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MASTHEAD

Issue Ten, Autumn 2015

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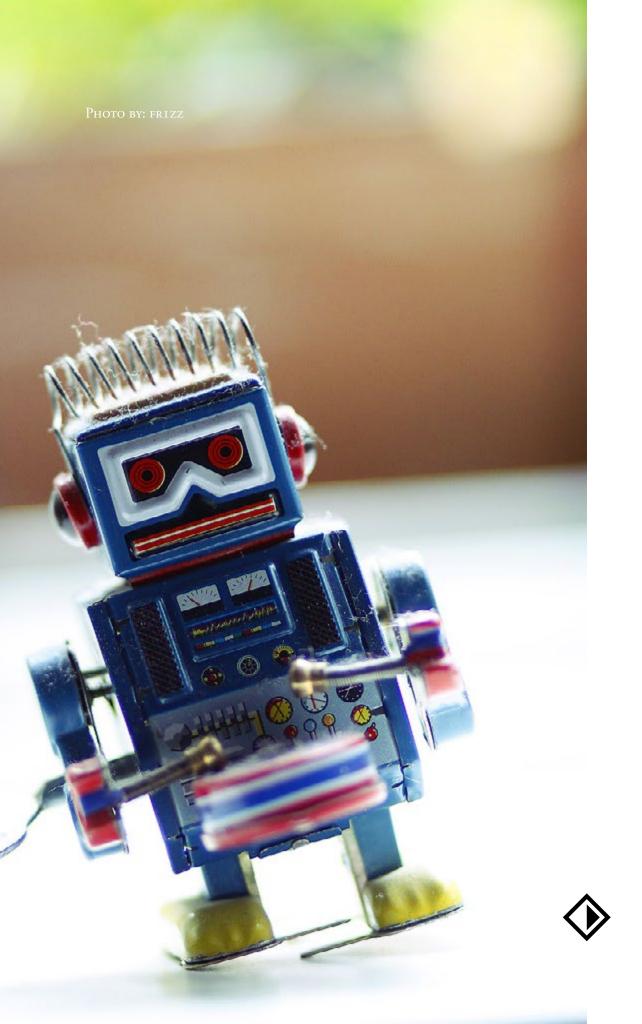
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MAJOR TENTH

Volume Three, Issue Ten

*** * ***

Shortly before we released our first issue, I attended a wedding as a plus one. I didn't know many people there and ended up getting cornered by an uncle of the groom after dinner. He asked what I did and I told him I was unemployed, which was technically true. Unfortunately, someone must have tipped him off, because he then asked if I was looking to start a magazine. He promptly revealed that he worked for some sort of Toys R Us style trade publication and was responsible for selling advertising in it. "You'll remember what I'm about to tell you," he said, "because it will make you some serious money." I suppose he was partly right – I certainly remember it.

"Drum kits are essentially toys," he continued, "we sell loads of them via mail order. And every Christmas, I get a big commission because companies increase their marketing budgets and I sell a load of ads." This was his advice: make a drum magazine especially for children and sell ads to the likes of Fisher Price. I won't lie. There have been times over the last

10 issues when I've wondered if this might have been the better option.

I always used to think that sticking to your guns was a unanimously positive trait. Chad Smith, for example, gigged for 10 years in Detroit before he moved to California and landed a gig with the Chili Peppers. It's safe to say that worked out pretty well. On the other hand, our interview with a professional instrument thief revealed how pursuing such a career ruined the lives of a great many people, including the thief himself. Conviction in more ways than one.

One thing is for sure: don't listen to drunk relatives at weddings.

Welcome to Volume Three, Issue Ten of The Drummer's Journal.

Tom.

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Terry Keyawa is the man with the stories. Having worked in Hollywood's Professional Drum Shop for the last 48 years, he's seen it all.

He grins constantly and laughs loudly, and has a small stain on his t-shirt where he spilt his lunch. He's worked in the shop since he was nine, along with his two brothers Stan and Tom. "Some things have changed over the years," Stan grins, "but Jerry still eats like a child." Following a bit of friendly pushing and shoving Stan concedes, "We love him really."

During the 1960s, with the LA recording industry in overdrive, Pro Drum was a regular haunt for some of the world's most prolific musicians: Buddy Rich, Gene Krupa, Art Blakey and Papa Jo Jones. It was one of the first dedicated drum shops, and rode a wave of success not simply because of its proximity to Capitol Records and the Musician's Union, but because of the people who ran it.

