feel cramped by the limitations of the two keyboard format. Says Paich, "You can't ad lib certain things; vou've got to get together and write things out, and orchestrate the parts together. But I think there's a very powerful double energy in double keyboards."

They are not so patient with their equipment. Like a surfer in search of the perfect wave, increased knowledge and experience has only whetted their appetite for a more perfect instrument. Toto does not plan to tour until after another album is released. Meanwhile, with characteristic impatience, since technology has not caught up with them, they are taking matters into their own hands. Says Porcaro, "The next tour, David and I plan on having one keyboard each, two at the most, which will hopefully be of our own design. Because it's all a means to an end, you know? The day I find something that nails it, I won't be sitting here with filters and whatever learning all this. We're waiting for the no-excuse synthesizer. So we're going to build our own." M.I.



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"I really want to write realistic songs, songs that are significant to people. All of us, basically, have the same emotions. We all feel the same hurts. We all feel the same happinesses. And it doesn't necessarily mean that they have to be directly connected to us. A lot of things that really give people pain... perhaps you haven't experienced it yourself, but you can see how much it hurts the next guy. So as a human being you can feel what he feels because you have that empathy for his emotions."

If any musician during the past quarter of a century has succeeded in locating and expressing those human emotions, it is William "Smokey" Robinson. Whether he was singing about dancing up a storm or evoking an inner torment kept hidden by a public smile, the hits Smokey made with the Miracles and as a solo artist have secured a firm place in the memory of those who have heard them. "Shop Around," "You Really Got A Hold On Me," "Mickey's Monkey,"
"Goin' To A Go-Go," "Ooh, Baby Baby," "The Tracks of My Tears," "I Second That Emotion," "Tears Of A Clown," "Cruisin'," and 1981's smash, "Being With You," all have that rare ability to generate a decidedly personal reaction, be it joy or sorrow, on the part of a listener.

It was hard to believe that the warm, healthy looking man walking into the Motown Records executive lounge in Los Angeles was in the midst of celebrating his 25th year in show business. Somehow, the youthful tenor and engaging romanticism heard on Smokey's latest album, Being With You, seemed almost too fresh for an artist with so many years behind him.

But then, Smokey Robinson has never been your typical crooner, or your typical songwriter, producer, or record company executive either, as became apparent during our wideranging conversation.

M.I.: Did you always know as a child that you wanted to be making music for your life's work?

Robinson: Not always. I probably had several different careers in mind. I think the first thing that I wanted to be was a cowboy [laughs], and after that a baseball player. But I've always been a kid who was very much into music. My mother and sisters had a lot of records, and there was always music going on in our house. But I never really thought about it seriously as a career until it started to happen.

M.I.: When did you realize that you had enough talent to be a successful

Robinson: Well, I don't know. I don't think I realized it. It was more being accepted by the public. We had something that they liked, so therefore they're the ones who allowed us to have hit records, so to speak. There are a lot of talented people in the world. It comes to the point where you just have to be at the right place at the right time, and be very blessed in order to become a viable entity in the entertainment world.

M.I.: How do you think the Miracles managed to be at the right place at the right time in 1958?

Robinson: I think it was fate. We were just fortunate inasmuch as we went for this audition for Jackie Wilson's manager, and Berry Gordy, who was writing songs for Jackie Wilson, happened to be at the audition. Even though there was no Motown and Berry wasn't producing records at the time, we sang some songs that I had written while I was going to high school that he really liked. So Berry and I struck up a relationship as a result of that, and the rest is what happened.

M.I.: When did you first start singing with the other Miracles?

Robinson: Ronnie White I've known since I was about 10 years old, and I've known Pete Moore since I was about 12. Ronnie, Pete and I were in several different groups together before the formation of the Miracles. We met Claudette [Rogers] and Bobby [Rogers] when I was about 14 and they became our group members, and as such we became the Miracles.

M.I.: What were you singing at first, your own songs or cover versions? Robinson: Not necessarily cover versions. We were doing what all young groups who haven't recorded themselves do. When you sing at a party or at a dance or some talent show, then you just sing something that is currently popular, a song that you enjoy and like. However, we did learn a lot of the songs I was writing. We would imagine ourselves making records on these songs, which is how we caught the interest of Berry Gordy. In fact, when we went for this audition, we didn't sing any current popular songs by other artists; we sang all songs that I had written.

M.I.: At this early point in your career, who were your greatest influences?

Robinson: Anyone who is in the music business is a liar if they say they haven't been influenced by a great many people, because music itself is influence. I had many, many favorites: Frankie Lyman and the Teenagers, the Spaniels, the Moonglows, the Drifters, Jackie Wilson, Sam Cooke. I had many idols when I was growing up and buying records.

M.I.: It wasn't very common for someone as new to the business as you were to be both co-writing and co-producing your first single, 1958's "Got A Job." How did that come about?

Robinson: I would always go to the

NSON

studio with Berry, no matter who he was producing, just to see what he did, how it was happening, and to help him. I started to learn more about what was happening there, and eventually, I was able to go in by myself.

M.I.: At this point in time, what were studios like?

Robinson: Studios were very simple, yet they were very complex. In those days the engineer and the producer had to really be on top of their job—not to say that they aren't today, but you have so many technical advantages today that you didn't have then - because when you went into the studio then it was only mono. So when you came out of the studio, that was your mix, that was the way it was going to sound. You couldn't adjust anything; you couldn't go back and add something; you couldn't take anything away from it. That was it.

M.I.: "Shop Around" was the big breakthrough both for you and for Motown Records. Why do you think it was such a big success?

Robinson: I can't really say. It was just a hit record. When you had a hit record, then you were home free, basically. It was a record that had a very perplexed kind of history because I had already recorded this record one time in the studio myself. We had a slower, funkier version of it and the record had been out on the marketplace for about two weeks. Berry called me 3 o'clock one morning and said that he hadn't been able to sleep for two days because he kept thinking about this record. He wanted to change the beat. He wanted to record it, and so he called the musicians and the group to come to the studio right then. Which is what I did. We went over and re-recorded it at about 4 o'clock in the morning, and the one that was the tremendous success is the one that he had been thinking about.

M.I.: Do you think the slower version would have sold as well?

Robinson: I don't think it would

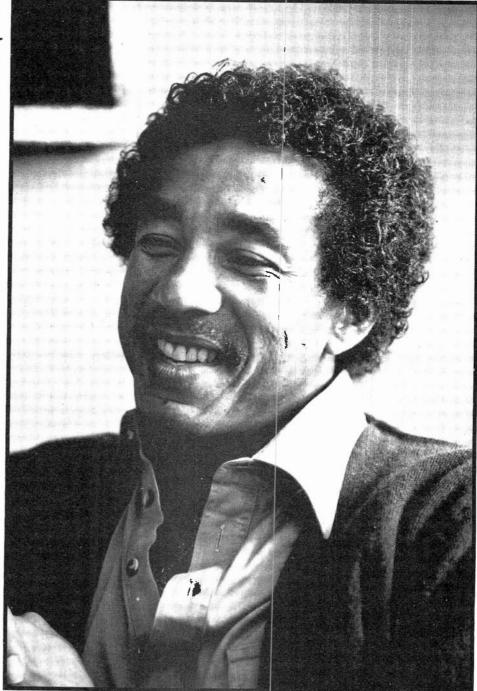


PHOTO: NEIL ZLOZOWER

have been as big, because the production wasn't as good.

M.I.: One of the things that has always struck me about your singing is that you seem to be able to shift from soft, pretty ballads to uptempo numbers like "Shop Around" or "Mickey's Monkey," whereas a lot of singers tend to get straight-jacketed in one area: Has that kind of versatility with your voice and interest in different kinds of music always been the case?

Robinson: Absolutely. I want to sing all kinds of music, and I enjoy all kinds of music, from symphony to

gut bucket. So I don't want to categorize myself as a singer or performer and only sing one sound or one type of song. I just want to do whatever I can do as long as it's a good song and some good music.

M.I.: How do you write songs? Do you work them out on piano, guitar, or by singing into a tape recorder? Robinson: Instrumentally, usually the piano is my accompaniment, unless I'm writing with my guitar player, Marv Tarplin—and I've written many, many songs with him. However, there is no set pattern for writing songs. I write songs in the

car; in fact, that's one of my favorite places for writing songs because Los Angeles is an area where you spend a lot of time in your car [laughs]. I get a lot of ideas in the car, or in the tub, or at the baseball game, or on the golf course. Melodies come into your head and I proceed to try to remember them, which is why I try to carry a little tape recorder with me, because I've lost a lot of melodies by not having one. So writing is like a spontaneous kind of thing; there's no rule.

M.I.: So there's no pattern in terms of lyrics coming before music or vice-versa?

Robinson: No. A lot of times the words or a phrase come first. You might see something on a billboard or you might say something while you're interviewing me that might be a great song title, so I'll write it and I won't give you credit for it [laughs].

M.I.: Could you run through the process of writing a hit song. How about my personal favorite, "The Tracks of My Tears," which was written by you, Marvin Tarplin, and Warren Moore.

Robinson: Probably [with] all the songs that you have seen that I have co-written with Marv Tarplin, the song begins with his music. He has the music and he comes and plays it and we tape it. I listen to it over and over and over again until some idea starts to form, and then proceed to write on that idea. And a lot of times I'll write two or three ideas on the same track of music and just go for what I think is the best one.

M.I.: Any particular inspiration for that song?

Robinson: Nothing other than his music, and his music is very inspirational to me. He has a way of playing his guitar that makes it very easy for me to write lyrics.

M.I.: Were you surprised at the huge crossover success Motown groups like the Miracles had with both black and white audiences in the mid-Sixties?

Robinson: I can't say that I was surprised by it, any more than I was surprised at us having hit records with black people. In those early days, all we were concerned with was whether or not the record was a hit. It didn't matter to us where. Berry's idea was for us to make music that had a good funky beat, but had stories that were adaptable to the general public-rather than us being blacks [who] made bluesy records. We wanted to make records

that had a combination of funk and class at the same time.

M.I.: It's so striking to look at the popularity of Motown in the Sixties in contrast to the 1970s, where there seemed to have been a splitting apart of the black and white popular music audience. A lot of black artists can't get their music played on rock radio anymore.

Robinson: I think you have a valid point there. However, the situation exists mainly in radio, as far as what the programmers want to program. I don't think it touches the general public as much, because you have a great many white listeners who listen to black stations now. The reality of it is that a hit record by a black artist outsells a hit record by a white artist normally three to one, because it is selling across the board. Black people are buying it, white people are buying it, Chicanos, because it is exposed to those different areas. Of course, you have your established white acts who sell a good gob of records every time out of the box. But normally, racial-wise, black music is outselling white music because of the fact that it

PHOTO: NEIL ZLOZOWER



doesn't necessarily matter to the consumer of records whether or not the record is being played on said station as to whether or not they're going to buy it. The situation does exist in radio, whereas it's very hard for a black artist to get played on a lot of white stations; however, in the marketplace it's a vice-versa thing.

M.I.: Do you know why radio has moved in this direction? Is it by trying to target increasingly narrow audiences?

Robinson: I really don't know. I can't put my finger on it. It almost seems like a plan of someone who is trying to segregate music or something. And they have the power to reach the powerful stations. I don't know what the reason is; I wish I did.

M.I.: What were your thoughts when a group as popular as the Beatles covered "You Really Got A Hold On Me?" On the one hand, it brought your music to a broader audience. But on the other hand, it was another example of where a black artist would originate a style or a song and then white artists would cover it and people would think it was their song.

Robinson: My feelings at the time

were the same as they were last year when I heard "More Love" by Kim Carnes. I loved it. [I was] absolutely flabbergasted by the fact that [the Beatles] recorded "You Really Got A Hold On Me." I didn't necessarily think about it as, "Hey, they're getting more exploitation off of the record than we got," cause we had a Number One record with "You Really Got A Hold On Me." The only thing that entered my mind was how happy I was that they had recorded that song. When I write a song I hope it's a song that people will want to record over and over and over again. Which is why I don't like trend songs-something that's happening right now, today, and gone tomorrow. I try to write about something that's going to be significant or would have been significant twenty years ago or in 1990.

M.I.: Many of your finest songs were written for other groups on the Motown label, songs like "My Girl" by the Temptations, Mary Wells' "My Guy," and "Ain't That Peculiar" by Marvin Gaye. How did you decide which songs to keep for your own group and which to give to other artists?

Robinson: Usually when I wrote a

song or produced a song for someone else, I had written that song for him. I would specifically write a song because I could envision the person that I had in mind singing the song, and try to pattern the song after their style of singing.

