JEFF PORCARO
THE DRUMMER WHO DEFINED THE EIGHTIES
HIS LIFE STORY IN THE WORDS OF
Steve Lukather, Simon Phillips, JR Robinson and Jeff's brother Mike

"When you don't use cymbals you hear everything"
Alt-J's Thom Green on his simple set-up

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INTERVIEWED
Jean-Paul Gaster - CLUTCH
Rat Scabies - THE DAMNED
Jon Dette - SLAYER/ANTHRAX

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In September and October 2012, drummers around the world voted on which new cymbals SABIAN would release in 2013. Sets of the 12 new cymbal models were shipped to the finest drum shops around the world, where drummers were able to play them before voting. The results are in!

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HELLO!

Saluting one of the all-time greats

How many drummers can you name who have defined the sound of an entire era of music? Vinnie is instantly recognisable. JR Robinson was pretty prolific himself in the ’80s, and the noughties was notable for records with Josh Freese’s name on the liner notes. But there have been none more productive than Jeff Porcaro. Growing up in a musical family it was no surprise that Jeff would take the same path. Not only did he set the standard for session playing through the ’80s, appearing on albums by Michael Jackson, the Bee Gees and Madonna to name a few, he also topped the charts with virtuoso band Toto, hitting a career peak with his sublime performance and that shuffle on ‘Rosanna’. In this, Toto’s 35th year, we thought it fitting to celebrate Jeff’s life, and reminisce with musicians, friends and family who were closest to Jeff, to get a true picture of what shaped the finest session drummer of a generation.

Another legend crops up in this issue in the shape of The Damned’s punk powerhouse Rat Scabies who tell us about touring the band’s classic Damned, Damned, Damned album. Elsewhere, JP Gaster of Maryland blues rock groovers Clutch tells us all about studying the shuffle in preparation for stunning new album Earth Rocker; Mario Duplantier reveals his love for Lars Ulrich and trying to make it through Gojira gigs without crying; plus we finally catch up with Alt-J drummer Thom Green. The band’s Mercury-winning album An Awesome Wave is deservedly acclaimed, and it’s the drumming that makes it so striking, mainly due to the absence of cymbals. Thom tells us why his simple set-up is so effective on page 48. Enjoy!

Chris Barnes, Editor
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PLAYLIST
PUMPING ON OUR STEREO...

DAVID BOWIE
THE NEXT DAY
A worthy comeback from the Thin White Duke with some sterling and dynamic drumming courtesy of both Zachary Alford and Sterling Campbell.

ROCK CANDY
FUNK PARTY
WE WANT GROOVE
Tal Bergman has been Joe Bonamassa’s live drummer for some years and here they collaborate on this light but prodigiously executed jazz funk cut, produced by Bergman.

ARCANE ROOTS
BLOOD & CHEMISTRY
We introduced these guys in 2011 and their first album proper is spectacular. Angular, quirky and huge. Not dissimilar to a Scottish three-piece currently doing rather well.

THIS MONTH’S EXPERTS

DAVID WEST
A drummer for nearly 30 years, David is one of Rhythm’s top writers. This month David helped Rhythm pay tribute to the mighty Jeff Porcaro, interviewing many of the people closest to him including Toto bandmates Steve Lukather, David Paich and brother Mike Porcaro. Find David’s feature on page 26.

RICH CHAMBERLAIN
Another busy month for staff writer Rich this issue. Aside from his sterling work coordinating Rhythm’s gear reviews and rounding up drum news, Rich met Clutch’s Jean Paul Gaster and Mario Duplantier of French tech metalers Gojira. Find those interviews on page 42 and 58 respectively.

ERIK STAMS
Erik built up an impressive résumé studying and recording in NYC. He is now Head of Drums at Tech Music School. Erik is a staple of Rhythm’s Drum Lessons section, and in his Rhythm Concepts column this month he continues to look at funk grooves with a lesson in two-handed 16th-note grooves. Page 81!
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110 ASK GEOFF
Your kit conundrums solved by our resident gear guru

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VANNUCCI IS LEGACY

Ronnie Vannucci is part of a proud tradition of drummers inspired by the Zildjian legacy K sound. Discover all of the legendary dark sounds of the K Family. Warm, expressive K’s. Complex, modern K Customs. And K Constantinopoles, famous for their perfectly blended tones.

Ronnie Vannucci of The Killers plays K Zildjian.

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“The gruelling show was a Slayer headline show in Sydney with Anthrax opening. I was feeling it toward the end of the Slayer set.”
If you think playing a set of ultra-fast thrash night after night is physically demanding, doff your cap to Jon Dette, who has just finished up double drumming duties for two of the genre’s titans – Anthrax and Slayer.

