

JAZZ DRUMMING ICON **CHICO HAMILTON**



DRUMMING FOR FANATICS

# DRUM!

## CARTER'S BACK

IGNITING  
DAVE  
MATTHEWS  
BAND

PLUS

BEST iPhone  
APPS FOR  
DRUMMERS

JOHNNY RABB  
WORKSHOP  
UNISON TECHNIQUE  
TEASERS

VIBE  
TIM YEUNG  
REFINES DIVINE  
HERESY

DRUM PARTS  
SHINEDOWN'S  
BARRY KERCH  
KICKS IN SIX

HAND DRUM!  
MARCEL  
RODRIGUEZ-  
LOPEZ

ISSUE

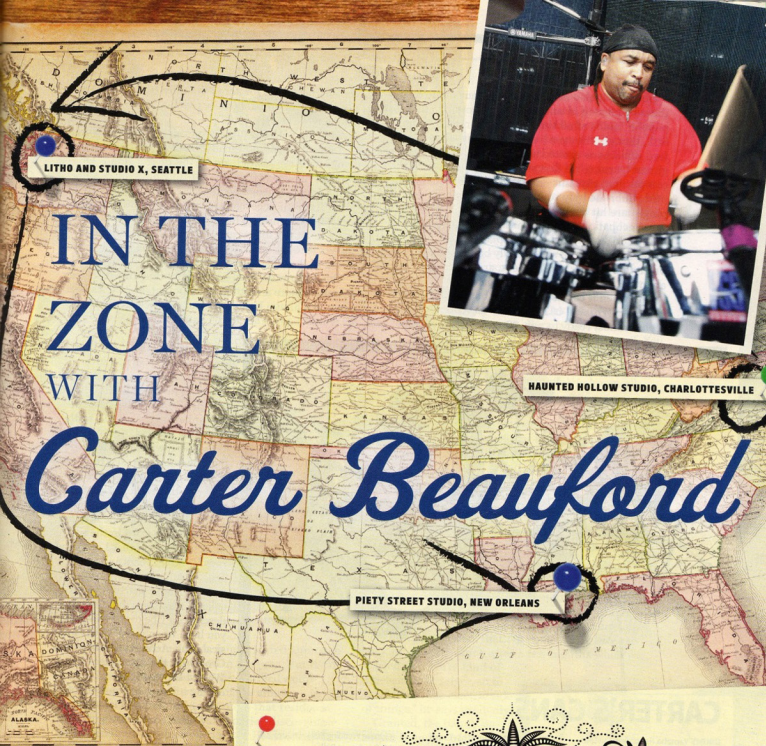
159



\$5.99 US \$6.99 CAN September 2009









LITHO AND STUDIO X, SEATTLE

IN THE  
ZONE  
WITH

# Carter Beauford



HAUNTED HOLLOW STUDIO, CHARLOTTEVILLE



PIETY STREET STUDIO, NEW ORLEANS



BY DAVE CONSTANTIN PHOTOS BY ERIC KULIN

**W**ant to know the real secret to Carter Beauford's success? It's not what you think: all that stuff about total ambidexterity, a lifetime of experience, and heaps of natural talent — who needs all that? No, the *real* secret is ... wait for it now ... a positive attitude! That's right, a positive attitude, which, when combined with total ambidexterity, a lifetime of experience, and heaps of natural talent, will make you play just like Carter Beauford! It's that simple!

Oh yeah, it also helps if you get your name out there by playing in one of the top-grossing and most popular bands of all time. Hey, it worked for him. Still, though, the ever-humble, ever-positive Beauford remains as excited and awed by his craft as a beginner learning his first set of licks. Beneath all the complicated rhythms and flawless technique, that's pure, unbridled joy you hear spilling out of every popping snare hit and mad musical tom roll, every dancing syncopation, skipping hi-hat riff, and powerful crescendo, every unexpected splash, crash, and bass drum bash in those ridiculously busy yet irresistibly brilliant beats that, let's face it, are the coolest thing about Dave Matthews Band's music.

And when it comes to talking about DMB's latest release, *Big Whiskey & The GrooGrux King*, Beauford seems almost ready to pop. "Boy, I'm psyched about this

record," he gushes for about the third time in a 30-minute span. "I'm probably more psyched about this record than any we've ever done."