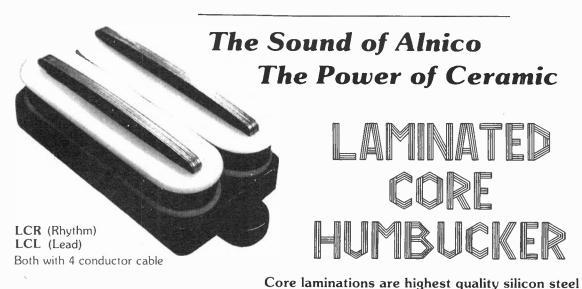
M.I.: Even in the case of "My Girl," which seemed perfect for your style?

Robinson: "My Girl" was my way of introducing the record buying public to the voice of David Ruffin. Before "My Girl," we had always used Eddie Kendricks or Paul Williams for the lead vocalist. And David Ruffin, who has this great, tremendous voice, was there. I just felt he should be heard.

M.I.: Were you already a Vice President of Motown at that point? **Robinson:** Yes, since 1963.

M.I.: What was your role at that time?

Robinson: I was travelling around a lot, I had met a lot of people, I saw a lot of talented people. If you could see the first contracts on probably all the old familiar names that you know from Motown Records, I signed them in. And then, if I was



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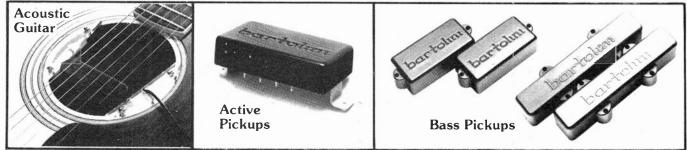
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not going to work with them as a producer or a writer, I assigned them to Holland-Dozier-Holland or Norman Whitfield or whoever we had on staff there to do their project.

M.I.: Did you ever find a conflict between your own career and your executive position?

Robinson: Only inasmuch as a lot of times when I'd want to be in the studio. I'd sometimes have to go and do a gig. But when I became a Vice President I was already an artist and I was already travelling around, producing records, writing songs, and so on, so after a while they all just became me. It was just one of the things that I had to do and one of the adjustments that I had to make in my time schedule. I love everything that I'm doing, so one is just as exciting as the other. The more artists we had hit records on, the bigger Motown would be.

M.I.: What was behind your decision to leave the Miracles?

Robinson: I had many, many reasons. First of all, I had been doing that since I was 17 years old—right out of high school, into the music business, on to the road, travelling around, eating in hotels, the bus stations, the train stations, the airports, the restaurants, all those things like that, and I had really had that. It was just like round-robin for me at that point. Whatever a black group could possibly have achieved in those days, we had done it twice. I didn't want to wait until there was no joy left in it for me to leave, because I still had the enjoyment of being with the Miracles, whom I love very much. And being on stage, performing for people, was always a gas to me. But all the things that it took to make that happen, that was driving me up the wall. Then too, my wife and I had several miscarriages, and in 1968 my son was born. That really started me to feeling like I wanted to be at home more, because I wanted to know him and have him know me. Then in 1970 my daughter was born. So I said, "Hey, I've got two other reasons now to be at home." I'm sort of a homebody person anyway. I explained to the guys how I felt and that I was gonna quit. I told them this in 1969, before [daughter] Tamla was born. They didn't believe me, so everything went along as usual. A year later I said, "Well, I'm quitting." Then "Tears Of A Clown" came out. It had been on an album in 1967, [but] came out in 1970 in England, where it was the Number One record. That catapulted us into another financial area as far as our dates went, and we

started making a great deal more money than we'd ever made. The guys wanted another year. So I worked for another year, till 1971, and they still hadn't gotten anybody to replace me. Finally, they decided upon Bill Griffin, who was the guy who actually took my place. Bill started to go to all of our dates with us, up until June of 1972, which was when I left.

M.I.: Were you ever worried about losing or damaging your voice? Robinson: No, I really wasn't. When we first started out to go on the road. I was hoarse all the time. It was also because I was experiencing a voice change; your voice doesn't change permanently until you're about 19, and of course, I started at 17. I used to listen to Michael lackson and Stevie Wonder when they were going through this same time period, and I felt so sorry for them because I knew what they were going through. But [my hoarseness] was like a running joke, because people would call the hall where we were playing and say, "Is Smokey hoarse?" But I found out that it was because your voice is like an instrument. It's like a saxophone player—when he first starts out, he's not too good. He doesn't know how to really play it. He squeaks a lot. And eventually he learns how to smooth his tone and so on. Your voice is the same thing-once you learn how to play it, then all those other psychological things that come into the picture are no longer there. It takes a long time for me to get hoarse now [knocks on wood], but if I do get hoarse, it doesn't bother me the least bit because I can sing over it now. Psychologically, I know how to play my instrument and I know that the throat really has nothing to do with you singing—it's merely the passageway for the note to come out of. You're actually singing from your diaphragm, and my diaphragm is not hoarse [laughs].

M.I.: I've read interviews where you described your solo career, at least up until the success of "Cruisin'," as one of peaks and valleys. Could you describe them?

Robinson: I was describing my career as a whole. Since the very beginning, my career has been peaks and valleys. People just don't know about the valleys, because the valleys are not publicized. They don't have a chart that says so-and-so doesn't have a hit record this week [laughs]. I'm sure all artists go through that, but I've had many of them. It makes me enjoy the peaks



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so much because of the valleys and because of knowing that the valleys are just something that you have to withstand.

M.I.: Did you feel that you had any songs during the 1970s whose lack of success surprised you?

Robinson: I had a few songs on every album that I made that I thought were hit records. And it just so happened that they were mild hits, but they were not "hit" hits. And a lot of the songs that were hits really were surprises to me. Probably the first one was "You Really Got A Hold On Me." I really liked that song. I got the idea for that from a feeling of a song at that time by Sam Cooke called "Bring It On Home To Me." "Tears Of A Clown" is a great example. It wasn't released as a single [in 1967], and three years later the EMI office from England called and said we got the Number One record over here with the Miracles on "Tears Of A Clown." I was all set to come out with another record here in the United States and Berry said, "Scratch that. We're coming out with 'Tears Of A Clown'," and that's what we did.

M.I.: Did the rise of disco cause any particular problems for you? At the

time, a number of black vocalists were saying that disco was driving R&B singers out of the marketplace. How did it effect your career?

Robinson: Actually, the disco fever or craze that swept the inner workings of the record business - not the consumer - where all the companies jumped on the disco bandwagon, was probably the biggest destructive force in the record business to date. The market was flooded with these disco records that are just gonna end up in the stockpile. It put a lot of the companies in real trouble and a lot out of business. Personally, as an artist, it wasn't necessarily a frightening thing to me, because I enjoy singing all kinds of music, and I've had a couple of records that were very big for me singing songs about dances. However, as a listener and as a person who is creatively involved in the record business, it was very redundant to me Everything started to sound the same. However, the album Where There's Smoke... contains three disco songs, because I wasn't going to sit back and let it kill me, because people wanted to hear disco. However, I'm very happy that they didn't want to hear that from me. When we came out with that album, our people in the sales and

promotion department were very high on the remake that I had done of "Get Ready," which was a big disco record. However, as I was making that album I told them all, "I got this song 'Cruisin'.' This is it, man." So for "Cruisin" to emerge in the midst of all that disco, that was the greatest gratification that I had had in so long. I know that I can still be me, and people can want to hear me

M.I.: Being With You marks a change in your recording career in that you brought in an outside producer, George Tobin, and a new group of studio musicians. Why did you change?

Robinson: I mentioned earlier that Kim Carnes had recorded "More Love." [It] was produced by George Tobin, who is a very great producer and a good man, too. And as I do when I hear one of my songs by another artist, I'll write two or three songs and send them to that artist or their producer and hope that they will use them for the next album or record. So I had written a couple of songs for Kim Carnes as a result of her success with "More Love." George invited me to come over and tour his studio, and when I played the songs for him on the piano and



HOTO. NEIL ZLOZOWER

sang them, he flipped out. He said, "One of my dreams is to record you. I love you singing these songs. Why don't you let me do an album on you, and you sing these songs, and we'll have a hit record." So we recorded the album, and I'm very happy that we did because he did a fresh sound on me. He interpreted those songs in a way that I wouldn't have done them. It's a new feeling for me, because all I have to do is write the songs and take them to him, then he does the arrangements and all the tracks. I just go sing.

M.I.: Could you be more specific as

to what George did that you might have done differently had you been producing?

Robinson: I just don't think that I would have had the same sound on the record. I don't think that I would have done them as airy or as light sounding, or had as many high sounding things happening. I probably would have done [the synthesizers] a little more subdued, or a little more funky. I don't know exactly, but I didn't have those kinds of arrangements that he did.

M.I.: What kind of material will you be performing on your forthcoming

tour?

Robinson: In order to establish ourselves on the stand, we have about four or five numbers that are set. We do those, and it's tight and there's no fooling around in between. From then on out, it's whatever you want to hear, from "Got A Job" to "Being With You."

M.I.: You take requests?

Robinson: Oh yeah. That's the name of the show - requests. We look at it as those people who come to see the show usually have one, two, or three songs in mind that they really love, and they really want to hear those songs. And we want to play them; I don't care how old they are. The show is about the audience. It's about whether or not the people who come to see you have a good time; it's not about you doing the show within yourself, for yourself, or trying to show off all the new stuff. It makes me very happy for people to even want those songs or remember them. So whatever you want to hear, just write it down or yell it out and you've got it.

M.I.: In terms of your work as Vice President of Motown, what are you involved in?

Robinson: Right now as Vice President I'm not really involved in anything. I think that they feel, just as I do, the most important thing for me to do is to get another hit album. So that's what I'm about doing. That would mean more than probably anything I could do as a Vice President for a year.

M.I.: In the 25 years that you've been performing, what do you see as the most significant changes in popular music?

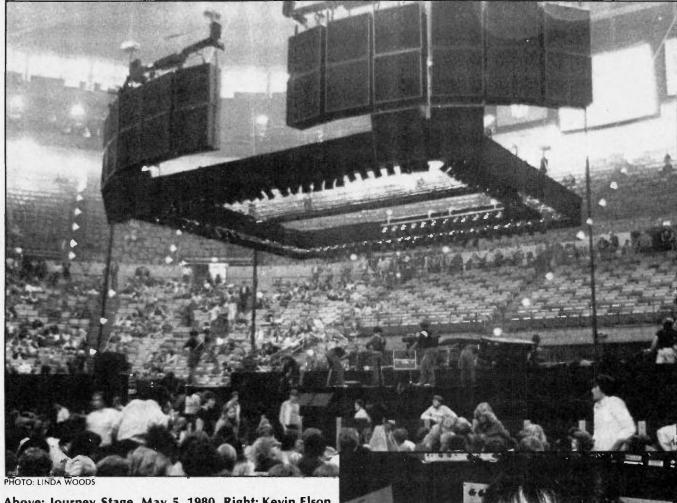
Robinson: I would say that the biggest change that I've ever seen was the destruction that disco did to the record business. And the economic situation of the record business now is probably at an all-time low, as far as I can remember in all my years. However, I think that things are looking up. Music is getting better and better all the time. People as a whole are more aware of what they're buying now. People used to buy records because their friends had them. People are more skeptical and more choosey about what they buy now. I can't predict where it's gonna gó, because if I could I would prepare myself with about 150,000 of those particular songs [laughs]. It has been a very good life for me, and I don't plan on doing anything else. I'm going to stay here until they say we don't want you any more.

SOUND REINFORCEMENT SUPPLEMENT

nce a musician leaves the intimacy of small clubs behind and heads for the concert stage, sound reinforcement equipment and techniques assume paramount importance in getting the music across to an audience. In the live sound environment, microphones, loudspeakers and signal processing equipment are every bit as crucial as guitars and amplifiers. In the following pages, M.I. takes a closeup look at this important area of the performer's craft.



The Sound of Journey



Above: Journey Stage, May 5, 1980. Right: Kevin Elson.

by Hillel Resner

uppose for a minute that you're one of the top rock bands in the world, with half a dozen gold and platinum albums, legions of § fans, and a new LP rising to the top of the charts. You're about to depart for a fivemonth, 80-city tour which will take you to some of the largest arenas in the United States and Japan.

Continued on page 50



New from Studiomaster: a compact highly innovative mixing desk. The 8/4 is truly not "just another" mixer. What sets the 8/4 apart are the five most important things you must consider in purchasing a console.

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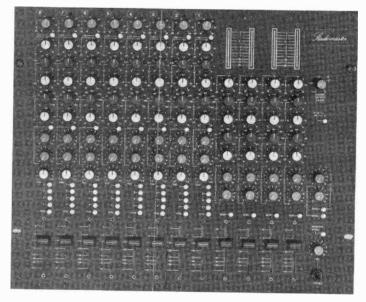
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Journey Road Crew (Left to Right: Benny Collins, John Griswold, Jackie Villanueva, Steve Hill, Jim McCandless, John Villanueva.)