Dette last year answered Anthrax’s call, filling in for Charlie Benante, who temporarily bowed out due to personal issues. “Jason Bittner was filling in for Anthrax on some of their dates last year and he was unable to do their European tour with Motörhead,” Dette explains. “He recommended me to Charlie, and Charlie called me the next day. I’ve told Charlie that I will help him for any dates he can’t make.”

After wrapping up the UK and European dates, Dette prepared to head to Australia for the Soundwave festival, only to receive a call from Slayer, another band on the Soundwave bill, days before he jetted out. “I got a call from Kerry [King, guitar] asking if I could do the Australian dates with them. My immediate question was, ‘What’s happening with Dave [Lombardo]?’”

The call came as news reverberated around the music world that Lombardo was out of the band’s immediate touring plans, with a statement released by the sticksman suggesting that a disagreement over the band’s financial plans had led to the split. With Lombardo out, Dette was more than happy to fill in, rejoining the band that he had been a member of in 1996-97.

“I had three days to rehearse with Kerry before flying out. I hadn’t played the songs in 16 years but most of the set were songs I’d played with the band. It was like riding a bike. After day one we both looked at each other and knew that it felt great. We had three days to rehearse and the fourth time was on stage at Brisbane. That was also my first time playing with Tom [Araya, vocals] for 16 years and my first time playing with Gary Holt ever!”

Dette admits that playing with both bands each day required some forward planning: “It was physically challenging. I approached it like an athlete and took care of myself. I didn’t drink a lot, I ate well and took a lot of supplements. For Soundwave I had a two or three hour break between each band. The gruelling show was a Slayer headline show in Sydney with Anthrax opening. I played 50 minutes with Anthrax then an hour and 40 minutes with Slayer. I was feeling it toward the end of the Slayer set.”

Dette is currently on standby for Anthrax’s US tour, should Benante be unavailable, and it’s much the same story with Slayer as he awaits how the Lombardo situation plays out. “Dave has been such an integral part of Slayer, he’s been one of my largest influences on drums. It’s natural for the fans to be upset right now. There’s a lot of people you will never please, it’s either Dave or nothing. But, the show must go on.”

### METAL SEAL OF APPROVAL

“A highlight for me was looking over during the first [Slayer] show and seeing James Hetfield staring right at me smiling. It was like, ‘Alright, the master himself has given me his approval, I must be doing something right!’”

**DOUBLE DETTE**

Drummer saves the day for both Slayer and Anthrax
Rhythm is saddened to report the passing of Clive Burr. The former Iron Maiden drummer passed away at his home on 12 March aged 56. Burr had been suffering with Multiple Sclerosis.

His former bandmates were quick to pay tribute, with Iron Maiden's Steve Harris saying: “This is terribly sad news. Clive was a very old friend of all of us. He was a wonderful person and an amazing drummer who made a valuable contribution to Maiden in the early days when we were starting out. “This is a sad day for everyone in the band and those around him, and our thoughts and condolences are with his partner Mimi and family at this time.”

Frontman Bruce Dickinson added: “I first met Clive when he was leaving Samson and joining Iron Maiden. He was a great guy and a man who really lived his life to the full. Even during the darkest days of his MS, Clive never lost his sense of humour or irreverence. This is a terribly sad day and all our thoughts are with Mimi and the family.”

Prior to joining Maiden, Burr was sticksman for fellow New Wave of British Heavy Metal pioneers Samson, staying with the band until 1978. Burr sat behind the kit for Maiden from 1979 to 1982, in that time playing on the classic albums Iron Maiden, Killers and Number Of The Beast.

After leaving the band he went on to perform with several bands, including Trust, Alcatrazz and Gofmagog. Burr had been suffering with MS for more than a decade, with Iron Maiden setting up the Clive Burr MS Trust Fund in 2002 to help raise money and awareness for the cause. The band contributed to a series of Clive Aid events which helped generate funds for treatment and specialist equipment for Burr.

As news of the drummer’s passing spread, several high profile sticksmen took to Facebook and Twitter to pay their tributes. Mike Portnoy was one of the first to do so, saying: “So sad to hear of the passing of Clive Burr... RIP.” Dave Lombardo and Charlie Benante both took to Twitter to pay tribute. Lombardo said: “Playing Iron Maiden nice and loud for Clive Burr, RIP.” While Benante added: “Clive, You have influenced so many, and to this day nobody plays like you.”

Our thoughts go out to Clive’s family, friends and former bandmates.

Clive Burr RIP

Former Iron Maiden man dies aged 56

**Rhythm**
Pat Lundy

Funeral For A Friend

Ex-Rise To Remain man returns with emo stars

How did getting the Funeral For A Friend gig come about?
“I had done several tours with Funeral For A Friend in my previous band, so I already knew the guys real well. I was called by Bouche [bass] one afternoon and he asked if I was interested in trying out. The rest is history I suppose, now. It was a good phone call!”