And why not? His playing on this album is as vibrant and inventive and powerful as it's ever been. From his liquid rhythmic cascade on "Lying In The Hands Of God," to the hard-charging odd-time pulse of "Seven," to the crazily syncopated, colorful patterns on "Why I Am," Beauford once again serves as both the driving force and the musical lubricant in the DMB machinery, using his sticks like wizard's wands to cast emotional shivers through the listener, elevating the merely interesting to the truly extraordinary.

This has always been his gift. But this time it seems somehow more arresting, more potent. Maybe it's because this album holds a special significance for Beauford unlike any other in the band's catalog.

**An Inside Thing.** *Big Whiskey* is, in many ways, a loving tribute to saxophonist and founding member LeRoi Moore, who passed away this past August smack in the middle of the recording process. And no one in the band was closer to Moore than Beauford. In fact, the essence of their musical partnership sets the framework for the entire album, a framework summed up in that one mysterious, made-up word in the title.

"Grux is a term that LeRoi and myself started years and years ago," Beauford explains. "I think we were in our fourth year of college. It's a term that kind of describes a vibe or a feeling that you have when you're in the musical zone. Actually, the word was GrooGrux, the complete word. We just shortened the term by calling it Grux. And instead of calling him LeRoi, I would say, 'Hey, Grux, check this out! I got a piece of music for you to listen to.' And people never knew what we were talking about because it was just, it was an inside thing. And we never really explained it to anybody because it was just so hard to describe. But the best thing we could come up with is it's just a vibe, or a feeling that you get when you're playing, outside of any crowds, outside of anything. Just within a small space. It's just you by yourself, or you and one or two other people, and you're in the zone."

The Grux spirit is all over *Big Whiskey*, with the band having



## CARTER'S CANS

### DRUMS Yamaha Recording Custom Series (Raven Black Lacquer)

- 1 20" x 18" Bass Drum
- 2 14" x 6.5" Ludwig Black Beauty Supra-Phonic Snare Drum
- 3 8" x 8" Rack Tom
- 4 10" x 9" Rack Tom
- 5 12" x 10" Rack Tom
- 6 14" x 12" Rack Tom
- 7 16" x 16" Rack Tom
- 8 13" x 7" Dunnett Titanium Timbale
- 9 14" x 12" Rack Tom

### CYMBALS Zildjian

- A 13" K Custom Dark or A Armand Hi-Hat
- B 7" LP Ice Bell
- C 6" Zil Bell (stacked upside down on Ice Bell)

- D 18" K Dark Medium Thin Crash
- E 10" A Armand Splash
- F 18" A Armand Thin Crash
- G 14" K Dark Thin Crash
- H 16" A Custom Crash
- I 14" K Mini China (with rivets)
- J 19" K China
- K 18" Classic Oriental China (stacked on K China)
- L 20" A Custom Projection Ride
- M 20" A Custom Flat Top Ride
- N 6" A Custom Splash (stacked upside down on Flat Top ride)
- O 18" A Custom EFX Crash
- P 19" K Custom Hybrid China

### PERCUSSION

- Q LP Low-Pitch Jam Block
- R LP Rock Classic Ridge Rider Cowbell

### S Chinese Wedding Bell (antique)

- T LP Dry Agogo Bell
- U LP Granite Blocks
- V LP 72-bar Whole-Tone Aluminum Bar Chimes

### ELECTRONICS Hart Dynamics

- W 8" Acupad
- X Hammer Accessory Pad Trigger

Carter Beauford also uses **DW** hardware, Yamaha Hex Rack system, Remo heads, Pro-Mark sticks, Ddrum bass drum triggers, Butticker transducers, AKG, DPA, Crown, Neumann, Sennheiser, and Shure microphones, and Footlog gloves.





Before Matthews' latest bout of inspiration struck, Beauford had been keeping busy writing "pops" in between programming and commercial breaks for ESPN, of all things. "I had a great time doing that because I really get to extend and stretch out a little bit in ways that aren't too familiar with our stuff, with the Matthews style of music," he says. "And then you get to listen back to it when you watch the NBA Playoffs or whatever. You hear your piece of music going on the commercial break. It's like, 'Wow, this is great.' Because you get to write a lot of dramatic-style stuff. You get to write a bunch of teary-eyed stuff, or a lot of happy kind of stuff. You know, all across the board."