You have all the money and labor power at your disposal (not to mention the cooperation of leading audio manufacturers) to insure that your live sound is the very best obtainable. What kind of sound system would you take with you on the road? What kind of equipment would you use, and how would you set it up in order to get a live sound as good (or better) than your sound on records?

To get answers to these questions, M.I. talked to the sound and production crew of Journey, a band whose success has been built largely on non-stop touring since the group's founding in San Francisco during the early Seventies. The Journey sound and stage crew, like everyone else who works for Nightmare, Inc., the band's management and production company, are totally competent, engergetic, and absolutely dedicated to the band and each other. Of Journey's road crew of 31, five deal directly with the sound system, two are Journey employees, and the other three are with Audio Analysts of Montreal, Journey's sound company since 1978.

"We got to know Journey when they were the opening act for Emerson, Lake & Palmer," says Burt Pare, the president of Audio Analysts. "After that, they rented a board from us for an important gig in New York. Then afterwards there was a small tour which we did, and then a bigger tour, and a bigger tour—and now it's... horrendous!"

Audio Analysts supplies all of the PA equipment which Journey takes on the road —

an immense system capable of filling every nook and cranny of the largest arena with near-perfect sound. The system was built originally for the Montreal Olympics in 1976, and is constantly updated to meet the exacting demands of modern concert sound.

The System

The basic component of the Journey sound system is the S-4 speaker cabinet, a highly efficient enclosure first built by the Clair Brothers around 1974. This year, Journey will carry 52 of the S-4s on their American tour.

An amazingly compact unit, the S-4 is only 44" x 44" x 22", and each cabinet requires but a single plug. Rated at 940 watts rms per cabinet, each S-4 contains two 18-inch, four 10-inch, and an array of high-end speakers, all made by JBL.

"The mid-range is more of a custom-designed throat horn," says Journey's chief mixer, Kevin Elson. "It's a 40 by 45 degree dispersion, so you don't get the full radial, really piercing type of sound. It's mainly a paper system, and it's just a nice, smooth system for Journey... I think certain PA's fit certain bands. Vocally, the band is really strong live, and I wanted a system that would put it across really smooth, because Steve Perry could kill you on radial horns!"

In their concerts, Journey uses 44 of the S-4 cabinets for the house system, and 6 for the stage monitors. Eight speakers are at ground level, four on either side, and the remaining 36 are in the air, forming clusters that wrap 180 degrees around the stage. Elson explains:

"I try to get the sound everywhere, and use a nice down-fill that doesn't blow people out. We play to every seat in the round. We don't play dead center, but the way the stage is set up, we cover the whole hall. So I usually do double cabinets on single points to the back. We don't want people in the back to feel, 'Oh, I'm in the back, I'm not going to hear.' For a Journey show, the seats in back are probably the best."

For power, the Journey system employs Phase Linear 7708 amplifiers, specially designed for Audio Analysts, with crossovers from dbx.

Monitor System

If the audience can hear well at Journey concerts, the band can hear even better. An S-4 cabinet hangs in each corner of Journey's specially-designed stage, about 15 feet above the deck surface. In addition, according to monitor mixer Steve Hill, "We're also going to have what we call 2-15 cabinets. They're very narrow, skinny floor wedges, and they'll be implanted in the stage all around.

"We've looked very carefully at the monitor system," Hill continues, "in relationship to the drum mics and their placement. Steve Smith [Journey drummer] will have two mixes this year. He's going to have his drum Continued on page 52

The world's most



popular backup group.

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Specifications	E110 (10 in)	E120 (12 in)	E130 (15 in)	E140 (15 in)	E145 (15 in	E155 (18 in)
Primary Application	Lead or rhythm guitar, piano, vocals, line array	Lead or rhythm guitar, electric piano, organ, vocals	Lead or rhythm guitar, electric piano, organ, vocals	Electric bass, low frequency reinforce- ment	Organ, synthe- sizer, low frequency reinforce- ment	Electric bass, subwoofer, low frequency reinforce- ment
Power Capacity Continuous program Continuous sine wave	150 W 75 W	300 W 150 W	300 W 150 W	400 W 200 W	300 W 150 W	600 W 300 W
Sensitivity	98 dB SPL	103 dB SPL	105 dB SPL	100 dB SPL	98 dB SPL	100 dB SPL



Continued from page 50

mix coming from the back, from a special floor wedge that's being developed right now. It gives more bass response—it's a wedge put into a bass trap in the stage. We run the kick drum through that, also the bass low end. Then the vocals and guitars, and the bass high frequency, we run through another wedge that's on his left side."

Mixers & Microphones

Journey uses two Midas mixing consoles—one for the house mix, placed on a riser about 100 feet in front of the stage, and another for the monitor mix, situated in a pit to stage right. The main console, which according to Burt Pare was originally designed for Journey, is a 36-input and 8-output board.

"Actually, it can go to 10 out," Kevin Elson says. "It's an 8 sub-out, plus two stereo [outs] for the masters, and it has the pro-five strip. Each strip has a high band and a midrange parametric with a slider control—it's real straightforward. A lot of live consoles, you really have to get a lot of gain input to make the EQ work. With the Midas, the EQ is real punchy, but not real drastic."

Probably the most interesting aspect of Journey's stage production is the extent to which the band has forsaken the use of both consumer stage gear and microphones in favor of "direct" sound. Under the setup to be used on this year's tour, Jonathan Cain's keyboards and Ross Valory's bass guitar will go directly into the monitor console, with microphones being used only on vocals, drums, and guitar. In addition, both Valory and guitarist Neal Schon will employ wireless transmitters, as will Cain when he switches from keyboards to guitar.

To complete this space age electronic scenario, no amplifiers will be visible on Journey's specially-designed traveling stage. Those amps that are used—primarily by Neal Schon—are hidden inside the stage, from where the completely invisible Journey band crew can make necessary adjustments, and hand up guitars through trap doors as needed. Thus Journey's live sound will appear something akin to magic to the average member of the audience, as there will be no apparent connection between the instruments on the stage and the music coming out of the speakers overhead.

Apart from theatrical effect, Journey has other, practical reasons for its setup, as Elson explains:

"The band doesn't really play that loud, though it comes across pretty loud. The reason we went to this stage setup is that when you walk on the stage you can actually sit and talk to each other. The drums are the loudest thing. Stage center, or to Neal or Ross' side, you can sit and talk to them while the whole band is playing. It's really a great setup. It helps me, it helps the monitor man too, because you don't get all that noise. The mic lines are out of the way, and vocally it helps a lot."

Of course, with four band members singing and 12 microphones on Steve Smith's drums, there are still a few mics in Journey's

system. What are they?

"Our vocal mics are all Electro-Voice PL-77A condensers," says Elson. "We've been using them about two years. We went from the 76's to these, and we like them a lot."

For drums, Elson favors dynamic mics over condensers, which he feels have too great a tendency to break up—"especially if the drummer smashes one."

"Right now," Elson continues, "on all the toms and snare I'm using Beyer 201's because they stay out of the way. They're a little pencil mic and they sound real good. I went through eight months last year and never had one break down."

The Beyer 201 is also used on the high hat, and for overhead mics, Elson uses Shure SM-7's.

"It's a real good mic," Elson says. "It has a good filtering system—a little knob to adjust the curve. It's real rugged, and it sounds good on cymbals.

"I try to stay with dynamic mics. I don't have to worry about phantom power supplies and, you know, 'what's that buzz'?"

For the bass drum, Journey uses an AKG D-12.

Guitarist Schon is the only Journey member whose equipment is regularly miked. Neal plays through Peavey and Hi-Watt amps and two Peavey 4-12 cabinets. One of the cabinets is miked with an Electro—Voice PL-9 microphone, and the signal runs through Schon's effects rack, and then to the monitor system.

Signal Processing

What outboard gear Journey uses is mainly to help recreate effects from their albums. Elson has enough equipment, however, to get just about any sound he could wish for:

"I've got a special effects mixer that was built by Audio Analysts that gives me three extra ins and outs. What I use now is a Revox B77 for tape slap (for voices), an Orban Stereo Reverb, some EXR Exciters for voices and piano, a Lexicon 92 and a Prime Time, and different Eventide things...I use a lot of effects that I use on our records, phasing and things, to try to recreate the record as closely as we can, vocal-wise and effects-wise."

Obviously Elson, who mixes alone, has a great number of cues to deal with in a typical Journey concert.

"What I normally do," says Elson, "is have all my cue sends set ahead of time. Then I have all my returns on push-buttons. When the time comes, say for a drums flange or something, I just punch in the return and it's there. I have a real good flanger, the MicMix Dynoflanger, that I use for flanging and phasing. It's automatic, preset with different times. So when a cue comes along, depending on what kind of cue it is, I'll either run it up [on a fader] or push-button it in."

Mixing for Journey

Kevin Elson joined Journey in January of 1979, after seven years on the sound crew of Lynyrd Skynyrd. After two years as the live sound mixer, he has become the band's record

producer as well. He produced *Departure* in 1980, and recently completed Journey's newest album, at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley.

While studio and concert environments each present different problems and challenges to the sound mixer, Elson observes that live sound probably requires the most adjustments on his part as the evening goes along:

"All night long there are certain things that are changing. On different songs the band will change guitars, or vocally they get stronger as the night goes on, or the energy just starts picking up and the band starts playing harder. Probably the most change is on the drums. Steve Smith, he pounds! We've clocked him at 125 db, just his percussion kit, just acoustically. I end up rolling off some low end, to get him to cut a little bit better.

"As far as sound checks go, I'll go instrument by instrument, just to make sure everything's working right. I really like clarity—I usually sacrifice a lot of bass. There's enough bass in the half anyway. That's why I rely on the drum kit to carry the bass a lot of the time..."

Transportation and Setup

Transporting Journey's sound and lighting systems from city to city, and setting them up and breaking them down, is a mammoth proposition requiring a fleet of vehicles and the skill and labor of nearly a hundred people.

On the road, Journey's equipment is transported in four 40-foot semi-trucks and trailers—one for the sound system, one for the lighting system [Nightlights, owned by Journey], one for the staging, and one for additional stage and all the band gear. Upon arrival at a venue, Journey's production crew—numbering about 20—is assisted by a local crew in setting up the stage, sound and light.

The process of setting up the entire production begins with the 8 am rigging call, and continues till about 3 o'clock, when the band arrives for the sound check. Both sound and lighting systems require about four hours to put in place.

At 7:30 comes the show call, when the crew take their positions in preparation for the concert. At about 11 pm, the show over and the fans streaming out, the crew begins to strike the production and move on to the next city. Like production crews everywhere, Journey's takes great pride in clocking recordbreaking times for striking their system and loading up.

"As a crew, there's nobody that's better," says Jim McCandless, Journey's production manager. "We set a record at the Omni in Atlanta for a four-truck load-out. We did it in two hours flat."

While Journey's production crew may give themselves high marks for performance, outsiders are quick to concur. Burt Pare of Audio Analysts is succinct in his praise:

"They understand the problems;" he says, "and won't ask you to do the impossible. I deal a lot on a day-to-day basis with a lot of rock & roll bands, and very few and far between are organizations like Journey." M.I.



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by David Gans

As a signal-processing tool in a musical instrument system, DeltaLab's DL-4 Time Line is a versatile, convenient and great-sounding piece of equipment. Its effects range from the subtlest comb filtering to weird, random pitch shifting, with a lot of useful and pleasing sounds in between.

Often the weakest part of a piece of high-tech gear is the owner's manual. Such is not the case with the DL-4—following thorough explanations of everything on the front and rear panels, the manual provides some background on the principles of digital delay, then provides eleven diagrams of settings for various effects. There are also blank diagrams for patches developed by the user.

The DL-4 provides delays from .25 to 512 milliseconds, and with an additional Memory Module the time can be extended to 2½ seconds. It took a while to get used to working with it, but I got some very interesting sounds by playing chords and stack-

A "tuned resonance" patch described in the manual creates ringing at frequencies which can be tuned by varying the delay length. This yields a metallic "computer speech" effect and can make drums sound "rather like a guitar," according to the Owner's Manual.

Tape-delay effects are crisp and clear with the DL-4. With the Mix control, you can adjust the blend of dry and delayed signal for that hard "slapback" effect, then dial in just the right amount of regeneration to get that classic Sun Records sound. High-and low-cut filters and a phase selector in the Regeneration stage allow control over the tone of the echo, so you can soften or sharpen the effect.