Was it a daunting gig to take given that this is a band 10 years in?
“I suppose so, yeah. I always vibed the tunes and the band though, so I knew there was going to be great chemistry on and off stage. We all love playing live, and that’s what we are, a live band. The grin I have playing a show far outweighs the daunting aspect, for sure.”

How have you approached playing the old songs?
“Sometimes the boys will suggest changing it up in slight areas. I’m forever writing new fills, and coming up with patterns that I’m dying to execute live, but I definitely keep true to a lot of the original parts. The extras are for the sheer fun of spicing it up at a show.”

What was your approach on Funeral’s new album, Conduit?
“Well, I didn’t have very long to compose for the new record. As the album had all been tracked before I joined, I had to write the beats around the feels and movements of the tracks. It was quite tricky at times, but I feel like I’ve played for the songs on this one and I’m very proud of how authentic the finished product is. It’s very real, and very live. I used my Premier Elite drums, of course, 22” bass, 12”, 16”, 14” hammered brass snare. A selection of Paiste spankers – Rude and 2002 series. I have a really basic set-up – less goes wrong, and let’s face it, it’s way more punk!”

What is it about your Premier drums that suit you and your sound?
“Premier were the drums I began playing when I was eight years old and my old man would take me to our local practice rooms. I’ve always felt comfortable playing them. Also, using the short stack toms, they’re totally easy to maintain, sound punchy and cut through, which is essential for any heavy bands, and their beautifully crafted-in-England snare drums speak for themselves. I couldn’t be happier!”

Are there any tracks you’re proudest of from a drumming point of view?
“A song called ‘Nails’ – it’s a really hard-hitting track with lots of things going on. It’s a synergy song, something that every album should have.”

This Month at RhythmMagazine.co.uk
Highlights from the online home of the UK’s best-selling drum magazine

Interviews

Steve Barney
The pop godson was told us all about his juicing diet a few months back and how it had made him a better player. Here you can follow suit by checking Steve’s advice and recipes.

Features

Mike Portnoy
Mike Portnoy’s Adrenaline Mob have just released their Coverta EP. We chat with the drummer about covering Van Halen, Dio and more for the disc.

 Videos

White and Blundell
Fancy taking drum lessons from not one but two Brit drum stars? Craig Blundell and Steve White are offering specially tailored, one-on-one lessons on 28 and 29 May. Head to RhythmMagazine.co.uk right now to benefit from these great players’ drum expertise!

Jason Gianni/Tommy Igoe
Take lessons from Gianni and Igoe courtesy of Hudson Music and Drum Guru. The clips give some handy tips for beginners and a few pointers on fills.

Plus Ed Graham injury curtails Darkness tour, ACM unveils new music course, Mark Richardson masterclass and more

WWW.RHYTHMMAGAZINE.CO.UK
Benny’s back
GREB ANNOUNCES UK CLINICS

Clinic ace and groove master Benny Greb is back in the UK next month for a batch of unmissable live dates.

The master sticksman kicks off a four-show UK run at Rhythm Base in Glasgow on 6 May.

He follows that up with dates at Gateshead’s Drum Shop on 7 May, before a performance at Sound Attak in Colchester the following evening.

The tour is rounded off with a stop off at Absolute Music in Bournemouth. From there Benny will head to the Netherlands for a pair of clinics.

The Meinl-backed tour will give UK fans the chance to see one of the hottest properties on the clinic circuit, with Benny having wowed audiences around the globe in recent years with his incredible chops and technical skill.

Benny has been a particularly busy boy of late, having recently put on a US Mastersession Drum Camp in March, as well as working with jazzers Blue Touch Paper and Nils Wulker.

Contact the venues for ticketing details. For more information on Benny head to www.bennygreb.de.

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IMPROVE YOUR...
QUARTER-NOTE TRIPLET INDEPENDENCE
Coordination to help you master the shuffle

Example 1 this month shows playing quarter-note triplets in the left hand whilst the right maintains the shuffle, with the left hand playing the upbeat or syncopated quarter-note triplet.

Example 2 then moves the figure to the bass drum while the left hand fills in the eighth-note triplet spaces. If we apply the dynamics marked this can create a great groove with the bass drum and left hand playing downbeat and upbeat quarter-note triplets simultaneously.

Example 3 uses the same coordination, this time incorporating the toms. This can be used as an effective fill in a shuffle setting.

EXAMPLE 1

EXAMPLE 2

EXAMPLE 3

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FULL DETAILS ON PAGE 70