But Beauford was eager to get back to crafting new music for his flagship outfit. And it didn't take long before he and Matthews struck creative gold, tapping a vein that led them straight back to their roots. "In the early days, when we started this band out, it had a really, really raw sound to it," Beauford explains. "It had somewhat of an electric sound, although we were using all acoustic instruments. And we're kind of trying to get

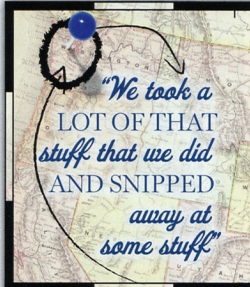
back to that, and feel that out some more, because we kind of left it alone after a few months when we started out. We're kind of unleashing the tiger, so to speak, with the electric side of things," he says excitedly.

Granted, the band's signature sound — Matthews' percussive acoustic chops and acrobatic vocal contortions rounded out by violin, horns, and Beauford's agile, airy rhythms — is still the anchor on *Big Whiskey*. But this time the added spark of electric guitar, courtesy of longtime Matthews co-writer and guitar virtuoso Tim Reynolds, is what gives the beast that extra bit of bite.

That, and a certain indefinable edge, a rawness Beauford and Matthews spent the first month in

followed a more all-inclusive, jam-oriented approach to the recording than they had in the past. But it can be heard in its purest form in the distilled examples book-ended on either side of the album — in the opening track, "Grux," and in a piece that resides at the end of the last track, "You And Me," discoverable after a few seconds of silence, where Beauford and Moore are having their last GrooGrux moments together. That, says Beauford, "sums up what this whole journey is all about."

**Fleshing Out The Grux.** That journey would take the band on a triangular course around the country, from Charlottesville, to Seattle, and finally, to New Orleans, an end point commemorated in Matthews' Mardi Gras-themed drawing on the album's cover. But it all started in January of last year when Matthews and Beauford got together at their own Haunted Hollow Studio in Charlottesville to play around with some new ideas. "Dave kind of bounces ideas off of everybody," Beauford says. "This time it just so happened that he decided to get with me. I guess we were in the same area at the time and he was like, 'Hey, Carter, check this out.'"



Charlottesville teasing out of the ether, before LeRoi Moore entered the mix, followed by producer Rob Cavallo (My Chemical Romance, Green Day) to add some much-needed rock-centric structure to their efforts. Cavallo, says Beauford, was a perfect match right from the start. "I knew he had worked with Green Day because

*"Almost every band I've played in [LEROI MOORE] was right there WITH ME."*

I'm a big Green Day fan. But my decision for choosing him to be a part of this record and to steer us, to guide us on this record, had really nothing to do with the Green Day sound. It was just a personal thing. I just liked him right off the bat."

It also helped that Cavallo knew his way around a guitar, which allowed him to sit in for a few jam sessions with the band and feel what they were feeling. "We took a lot of the stuff that we did and kind of snipped away at some stuff and created some ideas and created some tunes and had something to kind of go off of when we did that," Beauford says.

But it was Cavallo's "great head for drums" that really got Beauford excited about working with him. "And if he didn't know that much about me, it damn sure seemed like it because he just seemed like he went home and he just did his homework and he came back and he knew exactly what I was all about musically when he got there. And I just thought that was the greatest thing on earth."

One of the things the pair discovered is that they both share the same tastes in drum sounds. "I kind of like the old '70s studio drum sound," Beauford says. "I also like the sound of today, you know, with the open toms and the kind of open snare. I also like a poppin' snare, one that's kind of tight, that pops really hard, for that backbeat kind of thing. So he came in and he kind of knew that that's what I was into. He also knew that I was into certain styles of music — the jazz and fusion kind of thing. It was almost like we had known each other for years and years and years. So it was the perfect marriage I thought."

Cavallo showed equal adeptness at working with each member of the band as they trickled into Haunted Hollow near the end of those sessions. And once everyone's input had gone into the pot, step two was to move up to Seattle to start dishing out complete songs. "We all were in the studio together, some tiny studio in Seattle, and we were just having such a great time," Beauford says. "The music was really poppin', this stuff that we were doing. We were just kind of venturing out and figuring out what was going to work and put stuff together and create some good stuff and put all our heads

## STEFAN LESSARD

### Basses It On Beauford

Stefan Lessard has spent more than half his life slapping out bass lines alongside one of the most unpredictable and inventive drummers on the planet. And even still he finds his fingers playing catch-up. "That incredible pulse that he has — it took me years to really get comfortable with that," Lessard says. "I'm still struggling with it a little bit." The trick, he's discovered, is to imagine himself as an airplane inside what he calls "a thunderstorm of music — I'm just trying to stay stable and just keep on course," he says. "But it's incredible too because Carter can be a thunderstorm all by himself but still be in full control, and still have a lightning fill going on. Not many people can do that."