There is so much to do with a complicated device such as the DL-4 that I would hesitate to use it in a live performance situation until I had plenty of time to get acquainted with it. But the sound is so good and the range so broad that it would definitely be worth the investment of time and money. The optional foot pedal controls VCO sweep,



ing different notes on top of each other as they came back out through the delay. By adding the VCO at various speeds and delay times, some strange and wonderful out-of-tune doubling can be obtained—and it may be reined in for a more subtle effect that is more pronounced than the suggested "doubling-thickening" setting.

Flanging effects are totally controllable with the DL-4, with delay, feedback (and feedback phase), VCO speed and width all individually adjustable. The VCO wave shape is continuously variable from triangle to sine to square, enabling a variety of textures from the subtlest to the richest.

delay (up or down), repeat (in-out) and bypass. The pedal provided is rather inconvenient—the bypass and repeat switches are beside the wedge-shaped pedal and are hard to get to, especially if there are other pedals or effects on the floor beside it. But DeltaLab provides instructions for wiring each of the controls, so you can make your own pedals and/or switches to control the functions you need.

Digital signal processing offers many advantages over analog in terms of versatility, flexibility, and sound quality. Despite its cost (the DL-4 lists for \$1295.00), consider this a resounding thumbs up for digital delay and DeltaLab's Time Line in particular.

M.I.

SOUND-ON STAGE

SHOW PRODUCTION

by Iim Coe

Last issue I left a series on concert production to write about working with guitars. We now go back to show production for you audio workers.

SHOW PLANNING

A concert is a collective effort. You'll find that excellent sounding concerts require excellent planning, communication and cooperation. Communicate your plans at a production meeting and practice them at rehearsals and shows. Even the smallest club band needs a closed loop of planning, practice and improvement. In the simplest form, each show can be its own rehearsal, and the production meeting might consist of talking it out after the show over a late beer.

Communications, planning and improvement certainly aren't guaranteed by formal meetings. The point is that you must add planning abilities and negotiating savvy to your technical expertise and good ear to get a complete kit of professional audio skills.

INTO THE GAP

"(Perfect) Practice makes perfect." Planning and practice reduce your ignorance and the number of unknowns you face at showtime. The keys to effective rehearsal are realism and a good production plan.

A PLAN

An audio production plan should include:

- 1. A model or typical show environment
 - Room acoustics
 - A.C. Power and earth connection
 - Stage size and layout
 - Mix position
 - Speaker placement and aiming
 - Local personnel and equipment needed
 - Working conditions
- 2. Band needs
 - Number of mix channels
 - Quantity and brands of mics and directs

- Effect
- Equalization
- Compression/Limiting
 - Balance
- Recording
- Intermission music
- 3. Sound system
 - Engineered to meet the band's needs in the typical show room
 - Block diagram with impedances
 - Spec sheets of equipment
 - System electro-acoustic test results
- 4. Mic and direct list
 - Stage diagram
 - Channel list with snake and buss assignments and expected equalization or processing
- 5. Time schedule
 - Set-up and break-down times
 - · Tuning time
 - Travel schedule
 - Sound check schedule

REHEARSE

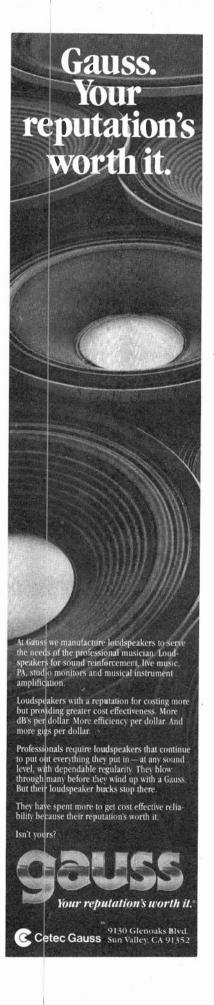
The secret to effective rehearsal is simple: make it just like the real thing. When you're ready for a dress rehearsal, do it just like a show. Instead of your usual audience, invite friends at no charge and let them know it's a final rehearsal. This sort of rehearsal lets the audio crew work with the full sound system.

Try to schedule time before or after for full system testing as well. Be sure to have some kind of debriefing or production meeting as soon as possible after the dress rehearsal, while emotions are still stirred up and the experience is fresh. Always ask yourself how you can decrease your ignorance and improve the show.

SOUND SYSTEM TESTS

In the next issue I'll discuss the basic tests you should run on any show sound system and a few sophisticated ones for those with access to better test gear.

M.I.



DEALERS CHOICE

Guide to Selecting Sound Reinforcement Gear

Shure unidirectional condenser microphone Model SM85

by David Gans

Whether you've got a ten-piece horn band, a synthesizer trio or an acoustic duet, sooner or later you're probably going to buy yourself a PA system. It's essential if most of your gigs are "casuals" at schools and military bases, or if you're on a station-wagon tour of the Americas promoting your homegrown album—or maybe you're just serious about sounding good and don't want to have to take your chances every time you step onto a new stage.

A PA system can be anything from a \$500 four-input mixer with a built-in power amp and two small speaker boxes to a ten-ton, megawatt monster suitable for filling stadiums with good, clean music. What you need undoubtedly lies somewhere between those two extremes, and unless you already know exactly what you're after, shopping for a system can be a frightening affair. There are old-fashioned piano stores that have added "sound rooms" and carry a limited variety of equipment, and there are dealers who feature hundreds of different items and employ audio professionals to put systems together and consult with their customers.

We spoke to sound-reinforcement dealers across the country in an effort to get some basic information on how to buy a PA system, as well as some personal opinions regarding what is hot in components these days. What follows are excerpts from a few of these interviews, each shedding light on some facets of this very complex realm.

Daddy's Junky Music Store is a chain with stores in three cities in New Hampshire. Chris Gleason works in the Salem location, thirty miles from Boston. "We're close enough to Boston that people can either come up from there or go down from here to shop," he says, "but the nice thing about New

Hampshire is that we have no sales tax." Daddy's is currently expanding their PA department.

"The basic building blocks of a PA system are microphones, mixer, power amp and speakers," Gleason explains. "The system is only as strong as its weakest link, so we try to match up the best products in a price class in terms of power, impedance and performance.

"Our main PA lines are Peavey, Biamp, Yamaha and JBL. We sell Audio Technica and Shure microphones, and quite a few used ones. The Shure SM-57 and SM-58 are the mainstays of the line for low-impedance microphones. In high impedance, Shure 585 and 515 are the old standbys.

"For miking a guitar into a system, I'd recommend an SM-57 or perhaps an Audio Technica ATM-11 or ATM-21. For drums, I'd use an ATM-10, ATM-11, or the SM-57. A lot of our clients are semi-professionals, so most of them are going to get away with miking the kick, snare and high-hat, and if they really get fancy they might mike the toms, too.

"In choosing a mixer, we try and leave enough capacity for growth so that the customer isn't going to have to come back in two months saying, 'This isn't what we needed—it's not big enough.' But we don't want to give the local four-piece country band a 24-channel board and tell 'em to go to town—they're just not going to need it."

Hector Romeu has been working at Brook Mays Music's Southwest Freeway store in Houston for two years. Before that he was a full-time bandleader—and he still plays gigs regularly. His professional experience gives him a special kind of expertise when it comes to equipment, as well as a definite idea of what a music store should do for the working musician.

"My general philosophy in sound rein-

forcement systems is to keep it compact, light and smart," says Romeu. "How fast can you get that quality sound happening? Before I start showing equipment, I ask a few basic questions. How many people in the group? Is it rock & roll, bluegrass, or jazz? How big is the average room you're going to play in? Do you have a soundman, or are you going to run it yourselves?

"If you want a quick, compact system, go with a pair of Bose speakers. They're expensive, but they're great. Columns are out, except for the JBL column with four 10s and a pair of bullet horns. They're good by themselves or as the mids and highs in a biamped system with a JBL 4560 cabinet crossed over at 250 Hz. That's an excellent combination, especially when you hang the columns and leave the 4560s on the floor.

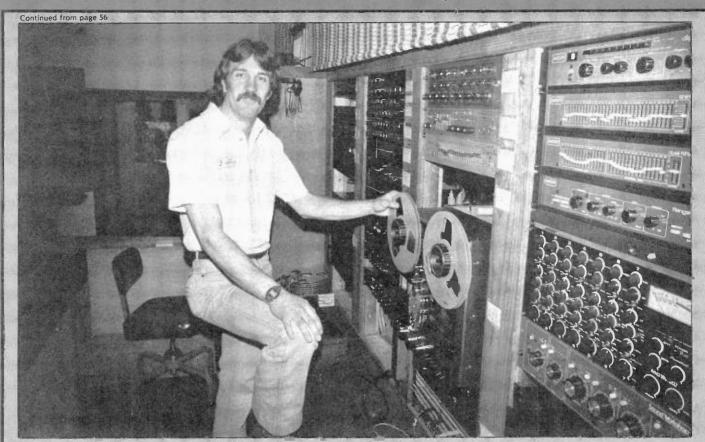
"If you have more than ten microphones, you have no business running the sound yourself, period. There are too many levels that change throughout the night—too much to keep track of while you're supposed to be playing music.

"When you're biamping, if you don't have a spectrum analyzer, you're wasting your time unless you have a perfect ear. A biamped or triamped system requires a third-octave equalizer and an analyzer, because there are frequencies coming out of there that you won't have any control over otherwise.

"No matter how exotically they shop, most people are economy-conscious and end up buying the cheaper things. Peavey gear sells well in Houston because they keep the dollar down and the performance up. It may not have the touch of Tangent or Yamaha, but Peavey is effective, affordable and rugged. It's geared for go, and it's an option a lot of musicians take.

Continued on page 58





Chris Ostrander, Leo's Pro Audio.

PHOTO: DAVID GANS

PA system: most bands are going to break up, and that's an inescapable fact. So it's better for one person to have the PA in his name than for all the members to own it, because when the band breaks up and the equipment is sold, everybody loses money. One person should take the loan and the other guys pay rent on it, so until the band splits up everyone is helping with the payments."

Leo's Music has long been one of the San Francisco Bay Area's busiest stores, with a large professional clientele as well as semipro and amateur business. In recent years, Leo's has expanded its physical operation in Oakland and opened a suburban store. Chris Ostrander, who works at Leo's Pro Audiothe recording and sound-reinforcement division of Leo's - is a full-time soundman with a working band and also a self-confessed "equipment junkie."

"The larger PA systems haven't been selling as well as they used to," says Ostrander. "There aren't as many gigs, and money's tight in general - it's hard to justify going out and dumping \$10-20,000 into a system when the band can't make the kind of income necessary to pay it back

"Our prices are competitive, but we don't stock the lowest-priced gear. The least expensive PA we have at Leo's is about \$1000-that's a Yamaha powered mixer without monitors, with six inputs and about 75 watts per channel. Yamahas run up to about

"One final consideration in buying a 12 inputs and 150 watts per channel. A typical there are some very good crossovers rated up speaker system for a self-contained PA would be a three-way cabinet with 10" and 8" speakers and two tweeters. This is a good kind of system for a small club band that's just starting out. Yamaha also makes some very high-quality mixers for use in PA and recording systems.

> "Self-contained units aren't really versatile enough for rock & roll, though. We have an 8-input Biamp for around \$900 that has a lot of features and is very popular. It's a really quiet board with three-band EQ on each channel, separate reverb/effects and monitor loops, stereo output, and a separate in/out loop for each input channel—and it rarely breaks down

> "The Tapco Panjo series is a good, bottom-dollar, basic board. Electro-Voice bought Tapco a couple of years ago, so they have a lot of capital behind them and they're coming out with new products, especially in the Panjo and Catalina lines. The Catalinas are four-channel, with twelve inputs and expandable in groups of eight. We also have Tangent, a good product in the right price range, and Soundcraft, very expensive but very high-quality.

> "I've been trying to steer people away from biamping. More than anything else, it's dangerous because it's so confusing-you could plug the low frequencies into a highfrequency driver and shoot 80 bucks in a second, then not have highs for your gig. To me, it's better to just plug in one speaker cabinet with a built-in crossover. Biamping became popular because until recently, passive crossovers couldn't take enough power. Now

to 400 watts or more.

"For monitors, we carry Harbinger, with IBL or Renkus-Heinz or PAS drivers. We also have Cerwin-Vegas for around \$300 per cabinet, and at around \$500 we have Electro-Voice and Yamaha. JBL makes a nice box, too, the 4602. It's useful to have a parametric equalizer for the monitors. You don't want to think about the room at all when equalizing the monitors - all you have to deal with is the relationship between the microphones and the speakers, which are so close together.