At first glance you could be forgiven for thinking the store hasn't changed much since 1959 when it was founded by Stan and Jerry's stepfather, Bob Yeager. The huge, hand-drawn sign above the door is still the same. The windows, slightly dusty, are still covered with posters of jazz era icons.

Inside, the carpet is worn. The shelves are scratched and the walls are plastered with black and white photos. But it's busy with people, simply because there's nowhere else like it.

The Drummer's Journal: Is this a photo from your wedding?

Jerry Keyawa: Yup. September 8th, 1979. Look, that's the Louie Bellson Big Band right there. It was the hottest day of the year. But what a day!

(Gesturing at another wedding photo) Forgive me, but is that guy smoking a huge joint?

Oh yeah! It was ok to drink and party and do drugs then. I mean look, lots of people are smoking weed. There was one guy who had all the cocaine but we didn't let him in. A good decision in hindsight.

You had a good head of hair then, well, you still do – but it's particularly impressive there.

Yeah – I'd actually cut that for the wedding (*laughs*). But the 70s, man I loved the 70s. I was such a jerk.

So you were working in the shop then?

Yeah. I started in 1967 when I was nine. Stan was 11. It was our stepdad, Bob Yeager, who owned the shop. They needed an extra pair of hands, so Stan and I would clean drums, cut up cardboard and that sort of thing.

Were you a good kid?

I was real cocky, so if you say something to me, I'll say something right back: "Hey, fuck you man!"

You started working in the shop in 1967. Have you ever had another job?

I strayed one time for six weeks. My buddy was a set decorator for the Motion Picture Association, and he was working on a movie called The Natural. He asked if I wanted to help out. I got paid 1000 dollars a week. I was only making 200 dollars a week in the shop.

And that didn't work out?

No (*laughs*), well, we did the movie, then I just came back to the store. But I earned more money doing that than I still make today.



Previous: Louie Bellson Big Band playing Jerry Keyawa's WEDDING, 1979 Right: Jerry Keyawa 0



Left: L-R brothers Stan and Jerry Keyawa

Below: Tom Yeager, son of founder Bob Yeager

(Gesturing at desk) Nice to see the old Rolodex is still going strong...

Oh yeah, man. There are some crazy names in there too. Did you know we've had President Obama in the shop?

Really? That's pretty impressive. (Jerry shows me a photograph of Obama in the shop) Wait – that doesn't quite look like...

Yeah, it's just a lookalike. I mean, he's a professional Obama impersonator.

(*Jerry reveals another photo*) Wait. Is that Kim Jong-un too? Well, obviously it's just a Kim Jong-un impersonator. They had a drum-off.

An Obama lookalike and a Kim Jong-un impersonator came in here to have a drum off?

Correct. They're both pretty good drummers actually.

I had heard that you've got some good stories about the shop... Yeah, I'm the story guy all right. You want to hear some?

Yes. Yes I do. Tell me your best one.

(*Deep in thought*) Ok. Back in the day, we were cash only, but it was the 70s and people had just started using credit cards. So we talked to our Dad about how we needed to start taking credit cards because people didn't carry cash like they used to. He didn't like the idea but eventually we talked him into it.

Two weeks later, what happens? We take a bad credit card. When Dad found out, he absolutely lost it. He was shouting at me like, "From now on, I don't care who it is, you call Visa and you make sure their credit card is good!"

So, the very next customer that walks in is, (*dramatic pause*) Neil Diamond. You know who Neil Diamond is?

Yeah, the singer?

Right. Well he's in to buy his kid a drum set. So he picks everything out and comes over to pay. All I'm thinking is, "Please, please do not give me a credit card." So, I ring up the grand total - 1800 dollars - and he hands over his card. Fuck. I have to phone Visa in front of Neil Diamond.

So I'm on the phone to the guy at Visa. I give him the card details. Then the Visa employee says, "Wow, this is Neil Diamond's credit card!" And I'm like, "Yeah, is it good?" And the Visa guy is like, "Well, is that actually Neil Diamond?" When I tell him it is, the Visa guy just starts laughing at me down the phone and I'm pretty sure Neil Diamond can hear it. Diamond had to have been one of the richest musicians around back then. I mean, he probably still is, he's one of the best selling artists of all time. So that was pretty embarrassing.

That's a good one.

But it's not over yet (*laughs*). So, later that same day at 5pm, I get a call from Jim Keltner. He's like, "I'm running a bit late, can you stay open an extra five minutes?" And we're like, "Sure, no problem." It gets to five past five and in he walks, (*dramatic pause*) with George Harrison! And I'm like, "Holy fuck." At this time, George had practically been in seclusion, no one had heard a peep from him. But here he was, in the shop.