Lessard, whose bass lines are often informed as much by Dave Matthews' guitar and vocals as by Beauford's drums, has lately been locking into the hi-hat for a reference point. "Carter's hi-hat work I feel like is so crisp and clean. So I can turn that up a little bit and it's great because the embellishments are there, and the pulse is there. A lot of times my bass lines grow during a live show because Carter has a way of making me excited," he says. "And my bass lines on the record that fit perfect for the song, all of a sudden I need to embellish them because he's embellishing his parts."

That was less true this time, though. Because of all the live-tracking the band did on *Big Whiskey & The GrooGrux King*, Beauford and Lessard were able to work out a lot of those kinks in the studio, playing from a more



spontaneous, interactive place until that magical synthesis was achieved. "I wanted to make sure that his fills, which are so pristine and so musical — I wanted to be just as musical surrounding his fills on the record," Lessard says. "So there were a few moments where I would have to think about how I wanted to

approach this fill that he had going into the next section. But for the most part it just comes so naturally because we've been playing together for so long. Even though I can't execute everything he's executing, I can hear it and I know how to play with it. I tried to put that on the record."

BY DAVE CONSTANTIN



## Carter Beauford

together to make the best possible music that we could make for our fans. And once we got all that stuff together in Seattle we decided, 'Okay, we have about 25 tunes or so. Let's take all these things to New Orleans and let's put them down on some real equipment here and see what we come up with.'

But before they could make it to New Orleans, tragedy struck.

**Say Goodbye.** On June 28, 2008, after having wrapped up recording at Litho and Studio X in Seattle, the band played a show at the Nissan Pavilion in Bristow, Virginia, not far from their hometown. "It was probably one of the best gigs that we've done," Beauford says. It was also LeRoi Moore's last. Two days later, an ATV accident landed Moore in the hospital. A harrowing two-month odyssey of recovery and relapse followed. And just when it seemed their friend was out of the woods, the band got a call on August 19 saying Moore had passed away suddenly due to complications from pneumonia.

The news of Moore's death was a stunning blow, to no one more so than Beauford, who had not only grown up two doors down from Moore — "His parents and my parents were best of friends. For the longest time I thought he was my brother because he was at my house all the time" — but had grown up musically alongside him as well. "Almost every band I've played in, he was right there with me," Beauford says. "I miss that greatly. It's just an incredible loss, incredible loss."



**BARRY KERCH - SHINEDOWN**  
**ORANGE PEEL - ASHEVILLE, NC**

Barry plays Mb20, Byzance and Generation X series. Meinl Professional Cymbals are only available at authorized stocking dealers.

Find your dealer at [meinlycymbals.com/dealers](http://meinlycymbals.com/dealers)

*"It's about making the music  
SWING to give you the right  
FEEL to make you GET UP"*

But personal pain aside, coming when it did, at the tail end of the Seattle recording sessions, and at the crucial moment when the music needed an experienced guide to midwife it into its final phase, Moore's passing meant the band was, for the first time, without the person they'd always depended on to fulfill that role.

"One of the big things that we miss about him is the knack that he had for arranging the tunes that we do," Beauford says. "He was such an important part of that. Although, we all do our part as far as arranging, but he was kind of the godfather, so to speak, when it came down to doing that. His ability, his theory chops were just happening. And his reading chops were just happening. Not that we relied on that all the time, but it just came to be such a comfortable space for us, you know, to have him kind of show us which direction to go as far as the theory was concerned with the piece of music that we were working on. So we miss that."

But rather than throw in the towel, the band sol-

diered on, with famed Flecktones saxophonist Jeff Coffin filling in whatever minor gaps remained as they headed down to Piety Street Studio in New Orleans to finish up the album. And it was there, against the haunted, hallowed backdrop of the Crescent City, where they managed to spin the sorrow of death into a celebration of life.