"Parametrics run about \$250 for mono, \$350 for stereo, and on up. Audio Arts, UREI and Symetrix make good four-band parametrics. Furman makes a nice three-band with low-level inputs so you can plug a guitar or bass right in and use it as a preamp. Some parametrics have independent bypass switches for each band, and some have other features such as high- and low-pass or subsonic filters, etc.

"Graphic equalizers are good for room equalization. Nothing is pinpointed, but if there's a certain echo in the hall, or cement walls are giving it a midrange ring, a thirdoctave graphic is a good tool.

"For durability, I recommend Yamaha boards-they're solid as a rock. They never come in for service unless someone drops one. They're very well-designed, difficult to blow up. The last thing I'd ever want to do is to get to a gig and have something shut down on me-that's the worst feeling in the world. You've got to spend a bit more money and know that your equipment isn't going to fall apart."

Manny's Music is a near-legendary store on West 48th Street in New York City. "We have everthing in stock," says Doug Cook, "and we're jammed to the ceiling. We're building a sound room, so we're going to start stocking even more high-end equip-

"We try to steer people in the right direction according to the calibre of what they're doing. If they need a biamped or triamped system, we'll set it up beautifully here. If it's a single or a duo, we'll sell them a black-box head and a couple of small speaker cabinets. It's to the customer's advantage to keep it simple if he's going to have to deal with the system night after night. The primary concern should be with the music.

"Portability is another factor. We have to consider what type of vehicle the stuff will be carried in You don't buy a big horn array if you're driving a Volkswagen!

"A lot of people come in and just say, 'I need a PA,' and we have to take if from there. We have to teach them what a signal path is, how to hook everything up. We try and make it as simple as possible with the highest fidelity. We carry a lot of lower-priced things such as Peavey, Shure, Yamaha, Sunn, and others.

"For biamped systems, we'll use a fairly good mixer such as Kelsey or Tapco, then we'll use a stereo crossover such as Ashley or Tapco to split the signal between highs and lows. Two good stereo power amps such as BGW or Yamaha would be used to drive Electro-Voice or Peavey horns, which are self-contained-I talk about Peavey a lot because I happen to have some of their highend equipment myself, and it's very reason- distorting. able. They're high-efficiency cabinets with no peaks or dips, so you don't have to worry as much about equalization.

contains a 10" speaker and a piezo tweeter and sounds terrific. It can take a good 50-60 watts, and for a small PA system where you don't want to spend too much money, it's a really terrific monitor for around \$125 a pair.

"The microphone is the first link in the audio chain, so if you don't have a good microphone, you won't have good sound. You can have a good, well-designed system and stick a cheap microphone into it and it'll sound terrible. There are many good microphones out, but if you're on the road there's always the possibility that they'll be stolen or dropped, so you should get something that's not really way out there in price. I'd have to say the Shure SM58 is the best microphone overall for ruggedness and

"If you're going to mike the drums properly, you're going to need four or five microphones. I'd use two overheads, either AKG C451E or the new Shure SM81 - I always use condensers on the overheads Shure just came out with a new condenser mic called ' the SM85, a really crisp mic with a lot of high end and no overload. I'm going to recommend it for acoustic guitar and maybe for the drum overheads

"For the kick drum I'd recommend a Sennheiser 421 or an E-V RE-20. For toms, the Sennheiser 441 — that's also good for the bass drum because it can take extraordinarily high amounts of sound pressure level without overall budget. Think of it as if it were a car:

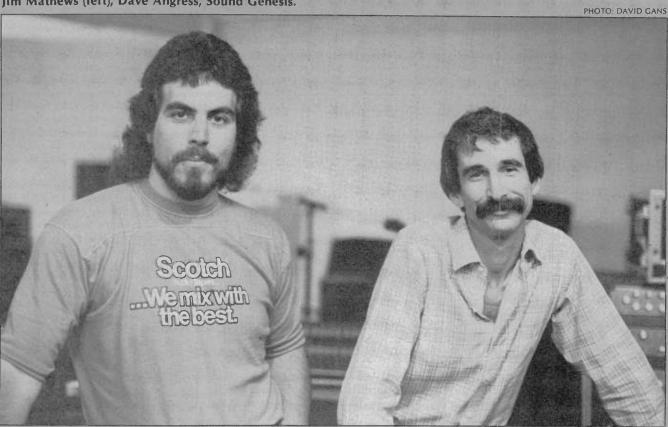
"For snare, I'd use a Neumann KM84-a very good condenser microphone but a little less durable. I'd also recommend "Peavey makes a little monitor that an SM57 or maybe a Sony ECM23F or ECM33F, especially if you're going to use one mic for the snare and high-hat. And unless you're doing disco, you can get away with one mic between the snare and high-hat when you're playing live. For disco, you need that sock sound so you have to put a separate mic

> "Now you plug all those drum mics into the board and EQ everything for isolation: roll off the highs on the bass drum mic, and the converse for the snare and tom mics and especially the overheads. You should learn about the frequencies, where each part of the drum kit is in the audio spectrum. There's a great book by Bob Heil called A Practical Guide to Concert Sound-you can learn quite a bit about the subject and understand what you need before you go running around spending money you don't have to."

San Francisco's Sound Genesis sells everything for sound reinforcement and recording, up to and including 24-track recorders. Dave Angress and Jim Mathews speak of the need to think everything through and take a systematic approach to integrating a sound system. Says Angress, "There should be a nice, long discussion of the customer's needs before anybody starts looking at hardware."

Angress: As a starting point, treat the entire thing as a system and look at your

Jim Mathews (left), Dave Angress, Sound Genesis.



you don't go out and start pricing transmissions, do you? There are certain individual parameters involved, what you need from the vehicle, but at no time do you start tearing the car down into its individual parts. If you need a Mack truck, don't buy a Chevy. If you're hauling your family around and doing the grocery shopping, don't buy a Ferrari.

Mathews: It's important that a system sound decent no matter where it goes, even if

in a room. Every time you exceed the available headroom, your head hits the ceiling—and the pain in your head is the distortion in the sound. The more you hurt, the more the listeners in the audience are hearing muddled, edgy sound.

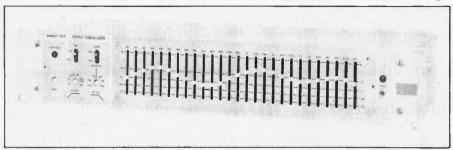
The space between the noise floor and distortion is the dynamic range of the system. If that space is only 65 dB, you can only put 65 dB through it. The wider the dynamic range

Mathews: And a limiter tends to make sounds pop out of the mix. You can shove the vocals out front a little, where they should be, as well as saving headroom by eliminating some peaks.

Angress: A sound reinforcement system should be totally transparent. If you had one person six feet away from the musician, you wouldn't need a PA. But if you put 2000 people out there and move them a little distance away, you've got to make the sound louder—but that's all you should do. The perfect PA system is totally unobtrusive.

Now, say you're looking at thirdoctave equalizers for room sound. Which kind should you buy? Some are boost-and-cut, and some only cut; some are combining filters, and others are non-combining.

Let's take UREI, which is probably the best line of equalizers on the market. They have two pieces, the 537 and the 539, which are both third-octave equalizers. The 539 is a

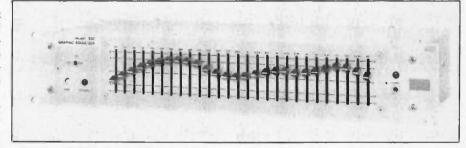


UREI model 539 room equalizer.

you don't start out with everything you want or should have. You have to leave yourself open—buy a mixer that either has an expander available or has more channels than you need at the time you're buying. The difference in cost between 12 and 16 channels is minimal.

Angress: Sound systems involve intelligent compromises—usually between performance and dollars. There are two principal considerations when integrating a sound system: noise and headroom. The noisiest piece in the system is going to set the noise floor for the entire system. The further towards the microphone end of the signal path that noisy piece is, the more effect it's going to have on the rest of the system, because the noise will be amplified so many times.

The next thing that's limiting is the part with the lowest headroom. To explain headroom, imagine that you are the program material and you're bouncing on a trampoline



UREI model 537 graphic equalizer.

the better, because the dynamic ranges of the instruments, the drums and the vocals on stage are pretty wide.

If you've got a defined dynamic range in the system and a wider range on stage, you've got to take a limiter and compress that live dynamic range into what will fit into the PA. And once you've defined how high that window is, you have to put your sound in the right place—you don't want to hit the ceiling all the time.

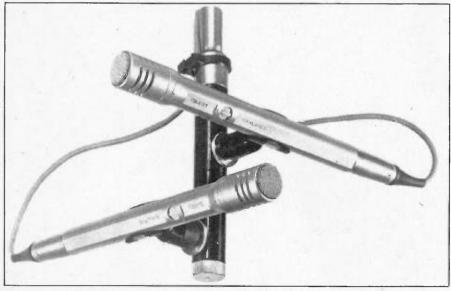
cut-only EQ that cuts further than the 537, and it's a combining filter set: if you take two adjacent bands down, it'll also bring down that area in the middle. The non-combining filter set won't give you as smooth a curve, so you haven't got as much control over that area in between the center frequencies. There's also a high-pass filter on the 539 which you can set to any level you want.

The 539 was designed to voice a room by cutting out the feedback nodes with nice, deep notches. It'll keep you from muscling out headroom, because you can't boost with it. The 537, on the other hand, doesn't have a high-pass filter and is a non-combining filter set—so it would be more at home on an individual instrument, making it sound the way you want it to.

Mathews: A lot of people don't pay attention to the interfacing of equipment. They'll load the output of their mixer to the wrong impedance on the equalizer, for example, and no matter how much gain and headroom they started out with, they knock it down by interfacing incorrectly.

Angress: With professional-grade equipment, the specs are usually quite conservative. You can sit down and build the concept of your system off the specifications. Now that's dangerous to do with lower-quality gear, because quite often their specs are written by the advertising department and bear no resemblance to fact whatsoever.

You need to be as conservative and as redundant as you can afford to be. The more power amps you have, the more likely you are to be able to patch around a dead amp and



Shure model A27M stereo microphone adapter permits two microphones to be mounted on a single microphone stand in a variety of selectable positions, such as the configuration shown here.

keep the system up during a gig.

You don't want the combined speaker load to be tacked onto so few amps that the amps run in the danger range. The ideal load would be 8 ohms on every amplifier channel. Running at 16 ohms is wasting phenomenal amounts of power. Running at 4 ohms is okay—you're putting out more power per dollar and carrying less weight around—but you're safest at 8 ohms. If something blows, you can take the banana plug from the dead amplifier and stack it on the back of the plug in a live amplifier that comes from the same feed. Now you're running a 4-ohm load off the second amp, which was running before at 8



Shure unidirectional dynamic microphone. Model SM58.

ohms. If it's a high-quality amp, it's now putting out 30-40% more power, and that'll get you through the show very comfortably. But if you were running at 4 ohms, you'd now have to take it down to 2 ohms, and the amp might shut itself down.

Another thing to consider is cabling. You can add so much capacitance and resistance with poor cabling and waste a lot of power. Cables can add noise and change the frequency response of the overall system, and phase response can go all to hell—an extra inch of cable can change what frequency is affected and how much, and too much cable rolled up in a coil between two pieces of equipment acts like an inductor. Then you'd have another equalizer in the system that you don't know about.

If your console, power amp, and equalizer are flat as a board and you use the wrong wire, your response can go all over the place and your headroom considerations can change. That's why you've got to look at the whole thing as a system: it's as though you decided on a perfect combination of components for a car and built it from scratch but you put it together with soft bolts. The first time you step on the gas, the torque from the motor will break the bolts. The transmission's fine, the engine's the best—everything's perfect, but the car won't run!

THE WORKING MUSICIAN

by Rick Vito THE AUDITION

In these days of inflation and recession, for most musicians it's important to have some sort of gig in order to eat regularly. To get a gig you must be reasonably proficient at your instrument, have a means of travel, proper equipment, and, all that aside, you probably will have to be prepared to audition.

Audition! Who, me?! I've been playing my axe for nine years, I've done session work, I've already played with so-and-so for a year and a half, and my reputation speaks for itself. I don't need to audition, do I? The answer without question is yes. In these extremely competitive times, everyone being considered for a gig must audition in one way or another. Don't forget that this is the music business we're talking about. That is, someone is going to pay you money so that in the end they will make a profit, at least partly because of your services.

Basically, an audition is a sampling of your technical ability to perform within a certain musical framework. The nature of the audition is such that you should think of yourself as a salesman, selling yourself to a buyer—in this case the one doing the hiring.

There are many ways to audition. You may have to appear in person or you may audition through previously recorded work. (Every session man out there "auditions" in a sense through his past recorded playing, and this is how a producer or contractor would know who to use for the particular recording session at hand.)