So George wants to buy Ringo a Christmas present. I remember we had a 100th anniversary Gretsch drum set and my dad tried so hard to sell him that. It was the most expensive thing we had (*laughs*). He didn't actually buy it, unfortunately. But he bought some other stuff. So then Harrison goes to pay, and what does he hand my dad? A credit card. Did my dad call it in? Did he hell. So we gave him a lot of stick for that (*laughs*).

I heard a rumour that you had a fight with Marlon Brando?

Yeah, I was getting mixed up with all these actors. Well, it wasn't an actual physical fight, more of a heated argument.



"AN OBAMA LOOKALIKE AND KIM JONG-UN IMPERSONATOR CAME IN HERE TO HAVE A DRUM OFF?"

"Correct. I mean they're both pretty good drummers actually."







Above: Joe Maine, Bob Yeager, Frank Bordanaro, Mel Lewis, 1963.

Below: Joe Morello (left) and Buddy Rich (centre) at the Pro Drum practice rooms.

"I HEARD A RUMOUR THAT YOU HAD A FIGHT WITH MARLON BRANDO?"

"IT WASN'T AN ACTUAL PHYSICAL FIGHT, MORE OF A HEATED ARGUMENT."

Brando was a drummer?

A conga player, yeah, and a pretty good one. So he just walks in and comes right up to me and says, "Hi, I'm Marlon Brando." I was just like, "Yeah, I know, are you kidding? I know you're Marlon Brando." So he was checking out the congas, and he eventually decided that he wanted a set but with custom heads and custom hooks. No problem. You know how we've got all the pictures of people who've been in the shop up on the wall? Brando was stood looking at those, so I suggested that it'd be great if we could have a picture of him to put on the wall too. And he lost it. He just went absolutely crazy. He was shouting, "You just want to use my picture to sell things and make money! What's in it for me? (*Shouting*) WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?"

mount those heads and give you the hooks for free?" We're talking over 300 dollars worth of stuff, for no charge. I thought he might be happy about this, but instead he walks up to me, slams his hand on the counter and says, "I want three brand new drums. For nothing." And I was just like, "What? Fuck you, I don't care who you are, get your fat ass outta here!"

So I was like, "Ok, well, how about I

So, just to clarify - you told Marlon Brando to get his fat ass out of your shop?

Damn straight! If you back me into a corner I'll come out swinging

motherfucker! Then it got crazy. The shop was real busy and people were staring. He was all ruffled. He looked like he was going to explode! Then suddenly he just storms out of the shop. A week later, the phone rings. Danny, another salesman, answers it and brings it to me: "It's Marlon Brando and he wants to talk to 'the salesman who insulted him."





So I get on the phone: "Yes, Mr Brando?"

And he sounds pissed. I thought I was really going to get it. But Brando just says, "I've got some congas but the rims are mounted too high and they're hurting my hands. Can you fix that?" So I was like, "Sure." Brando says, "Good. Come over to my house and fix them right now." At that point I was like, "Wait, that's going to take me about six hours." Then he says, "I'll make it worth your while." I explain to him that I can't just leave the shop for six hours and, as a compromise, I tell him how to do it himself. After that, he just goes, "Listen, just order three new drums for me I'll pay for them. Call me when they're ready and I'll pick them up." So I take his number. Two weeks later when the drums are ready, I call the number he gave me and I get through to his assistant, who won't let me talk to him because they think I'm some crazy guy trying to sell him congas. He never called back, so he never got his congas.

That's a shame.

He was such an odd guy. I remember, when he came into the store, he had sandals on and his toenails were so long, like claws. And he had such dirty clothes on, covered in food stains. Really odd. Anyway. Want to hear the one about when I insulted Lawrence Fishburne?

Absolutely.

Ok, well, (phone rings) ah - this call might take a while.

Well, perhaps you can save that one for when people come into the store?

That's a deal.