"It actually gave us strength in a weird kind of way," Beauford says. "I mean, that's a strange thing, but it actually sent us strength to move on because we knew that, that's LeRoi. And you hear this all the time: 'That's what so and so would've wanted.' Well, yeah, he really would've wanted us to finish this record because this record has him all over it. I mean his playing — a lot of the stuff that he did in the studio when we were in Seattle, we kept that stuff and we put it on this record. So, almost all the [sax] parts that you hear on this record, that's LeRoi playing. Those are the last notes that he played with this band in the studio. And it's some of the best playing that I've ever heard him do in my whole life. And it was almost as if he was saying, 'Hey guys, I'm going to be checking out, so here's my best work. You'd better take it and capitalize on it because this is it.' It was almost like he knew what was going to happen in a weird kind of way."

**Giving Up The Ghost.** The only way to do this thing right, they knew, was to move forward as a solid





unit. "We got into the studio and decided to all become Le-Roi as far as arranging and composing and getting stuff on the right and proper musical scale," Beauford says. And when it came to recording, they did their best to keep the Grux spirit alive. "When we got to New Orleans we decided, 'Okay, let's get in here and let's play it as a group again. Let's learn the songs and play as a group just to see if we have it down. You know, the way it should be.' And we did that, and once we got it down we recorded it as such, and it sounded great. And that's when we decided to do it individually again. So we did both things quite a bit. We just jumped back and forth."

At least two of the tracks they'd recorded live as a band in Seattle, "Lying In The Hands Of God" and "Spaceman," they kept untouched, unable to improve them with overdubs. Otherwise, they followed the usual model, with Beauford laying down his keeper drum parts either to Matthews' scratch guitar track or, more often, to everyone playing along. "If I have to do the take a hundred times, they're right there with me laying it down," Beauford says. "Most times when I'm laying down my tracks I just listen to the bass because that's pretty much what was there in the early days. We'd just do the bass and the drums and that's all I had to play off of, and I would try and make it have some kind of movement to it but it would always have to be adlibbed, so to speak. With this record, everybody's sitting in the studio with me playing along and everybody's giving it their all and I'm playing against whatever they're doing and its making things happen a lot better and moving a lot better."

And though Beauford wasn't averse to turning on a click track now and then, he was, as always, wary of robbing the track of breath. "I like to make it move, you know? To fluctuate the time signatures, to make it come to life. It's about making that piece of music swing to give you the right feel to make you get up and move your feet."

It should come as no surprise that for Beauford, the straight 4/4 backbeat is less a go-to standard than it is just another arrow in his quiver, to be deployed sparingly and mostly for effect. "I play really busy, you know, I'll say it! [*laughs*] I'm a busy player. And there are some other reasons for that. But to come out of that busy style and lay right into a 4/4 backbeat groove just as solid as you could possibly make it, it really works. It works in such a big way! And if people notice it then they're like, 'Oh yeah!' And I think the reason for that



is they get so used to my busy style that when it comes down to that 4/4 thing it's like, 'Oh, wow, I can hear something now. My ears — it's a break.' So it's kind of a good thing for a lot of the listeners out there, so I try to use it to my benefit."

**Dropping Bombs.** One notable instance of where Beauford puts that theory to work is in what he somewhat reluctantly labels his favorite song on the album. "Every single song on this record I absolutely love," he says emphatically, just so we're clear. "But there are some that just really, really go just a step further as far as my love for them. And one of those is a song called 'Time Bomb.'"

This one actually starts out as a different song entirely, one they had been working on in Charlottesville and Seattle but felt wasn't quite ready to stand on its own, so they tacked it onto "Time Bomb" as a sort of extended, moody intro. But about two-thirds of the way through, that slow build of energy suddenly erupts in a flood of hard-rock-inspired shredding, hinging on Beauford's bruising backbeat. "When we started messing around with it the first and only thing I could think of was like a heavy kind of rock, kind of Bonham, kind

of Ginger Baker, kind of Tommy Aldridge, Carmine Appice — all these cats, man. That's what I was thinking of. Those guys are my heroes when it comes down to the rock thing."

For Beauford, "Time Bomb" encapsulates the best of what they were going for on this album. "It is one of those tunes that — going back to that raw stage of our career and the electric side of things when we kind of messed around with it years ago. This tune has everything that I was talking about with that. It has that electric thing; it has that raw thing; it has that acous-

tic thing; it has that heavy rock, you know, that kick-ass kind of a punch-you-in-the-jaw kind of attack to it."