Obviously, you should look to present yourself in the best possible light. If possible, refer the "buyer" to a tape (or even better, a record, if you've had the good fortune to do one) that sounds great and is a good example of the style(s) that you play best. Don't make the mistake of playing someone a tape that isn't very good just to

avoid a live audition—you won't fool anyone, and the buyer could pass on you.

Sometimes even the best players are required to audition in a live setting. This may cause the coolest head and surest hand to break out in a cold sweat, resulting in a less than satisfactory performance.

Remember, attitude is a keyword here. It's up to you alone to prepare yourself mentally to accomplish what you want. Be confident, outgoing and friendly, without overdoing it. It's really important to be yourself and let your best qualities come forth—even if you may be faking your ass off!

If you are asked to learn some particular music to audition, then you must do your homework and really familiarize yourself with that music. Don't be afraid to ask questions. If you show interest in whatever project you're to be involved with. it can't help but work in your favor. Are there particular licks that you should learn note for note or would they rather you improvise, or a combination of both? If your audition is to take place in a live situation. remember that your appearance is very likely to be crucial to your getting hired, so, once again, you should take some time to determine what you think the interested party may be looking for and adjust yourself to his needs or style. Staying one jump ahead of the game very often will get you the results you're after.

I don't think anybody really looks forward to auditioning, at least not in the formal sense. But putting one's best foot forward with a little extra effort can mean you may not have to audition the next time a gig you want comes along. Don't forget—there are extremely few great musicians out there on the scene who have gotten every gig they ever tried out for. If you don't get the job, try not to take it too personally. Just try a little harder next time. And if you do get the gig, congratulations! You'll be eating well tonight, so enjoy your victory. M.I.

Why Modify Your Guitar?

by Seymour Duncan

Before you modify your instrument, there are a few things you should consider:

The model and age of the instrument. Old Fenders are dated in various places—on the end of the neck where the truss rod adjustment is, or in the body cavity (either in front or in the tremelo spring cavity of a Stratocaster). The serial number, located on the plate which holds the neck in place, can give you a general dating—if there is a four-digit number stamped there, the instrument was made before 1954. Serial numbers are not in sequential order, though, because the plates were picked at random when the guitars were assembled, so #3000 could have been made before #2500.

On old Les Pauls, you will find a number stamped on the back of the head stock. For example, the number 8 250 indicates that the guitar was made in 1958. It doesn't give you the day and month—you'll have to write the factory for a specific date. It would be interesting to get a list of dealers from the '50s and find out whether any of the stores kept their receiving records. Since the serial numbers were usually included on the invoices, this would give you a better idea of the age of your guitar.

Collectibility and value. Supply and demand—who is using a particular instrument—can be a determining factor here. The trend recently has been Sunburst Les Pauls and Stratocasters. The prices on the older instruments have gone quite high, because there are very few of them and they are real collector's items. As with antique furniture, the price is fair if you want the real thing.

The sound you are looking for. If you are playing a Les Paul and you want to sound like Eddie Van Halen, then you are using the wrong instrument to begin with. There are many factors which determine the sound of a guitar: body weight and density, pickup type and placement, amplification, effects used, and most importantly, the technique of the player. If you want a guitar to chop and crop, then I would suggest buying one of the commercially-available guitar bodies, which you can modify for your pickups and hardware. By doing this, you can keep your valued instrument's resale value.

The extent of the proposed modifications. By routing, refinishing, changing pickups, keys, etc., you are going to change the tone and value of the instrument. If you rout channels for pickups, you must be careful not to cut too much or you'll create acoustic chambers, which will cause the pickups to feed back more readily. If you don't have the proper tools, then I suggest that you don't even begin trying to add pickups or switches, or modifying pickguards, because the job can end up a disaster. Take the instrument to a qualified repairman.

Replacing old or worn parts. It is important to save every part—screws, nuts and washers included—when you alter a guitar. You may want to sell the instrument someday, and the buyer may want to restore it to its original condition, or modify it differently.

Routing for added parts. Remember that these types of changes are permanent. The character and value of the instrument will be lost, and another vintage guitar irrevocably damaged.

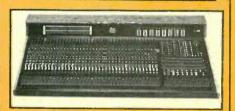
Refretting. I have seen some great old necks destroyed by refretting. On Fenders, the frets are slid in sideways, not pressed in from the top as Gibsons are. So when the frets are pulled out of a Fender, the fingerboard will chip at each slot as the tangs rip the wood. Then the fingerboard must be sanded, or the repairman must put in a wider fret to cover up the mess. Good fret men will take their time removing frets, so shop around and be sure the repairman does it himself and doesn't give it to his apprentice.

Refinishing. Your instrument is worth more with its original finish than it would be if you refinished it. By removing the old, worn, cracked and chipped paint, you take away the instrument's charisma. Guitars you play out with always seem to get banged and dented, so don't worry about it. If you want to paint a guitar all the colors of the rainbow, get a replacement body. A refinished instrument may look 100% better, but its value to a collector is diminished.

Pickup replacement or alterations. When removing pickups, don't cut them out and splice new ones in—unsolder all the wires from their original connections. Be careful with the pickups, as the coils are exposed and can be easily damaged while the covers are off. Gently wrap the pickups in paper, put them in a box and put them away. Though you may not like the sound of a pickup, the person you sell the guitar to will probably want the originals.

31170A9 PROFILE

Cetec Gauss has introduced a new line of musical component speakers, the Gauss 300 Series. Based on a 3-inch voice coil, the 300 Series comes in four models: 15" and 18" bass speakers, and 12" and 10" lead guitar speakers. All have 150-200 watt powerhandling capability. Impedances available are 4, 8 and 16; price ranges from \$180 to \$260. Cetec Gauss, 9130 Glenoaks Blvd., Sun Valley, CA 91352, (213) 875-1900.



Jim Gamble Associates' House Console Model HC40-24 is an in-house mixer capable of providing total signal processing for the audience. Totally transformerless throughout the signal path, with hand-selected semiconductors, low-noise IC's and discrete-hybrid circuitry, this roadworthy console attains precise gain control with over a 5-decade response (2Hz to 400kHz) and -130dB equivalent input noise at all settings. It uses full parametric equalization with 16dB boost and virtually infinite cut. The inputs span a 9-octave range in 3 overlapping bands; outputs cover a 10-octave range in 4 overlapping



bands. LED indicators provide gain setting and clipping detection on each of 40 output modules. Sixteen submaster busses set up in any configuration with 8 effects sends (each with full 4-band parametric EQ) provide 24 possible outputs. Also available is Stage Console Model SC32-16, an on-stage mixer with 32 input channels into 16 outputs, that provides

total signal processing for each performer. Jim Gamble Associates, 500 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Manhattan Beach, CA 90266, (213) 372-4691.

Sequential Circuits has developed a polyphonic sequencer to interface with its Prophet-5 synthesizer. This independent unit has all the features of the Prophet-10's sequencer: 2500-note storage, up to six separate sequences, instant transposition, real-time or single-step recording, variable playback speed, and overdubbing; edit single notes, chords or entire sequences and save your sequences and program changes with the builtin digital cassette deck. The SCI Polyphonic Sequencer can be used with any Rev 3 Prophet-5 synthesizer. Earlier models may be retrofitted for use with this sequencer for a nominal fee. Sequential Circuits, Inc., 3051 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95134.



Unicord has announced the introduction of the Jim Marshall Signature Series amplifiers, dubbed JCM800. The line includes the basic 50 and 100 watt lead amplifiers, available in standard and Master Volume configurations, as well as new 200-watt lead and 300-watt bass units, the 2000 and 2001 respectively. Both new models use a two-channel design with switching facilities, special effects send and return on all channels, and on the 2001 bass model, a compression circuit in the power amp section. Also introduced will be two Marshall 2 x 12" speaker cabinets and a heavy-duty 8 x 10" bass speaker cabinet. Unicord, 89 Frost Street, Westbury, NY 11590.

Drum miking is revolutionized with The Claw - a precision machined product of solid. heavy metal (except for the internal shock mount), attractively finished in satin chrome and black wrinkle. The jaws grip firmly to drum rims and cymbal stands, and its unique tilting mechanism puts the microphone exactly where it belongs and keeps it there-as close to the head as 1/2". The Claw can be used to attach cowbells or other percussion gear to a cymbal stand without any tools. The Claw eliminates separate mike stands. Its shock mount is also effective in eliminating transmission of sound through the stand. It lists for \$49.50, and is available at your drum dealer. For information; write Latin Percussion, Inc., 160 Belmont Ave., Dept. F. Garfield, NJ 07026, (201) 478-6903



The Smith IIG Electric Bass features hand-carved maple with rosewood trimmings, hand-rubbed oil finish, neck-through-body design, 24-fret rosewood fingerboard (34" scale) with pearl inlays, dual flex-action truss rod, graphite carbon-fiber inlaid neck of 3- or 5-piece construction, active/passive electronics, balance control to blend pickups, custom Bill Lawrence pickups, and more. This bass can be powered by batteries or with an external power supply. Ken Smith Basses, Ltd., 27 E. 13 Street, New York, NY 10003, (212) 243-2777.

Vortec, a division of Integrated Sound Systems, Inc., introduces two new radial horns, made of Technoplast, an economical and no-petroleum based material that is stronger, lighter and less resonant than fiberglass, metal or foam plastic units. The R-90-5 and R-90-8 have dispersion patterns of 90 degrees horizontal and 40 degrees vertical; efficiency (driver loading) is constant down to the lower usable frequencies to provide the flattest possible frequency response. Adequate driver loading also prevents diaphragm overexcursion. Exponential flares provide lower distortion than other types of flares such as hyperbolic. Both the R-90-5 and the R-90-8 are available for screw-on and 1" bolton drivers and are designed to operate down to 500 Hz and 800 Hz, respectively. Retail prices: R-90-5-\$175; R-90-8-\$140. Integrated Sound Systems, Inc., 29-50 Northern Blvd., Long Island City, NY 11101, (212) 729-8400.

Aria introduces the PE-R series of solidbody guitars. The PE-R 80 has a carved maple top and back, DiMarzio Dual-sound pickups, brass hardware and gold-finish die-cast machines. The PE-R 60 features a carved maple top and mahogany back, Aria Promatic III pickups and nickel-plated hardware. Both models feature series-parallel switches for each pickup and Aria's exclusive heel-less cutaway neck joint. Neck inlay on the PE-R 80 is the "cloudburst" design in an ebony fingerboard; on the PE-R 60 it's "diamond" markers in a rosewood board. Suggested list prices: PE-R 80-\$860; PE-R 60-\$560. Aria Music, 1201 John Reed Ct., City of Industry, CA 91745, (213) 968-8581

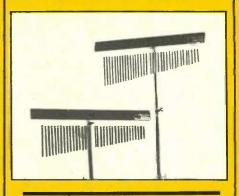
Renkus-Heinz has added complete highfrequency enclosures and a compact 2" throat horn to their growing line of professional audio products. The high-frequency enclosures are solidly constructed and attractively carpeted for maximum wear resistance and connect easily to any woofer section. The enclosures come complete with horn, driver, hi-pass network, continuous attenuator and provisions for bi-amp use. The new 2" throat horn is based on the configuration of other Renkus-Heinz horns. It has a cutoff frequency of 800 Hz and is designed to accept the Renkus-Heinz SSD 3300 or other 2" throat drivers with standard 4 hole flange mount. For more information, contact Renkus-Heinz, Inc., 17891 B Sky Park Circle, Irvine, CA 92714.

The Mini Boogee is an all-tube overdrive amp which can convert any guitar amp to the American or British overdrive sound. The four-stage preamp overdrive is footswitch-controlled; features include 3-band EQ, drive and master controls, American or British bright switch, 70 dB signal-to-noise ratio, and a 4½" x 7" cast-aluminum cabinet. List price: \$129.95. Audio Matrix, 1304 E. Mission, Escondido, CA 92027, (714) 743-5846.

JBL introduces two new 15" low-frequency drivers: models 2225H/J and 2235H. Both feature JBL's unique Symmetrical Field Geometry (SFG) magnetic structure, new hightemperature adhesives and optimized coil former construction, providing enhanced power capacity with minimum distortion. The extended (¾") length of the voice coil in both the 2225H/J and the 2235H allows increased linear excursion, while carefully selected suspension elements result in tight, accurate transient response. The 2235H is ideal for custom studio monitors, with usable frequency response to 20 Hz in equalized alignments and subwoofer applications. The 2225H/J is specifically designed for both horn-loaded and vented box enclosures, with the powerhandling capability required for high-power sound reinforcement applications. James B. Lansing Sound, Inc., 8500 Balboa Blvd., Northridge, CA 91329.