Most importantly, though, it has a whopping dose of that intangible GrooGrux energy, which Beauford, finally stumbling on a proper analogy, equates to Michael Jordan playing his best game. "He would say, 'Man, it felt like the rim was ten feet wide.' Anything he threw up would just go in. And we feel that same thing when we're in that space." No doubt Beauford's playing is all net on this album. Listen close and you can almost hear the *swish*. It's enough to put a smile on any drummer's face. ■

## GROOVE ANALYSIS *By Brad Schlueter*

### Beauford Pumps The Funk

Dave Matthews Band's new release, *Big Whiskey & The GrooGrux King*, proves once again that Carter Beauford is one of the most interesting, instantly recognizable, and relentlessly funky drummers playing pop music today. Instead of just providing a foundation for the song, Beauford chooses to interact with the music, creating a percolating texture with a very deep pocket. Here are a couple of prime drumming moments from the new disc.



### "Funny The Way It Is"

On this excerpt, Beauford plays a ridiculously funky groove with an unusually busy bass drum part. He emphasizes the *e* & *ah* of 1 and the *ah* of 4, with his bass drum while his hi-hat and snare fill in the spaces with rolls and funky accents.

0:25

### "Shake Me Like A Monkey"

This song features a horn section and could almost pass for an Earth, Wind & Fire song. Beauford starts off with a fairly straight-ahead set of cymbal hits and grooves. At the verse, he switches to an unusual yet very funky groove with lots of ghost notes that emphasizes count 2 and the & of 3, followed by a measure with accents on count 2 and the & of 3 and count 4.

$\text{♩} = 60$   
Intro



## SET LIST

## FEATURES

## 30 Carter Beauford

The funk-tastic pulse behind the Dave Matthews Band has a passion for playing that is downright contagious.

BY DAVE CONSTANTIN

## 43 Chico Hamilton

Well into his ninth decade, the risk-taking player and bandleader shows no signs of slowing down.

BY JOHN EPHLAND

## HAND DRUM!

## 52 Marcel Rodriguez-Lopez

It's not easy for a percussionist in the prog wilderness of The Mars Volta, but, Lord knows, Marcel tries.

BY ANDREW LENTZ

## 56 West Coast Cool

Gary Gardner gets his hands on a set of Tycoon Heritage Series congas and bongos.

## PLUGGED IN

## 59 Killer Apps

Forget texting friends. Get an iPhone for its drum-specific applications.

BY JAKE WOOD

## VIBE

21 For Tim Yeung, extreme metal is more than a bpm race. 25 Being a session ace is easier than you might think. Just ask Chris McHugh.

## SOUND LAB

## 72 Taye Studio Maple Bebop Kit

A light touch is all it takes to elicit beauty from these drums.

BY BRAD SCHLUEBER

## 74 Sabian Ride Roundup

It's a bona fide bronze bonanza from the Canadian cymbalsmiths.

BY JOHN NYMAN

## 76 Pearl Demon Drive

Eliminator Pedal  
Feast your feet on these fiendishly cool pedals.

BY BRAD SCHLUEBER

## 78 MXL Cube Microphones

Don't let the boxy aesthetics fool you, this mike is a workhorse.

BY GARRETT HAINES

## PRACTICE PAD

## DRUM PARTS

83 Barry Kerch gives it up to a greater power on Shinedown's "The Crow And The Butterfly."

BY DAVE CONSTANTIN

## WORKSHOP

## 88 Welcome To The Jungle

Playing drum 'n' bass so good the machine gets jealous.

BY JOHNNY BOBB

## LESSONS

90 For Terence Higgins, Mardi Gras Indian grooves are as political as they are festive. Wally Schnalle swings hard with eighth-note triplets.

## 92 A 5/4 in punk rock? Darrin

Pfeiffer sure as heck isn't notating Morello's "Take Five." New contributor Danny Gottlieb honors a drumming legend with variations on a shuffle.

## EVERYTHING ELSE

- 6 Perspective
- 10 Feedback
- 12 Notation Guide
- 14 Single Strokes
- 18 Showcase
- 69 DRUM! Picks
- 98 Wiretap



# CARTER JAMS

Carter knows the sound of a good jam. And he knows which drumheads sound best when you're jamming with the Dave Matthews Band. His choice? Remo®, of course. Carter Beauford plays Remo®; CONTROLLED SOUND® Emperor® w/Black dot on his snare drums, Coated EMPEROR® on toms, and Clear POWERSTROKE® 3 on his bass drum.





# FEEDBACK



## Band Versus Studio

It was quite odd and a bit disturbing to read the interview with some of Nashville's top producers and engineers [July 2009], who basically put down

"band drummers." They don't even realize that is the problem with Nashville's output today: 99 percent of all the music is corporate factory assembly-line productions using the same "perfect" studio musicians time after time. That's why most modern country music all sounds the same. It makes little difference to most people, but folks who really listen to music realize this. Groups like Alabama don't even play on their own records. I heard some bands today on the radio — The Who, Led Zeppelin, The Stones, The Beatles, The Moody Blues — and those great drummers would make these guys cringe! But that is exactly the point: they were all different, they each played differently, they were human with glitches and personalities in their music. Their tiny "errors" made the music more expressively human. Many of us prefer our music to be this way without such technical perfection. Nashville should use more "band drummers." Thanks for a fantastic publication.

**DONNY SCREWS**  
Eastman, GA

## More Than One Way to Waltz

I wanted to respond to Lee Kix's recent Feedback email about a mistake in my

transcription of "The Drum Also Waltzes" ["Thus Spoke Neil," June 2009]. While I appreciate Lee's efforts to maintain the high standards of DRUM!, I wanted to point out that the transcription I wrote was not actually of the great Max Roach's classic solo, but of Neil Peart's reinterpretation of that solo that he plays live and on DVD. The context of the article and the two references in the transcription triggered tom samples should have made it obvious that it wasn't a Roach transcription. I'm aware of Roach's foot pattern in his original solos, but should probably point out that Peart plays a variation of that pattern, which is correctly notated in the transcription.

**BRAD SCHLUETER**  
Hanover Park, IL

## From The Horse's Mouth

I really enjoyed the article on one of my favorite people, Louie Bellson [June 2009]. However, on page 43, under the heading of "Bellson's Setup," it states that "From 1973-83, Bellson was with Pearl Drum Company." This statement is inaccurate and omits a very memorable event in Lou's life.

I was fortunate to meet and be associated with Lou during the years that I worked as marketing manager with Slingerland Drum Company, circa 1978-80. During that time, Lou was a major endorsee of Slingerland drums. Lou asked Larry Linkin, then president of the company, to revive the Gene Krupa National Drum Contest that Lou won as a young man. Larry agreed to do so and the Louie Bellson National Drum Contest was created.

I was given responsibility of directorship of the contest, which was open to all drummers

age 18 or younger. Contestants could enter the contest at their local music store just as Lou had done in his youth. If they won locally, they were invited to continue on at one of 13 regional sites across the country. Winners of the regionals were then given an expense-paid trip to the finals, which were held in at the University Of Nevada in Las Vegas. The top five contestants then competed in the finals show, which was hosted by Lou's good friend Wayne Newton.

This event was another example of Lou's constant efforts to help other drummers. I'll never forget the man, Louie Bellson.

**SAM GEATI**  
Huntley, IL

## Plus It's A Practice Pad

I can honestly say that your magazine has been one of the greatest sources of information since I began drumming in October 2007, and I still have the first issue I ever got (Jimmy Sullivan, November 2007). This issue is in pretty bad condition. The back cover is ripped off and there are dents all of over it. I used it as a practice pad because I couldn't find a real one. I read it over and over and over again. I brought it on the school bus to show my heavy metal drummer friend and we pored over every word. I was so excited when I got my next one, the Thomas Pridgen issue [April 2008]. On and on it went until I got a subscription last Christmas (same time I got my drum set). Thank you for a great magazine,

**COLIN FLAHERTY**  
Fort Linden, NC

Your opinion matters! Send letters to DRUM!, 95 South Market St., Suite 430, San Jose, CA 95113 or email [andy@drumlink.com](mailto:andy@drumlink.com).

Feel the color of music.®

pro-mark

Now color makes it easy for you to find the right feel. Because we've created a system that narrows nearly 200 different stick models into five color-coded groups based on diameter, it's faster and easier to pick the perfect stick. Find the right color and you'll find the right feel.

*Carter Beauford*  
*Dave Matthews Band*



[promark.com/FEEL](http://promark.com/FEEL)

© Pro-Mark Corporation. Feel The Color Of Music is a registered trademark of Pro-Mark Corp.



Carter Beauford



Yamaha Drums



[www.yamahadrums.com](http://www.yamahadrums.com)