Spectra Sound's Model 1500 third-octave Graphic Equalizer has 27 bands (ISO frequency standard) of equalization with switchable boost-cut ranges (±6 dB or ±12 dB); constant impedance input level control with a range from +10 dBv to full attenuation; green LED power indicator and red LED overload warning; switchable infrasonic filter; system bypass switch. The input is an active differential amplifier (bridging) which is terminated with a standard female XLR connector; the output is an active differential amplifier capable of +22 dBv. The Model 1500 mounts in standard 19" racks. Spectra Sonics, 3750 Airport Road, Ogden, UT 84403.

Nail Road Products' Percussionist Chimes are made from solid aluminum for professional quality at affordable prices. Model #3835 (pictured) has 35 chimes and lists for only \$40.00. Each set of chimes mounts conveniently on any cymbal stand. Nail Road Products, 145 S. Daniel Lane, Florissant, MO 63031.



The Ortemp Super Groupie is a mixer/head-phone amplifier that can accommodate four performers in situations where regular amps and speakers cannot be used. It has four inputs and four stereo outputs, each with an independent level control, allowing versatility in mixing and level control for each user. Any combination of inputs and headphones can be used, and the inputs will accommodate electronic instruments, acoustic pickups, rhythm boxes, drum synthesizers, tape recorders, microphones, etc. Input impedance is 50 K ohms; output power is 3 watts per headphone. Ortemp, Inc., P.O. Box 904, Healdsburg, CA 95448, (707) 433-4459.

Audio-Technica's AT831 is a miniature microphone with a unidirectional polar pattern, designed for use in high-quality soundreinforcement systems and for musical instruments. In hands-free applications the AT831 will provide improved gain before feedback that cannot be achieved with miniature omnidirectional microphones. Suppression of background ambient sound is significantly improved over that of full-sized cardioid mics. Audio-Technica utilizes the newest low-mass electret technology, placing the electret charge on the fixed back plate, rather than on the moving element. This reduces moving mass by one-third, improving frequency response and transient response while reducing distortion. Suggested retail price: \$110.00. Audio-Technica U.S., Inc., 1221 Commerce Drive, Stow, OH 44224.

Octave-Plateau Electronics, Inc., introduces a new line of synthesizers and keyboards. The Voyetra synthesizers share these features: 32 program memories with tape load/dump; 32-stage program stepper allowing any sequence of programs to be accessed with a footswitch in either forward or reverse order; parallel memory bank control between modules; computer interface; rack mount chassis. Voyetra I features include built-in keyboard sequencer, envelope detector on AUX input for external triggering, etc. Voyetra 8 features include: eight voices, split layer or 8-voice keyboard module, arpeggiator, program parameter trimmers, etc. The VPK 3 is a mono keyboard with velocity and pressure sensitivity and an XY spring-loaded joystick controller; the VPK 5 is a poly keyboard with velocity and pressure sensitivity and an XY spring-loaded joystick. Octave-Plateau Electronics, Inc., 928 Broadway, Seventh Floor, New York, NY 10010, (212) 673-4205.



The MPI Pedal Steel Guitar, just introduced, has an adjustable roller nut (height of each string individually adjustable); harmonically-tunable puller mechanism; one-rod tuning; and strobe-tunable tone splitting capabilities. This instrument eliminates problems of string buzz, detuning at the first and second frets, wavering harmonics on the upper frets, and detuning due to pedal and knee-lever activation. The MPI is available in a variety of hardwoods (solid wood body), with a number of cosmetic options such as gold anodized and/or engraved metal, wood inlay work, etc.). Single-12 models begin at \$1800. MPI's patented adjustable roller nut may be purchased separately for installation on other pedal steels. McCormick's Precision Products, 602 Davis, Grand Prairie, TX 75050.



Hard Promises Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers Backstreet, BSR-5160

Produced by Tom Petty and Jimmy Iovine; engineered by Shelly Yakus; recorded at Sound City, Van Nuys and Cherokee Studios, Hollywood; additional recording at Goodnight, Los Angeles.

The musical highpoints of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers' still ascending career are very high indeed: capturing a Byrd-like folk-rock twang (and a mid-Sixties rock sound in general) and boosting it with a modern herky-jerky rhythm on "American Girl"; coming on stunningly cool and hard on "Breakdown"; jumping with pure nervous energy on "I Need To Know"; and peaking with the explosive fury of "Refugee." Fronted by Petty's unusual high and somewhat whiney, though always compelling voice, TP and the Heartbreakers developed one of the most distinctive sounds in rock.

Using the same production team as on 1979's Damn The Torpedoes, their fourth album finds the band still playing like a coiled spring, all taut and tight, waiting to explode. On Hard Promises' best cut, "A Woman In Love (It's Not Me)," co-written by Petty and lead guitarist Mike Campbell, the explosions take the form of guitar-detonated rave-ups wrapped around Petty's very emotional vocal. Perhaps with the new LP Campbell will finally get the recognition he deserves. On this song and throughout the album, Campbell's restrained leads power the groups' tight ensemble playing and provide further evidence that understatement should never be confused with having nothing to say.

Yet in many ways Hard Promises represents a departure for the band. Slower, moodier songs predominate. There are only two cuts here, "King's Road" and "A Thing About You," that could be considered full-out rockers.

To Petty's credit, on this trendbucking LP his passionate singing carries a sense of urgency not often found in such slow- to mid-tempo songs. The sinister "Something Big" opens with an acoustic guitar before giving way to Benmont Tench's well-placed, eerie organ background. With the table set, Petty's cynical vocal—he retains one of the best sneers in the business—holds onto the cut's edginess and packs it with considerable



drama. The same sort of intense vocal works well when played off Campbell's loping but angry slide guitar work on "Criminal Mind."

One almost gets the sense that Petty and the Heartbreakers are daring their fans to come along with them on the different route taken on Hard Promises. "The Waiting" was a surprising choice for a single not because it sounds so different from anything the band has played before—indeed, the folk-rock style of the song would have fit perfectly with the group's other albums—but Petty's lyrics and vocal exhibit much greater vulnerability than he was willing to show previously.

Yet even "The Waiting" doesn't prepare a listener for "Insider" or "You Can Still Change Your Mind." Both are slow, gentle, and achingly lovely; "Insider" marks the first time I can remember Petty singing a duet with a female vocalist—in this case, Stevie Nicks—and the results are quite moving.

Considering the huge commercial success of Damn The Torpedoes, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers have taken a somewhat risky step with Hard Promises. The change in direction is not as severe as, say, Talking Heads' on Remain In Light, but by revealing a new, more exposed side, the band shows an admirable determination to avoid standing still.

-Bruce Dancis



"Rit" Lee Ritenour

Elektra/Asylum 6E-331

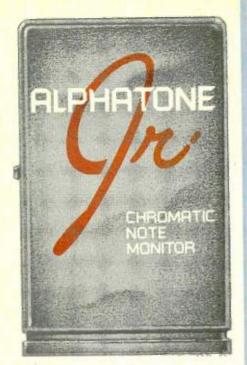
Produced by Harvey Mason, David Foster, and Lee Ritenour; recorded by Don Murray and Humberto Gatica; recorded at Monterey Studio, Glendale; Sunset Sound, Los Angeles; Santa Barbara Studios; Kendum Recorders, Glendale; Davlen Studio, Los Angeles. Only a few post-Miles Davis practitioners of jazz-rock fusion have solved the musical problems posed by melding jazz structures and improvisation with rock rhythms, electronics, and modern studio techniques. Too often, fusion groups become faceless back-ups for hot-shot, exhibitionist soloists, or, when they do achieve an integrated pop-instrumental sound, they come off like slick session players casting about for want of a good singer.

"Rit," despite its sparkling production and flawless execution, doesn't get beyond these common pitfalls. And that's a shame because Lee Ritenour can add some interesting twists to the McLaughlin-DiMeola-Metheny vocabulary of fusion guitar. His subtle control of the electric guitar's tonal dynamics and his ability to build searing leads over his own chunky chording give Ritenour's playing an exciting edge.

Unfortunately, most of that edge is blunted by the self-conscious intrigue and perfection of "Rit." In place of his "Friendship" band, Ritenour has surrounded himself with high-priced heavyweights from the L.A. session scene. If the instrumental tracks sound like Captain Fingers meets Toto, it's because the album was coproduced by keyboardist David Foster (with Harvey Mason and Ritenour) and rides on the same seamlessly textured and ultimately boring cushion of sound as "Hold the Line." Don Grusin, Abe Laboriel, Jeff Porcaro, Alex Acuna, Michael Boddicker, Richard Tee and over a dozen other musicians are credited. but most of their contributions are anonymous behind Ritenour's leads.

Not that these folks can't play when given something to sink their chops into. But Ritenour's songs are essentially compilations of segmented riffs, and however clever, Rit's riffs are in a rut. This is especially evident on side two, the mostly instrumental side, where the one near-success is Sly Stone's "(You Caught Me) Smilin'," and even here, the Steely Dannish arrangement leads nowhere. Ritenour's "Countdown," "Good Question," and "On the Slow Glide," are inconsequential frameworks for smoldering guitar lines.

Side one would seem to offer more hope, with the introduction of vocalist Eric Tagg, soulfully supported by the strong second voice of Bill (Sons of) Champlin. But



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Tagg's smokey crooning and occasional Stevie Wonderisms cannot salvage Ritenour's aimless melodies or give substance to his own empty lyrics. Nothing else is as silly as "It's a rat race Mr. Briefcase, Can you keep pace Mr. Briefcase? What do you keep in that bag of tricks? Is there anything at all?"-but "(Just) Tell Me Pretty Lies," "No Sympathy," and the single "Is It You?" hardly justify a lyric sheet on the inner sleeve.

Selected passages of "Rit" are snappy enough to serve as lead-ins for the Tomorrow show or TV network sports features, and "Dreamwalk" and the "No Sympathy" reprise (where Lee's custom Ibanez guitars sound their prettiest) might provide romantic soundtracks for late-night cuddling. Ritenour could, like Grover Washington has done so seductively on Winelight, create beautifully crafted background music. Clearly, he aspires to something more, but just as clearly, he hasn't yet found a way to get there.

- Derk Richardson



Sweet Combination Randy Crawford

Warner Bros., BSK 3541

Produced by Tommy LiPuma; engineered by Al Schmitt; recorded at Sound Labs and Capitol Recording, Hollywood.

In an age when most soul records are made with the teen to young adult party crowd in mind, vocalist Randy Crawford offers up a refreshing breath of clear, uncluttered air. As on her previous four albums, the Cincinnati chanteuse again gets a chance to sink her teeth into a set of mature, meaty tunes. Veteran Southern

California producer Tommy LiPuma, who is perhaps best known for having molded George Benson's initial crossover successes for Warner Bros., allows her elegant one-ofa-kind voice to carry the ball throughout in a carefully-crafted, gimmick-free setting of understated rhythm arrangements by keyboardist Leon Pendarvis, horns by Larry Williams and Bill Reichenbach, and strings by Nick DeCaro and Dale Oehler.

Crawford's velvet vibrato-laden voice exudes warmth and sincerity. It defies categorization, its slightly gritty blues edge tempered by a sophisticated knowledge of jazz phrasing. Her unmannered delivery is suave and emotive, her enunciation perfect, and her ability to dig deep into the meaning of a lyric unsurpassed among soul singers.

While the album's material is drawn from a variety of sources (three cuts were co-written by expert tunesmith Tom Snow), it is on chestnuts like Tony Joe White's "Rainy Night in Georgia," Leon Russell's "Time for Love," and Ralph MacDonald and William Salter's "Trade Winds" that she really gets a chance to display her considerable abilities as an interpreter of ballads. She seems to work a special magic with old Brook Benton hits; she did it a few years back with an elegant reading of "Endlessly" and again takes her time on "Rainy Night," letting her breathy alto swell and ebb as she gently reshapes the countryflavored classic. The Russell tune is treated with a delicate hummingbird flutter, while the oft-recorded "Trade Winds," a moving outcry against the moral breakdown of contemporary urban society, is given its definitive reading. Of the album's several uptempo selections, Turley Richards' "When I Love My Way" is the hottest; the funky Muscle Shoals-like groove that guitarist Dean Parks, bassist Abraham Laboriel and drummer Jeff Porcaro weave behind her recalls producer Rick Hall's work with singer Candi Staton during the early Seventies.

Despite five years of uniformly consistent recordings, commercial success has managed to elude Crawford, with the exception of her cameo appearance on the Crusaders' huge "Street Life." Yet her music is so totally without pretention and so directly honest that it is bound to eventually prevail. -Lee Hildebrand

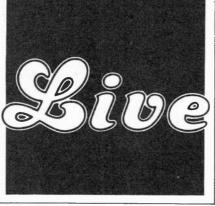
JIMMY CLIFF

by Bruce Dancis

With the news of Bob Marley's death only a little more than 24 hours old, Jimmy Cliff's appearance at San Francisco's Old Waldorf nightclub on May 12 took on an added emotional significance for both the sold-out audience and Cliff and his band, Oneness. And the veteran Cliff, whose first record came out in 1962, responded with one of the most moving and highly charged performances I've ever seen in a reggae concert.

Along with Marley, Cliff is probably the most widely known reggae vocalist in the U.S., largely because of the tremendous impact the film and soundtrack album to The Harder They Come have had since their initial release in 1973-74. Yet while reggae has expanded and developed in the following years, Jimmy Cliff's music has not grown with it. Based on his subsequent LPs, largely easy-listening efforts on the order of 1979's Give Thankx (Warner Bros.) and the new I Am The Living (MCA), Cliff's role appears to have been that of a conduit for reggae's internationalization, rather than as an innovator.

Cliff nevertheless remains an important and influential figure, as was shown by the collection of reggae all-stars in the sup-



port band he put together for this tour: lead guitarist Earl "Chinna" Smith, the leader of Soul Syndicate and without doubt the most popular guitar player in reggae; organist Ansel Collins, a former solo artist who has played recently with Toots & the Maytals; bassist "Ranchie" McLean, one of Jamaica's top studio musicians; rhythm guitarist Duggie Bryan, also a Toots & the Maytals veteran; percussionist "Sticky" Thompson, who has played with Peter Tosh; multi-keyboardist Phil Ramacon, one of Cliff's current songwriting collaborators; drummer "Mikey Boo" Richards; and Nyabinghi drummer Sydney Wolfe from Ras Michael and the Sons of Negus.

Beginning with "Bongo Man," in which every band member played some type of African or Caribbean drum, Cliff utilized rootsy arrangements to accompany his still magnificent voice. Virtually every song in his 65-minute set found Cliff singing with the spellbinding emotional power he showed in The Harder They Come. Indeed, on his classic "Many Rivers To Cross," Cliff writhed with so much feeling—matched by Chinna Smith's heartbreaking guitar lead—that it appeared as if he could conceivably split apart from the

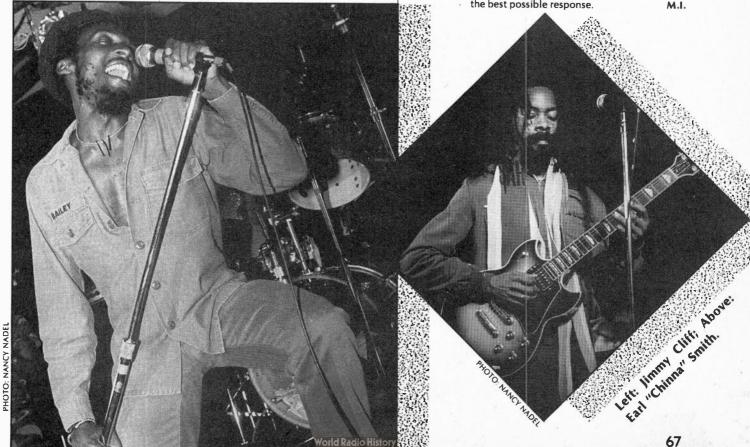
sheer intensity of the experience.

Cliff and Oneness were in such good form that the singer's newer songs sounded much tougher than their album versions. "Gone Clear," a strong protest against nuclear power, and "Stand Up and Fight Back" both produced ecstatic reactions from the jam-packed audience, their up-tempo pulse beats churning out rhythms that were urgent and undeniable. A lovely reggae cover of Cat Stevens' "Wild World," a big British hit for Cliff in 1970, gave the band a chance to show off their individual talents. Phil Ramacon and Ansel Collins contributed gorgeous electric piano and organ breaks, Ranchie McLean's bass took over a bottom-end melody line, and then Chinna Smith summed it all up with a high, eerily beautiful, stinging guitar

The most memorable part of the concert occurred during the encores. "I and I would like to take the time to pay tribute to our brother Bob Marley, the innovator and one of the pioneers of reggae music," Cliff said softly to the hushed crowd. After a minute of silence, Cliff and the band played such an emotionally wrenching version of Marley's "No Woman No Cry" that no one in the audience could possibly have remained unmoved or unshaken. If the Marley tribute left no throat unchoked, Cliff provided a release with his next and last song, "The Harder They Come." With the entire audience on their feet, hands clapping above every head, Cliff's most famous song offerred hope amidst the sadness.

Coming at a time when all lovers of reggae music were depressed and in shock, Jimmy Cliff's magnificent performance was the best possible response.

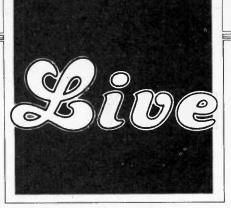
M.I.



by Bruce C. Pilato

Waiting in line to get into the Maple Leaf Ballroom in Toronto on April 17 to see this area's live debut of Adam & The Ants was like being transported back to England, c. 1977. The fans were dressed in full Antmusic regalia, and the 1,000 seat liquor-less club (they lost their license last fall after a Pretenders concert) had been sold out for six weeks. \$9.50 tickets were selling outside for 75 bucks.

Toronto's New Wave following has always been right behind the British movement,



The group's show consisted largely of tracks from their latest (and first domestic) LP, although the band itself has been around since the onset of the punk movement in the late 1970s. Some songs are strikingly different from others, but the vast majority sound alike, despite the band's excellent musicianship.

Adam himself is a non-melodic vocalist, and the attention he attracts is due more to his stage persona and image than to his singing ability. Visually, the performance was dominated by Ant's wild antics and his

ADAM and the ANTS

and this show was unquestionably one of the music events of the year. Despite a false start and some minor technical problems, Adam & Co. performed in top shape and captivated their audience throughout the 70 minute set.

In place of an opening act, the crowd was treated to a very well programmed disco of "some of the band's favorite Antmusic." Familiar songs by David Bowie and Roxy Music, lesser known tracks by groups like the Stray Cats, and off-the-wall recordings such as the "Theme From Rawhide," blared through the crystal clear sound system and kept the audience dancing, bopping and just generally happy for 45 minutes

At 9:40 pm the lights went down and the music of Holst's The Planets filled the ballroom. In darkness the group came out onto the stage, but suddenly they were off, the disco was back, and the house lights were turned on. Somehow the electricity for the stage had gone off and we had to wait another 15 minutes before the show finally

Opening with an Indian chant and "The Human Beings" from their debut LP, Kings Of The Wild Frontier (Epic), they roared through a near non-stop show dressed in the same Mutiny On the Bounty costumes that dominate their album cover. In both his music and dress, Adam Ant is obsessed with the image of pirates, cowboys and Indians. Such romanticism of heroic savagery, Adam told me after the show, "simply reflects the lyrical themes" of this particular record. In any event, the crowd ate it up by dressing in "ant costumes" with war paint and joining in on the band's unintelligible rhythmic chants.

Many might think that Adam & The Ants are yet another record company hype, but for me they stand far apart from the others. Their "antmusic," although reminiscent of the Bowie-Gary Clitter-Roxy sound of the early and mid-Seventies, is mostly beyond classification. What we have is a simple case of "either you love 'em or you hate 'em."

Bowie/Ronson-like playfulness with guitarist Marco Pirroni.

Pirroni (and occasionally Ant) played a raunchy sounding rhythm interspliced with frantic bits of lead runs. He used a 1958 Gibson Melody Maker out of a Marshall 100 watt top and 4 x 12 bottom. Bassist Gary Tibbs, formerly of Roxy Music and the Vibrators, anchored the group with a cement-like bottom, relying on a Fender Precision bass and an Ampeg SVT stack. Ant played his guitar, a Fender Telecaster with a Music Man amp, off and on throughout the show, mainly when more power was required on such songs as "Ant Music" and "Los Rancheros," with its Ventures-type riff.

Musically, the highlight of the show was unquestionably the group's double drummers, Chris Hughes-Merrick and Terry Lee Miall. Their backbeats, cymbal work and rolls were inseparable. The rhythm is the single most important element behind the band's music and these two Londoners did a superb exhibition of heavy, double drumming. Hughes-Merrick (who is left handed) and Miall played matching sets of Gretch drums, featuring chrome snares, 22" bass drums, and an array of tom toms, and Zildjian cymbals.

The group sounded excellent through the medium P.A. system. They were loud enough to have their rhythm penetrate the audience, yet never painful. The soundman paid particularly close attention to the two drummers, often making them sound like anti-aircraft

Highlights of the show included the frantic "Dog Eat Dog," "Killer In The Home," with its Kinks-like middle section, the catchy pop track "Press Darlings," and the funky and very danceable "Don't Be Square (Be There)."

The band did three encores, including



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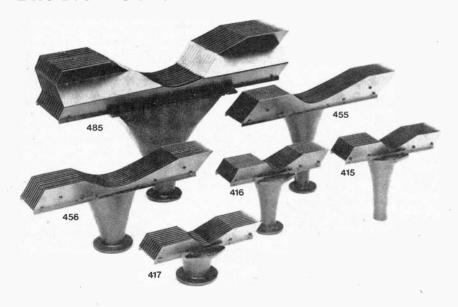
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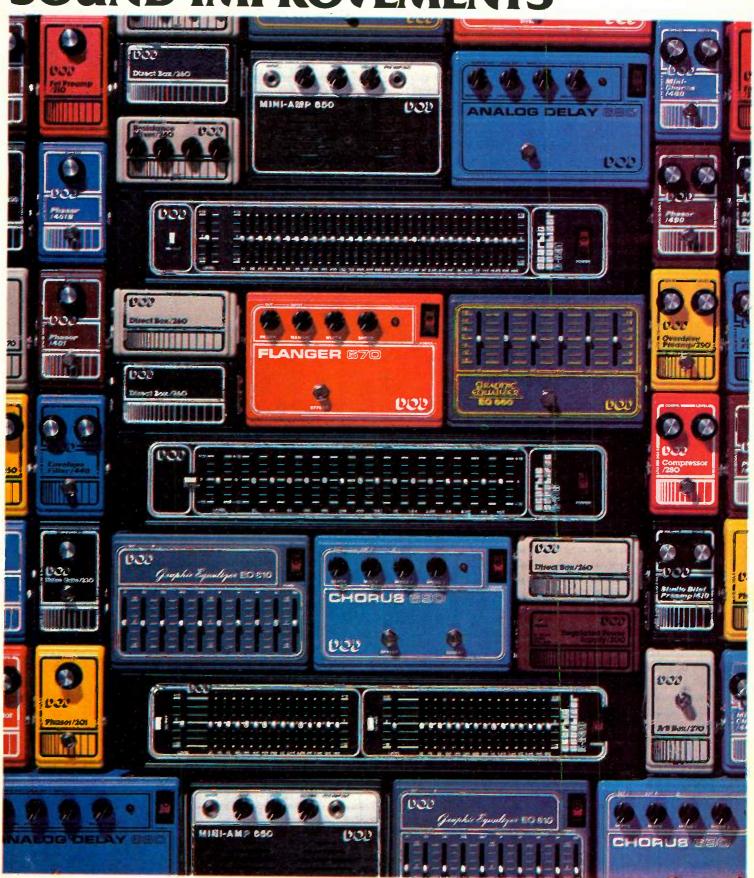
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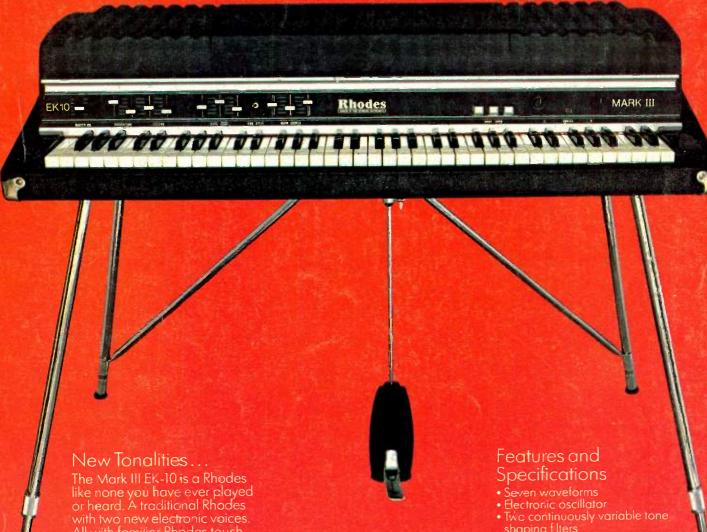
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