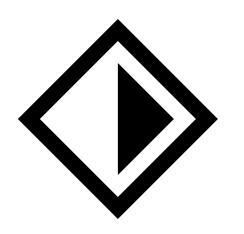








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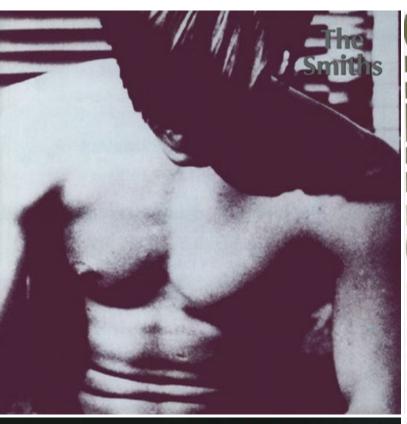
The 1980s left us a pretty sizable estate. Some inherited wealth, empowerment and prosperity. Others were left with hardship, deficit and destitution. The rising middle classes got Nintendo, white goods and Michael Jackson records.

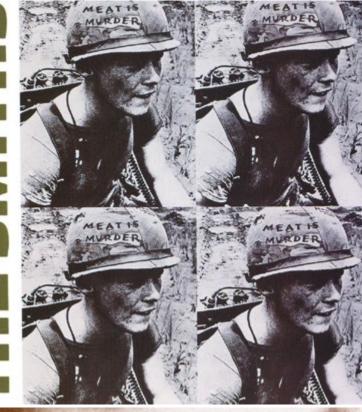
Like everything else in the 1980s, the music was especially polarising. Synthesisers and drum machines came to the fore, defining what many today consider as the archetypal 80s sound. Duran Duran, Culture Club, Gary Numen: these are quintessentially 80s acts.

But when The Smiths released their eponymous debut album in 1984, it was the polar opposite of neon arm warmers and mascara. Instead, it spoke to a generation who had little to gain from the fact that house prices in London had risen by 300%.

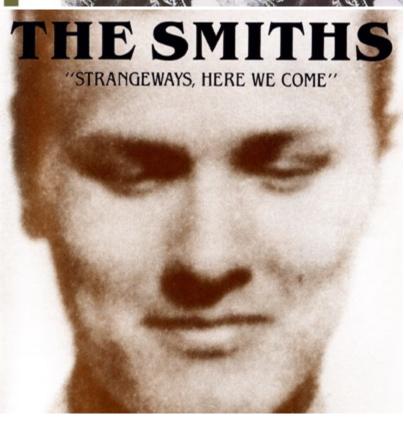
As one quarter of The Smiths, Mike Joyce helped to shape an alternative soundtrack to the 80s, which still resonates with people today. We visited him in Manchester to talk about legacy and lunar exploration.











Left to Right, Top to Bottom: The Smiths (1984) Meat is Murder (1984) The Queen Is Dead (1986) Strangeways, Here We Come (1987)

The Drummer's Journal: You're often referred to as "Mike Joyce from The Smiths". As you've gone on to do other things, including acting and working with other bands, is that frustrating in any way?

Mike Joyce: No, not at all. It's quite a lovely accolade in fact. When you think about the body of work that we did and the longevity of the band, it's clear that we're not just a band from the 80s as we still seem to resonate now with kids today. So I mean, it's a great thing to be known as "Mike Joyce from The Smiths." It's easy as a reference point, but what a great reference point.

"People say to me,
'what was it like in
The Smiths?' I can't
explain to somebody
what it's like - it's
too difficult."

* * *

You mentioned the longevity of the music. But as a band you weren't actually together that long.

No, five years in total. But we packed a lot in during that time. Four studio albums, and a bunch of tours. And the singles. When we used to record singles, they weren't taken off the albums.

Which is rare isn't it?

Very rare. So it shows you how prolific Johnny [Marr] was. I remember Geoff Travis, the

owner of Rough Trade Records at the time, saying to Johnny, "Stop writing A sides!" But yeah, we managed to fit a lot into those five years. We'd be in the studio, then we'd go on tour through America or Europe, then we'd do some TV, and then we'd go back into the studio. So we never had any time off.

Did you want time off?

Well, for me, why would you want time off from creating



something so fantastic and playing in front of so many people? I never really thought about it because I never thought where we were going.

Did that make you stronger as a band?

It did and that was probably because nobody could understand what we were experiencing apart from the four of us. We became quite insular because of that, the gang mentality. Even people who worked closely with the band, I'm sure they'd say their experience of it was different from ours. Looking back, we did become a bit too insular, I think, to outside influence. I don't mean musically, just more from a social standpoint. We didn't tend to hang out with other bands much. I remember being on Top of The Pops with these other huge bands like Duran Duran, Spandau Ballet, Depeche Mode and Paul Young; we didn't really integrate with them. It was just about us four. We started to even have our own language.

Do you think that was ultimately to your gain or your detriment?

When I say we became quite insular, I don't say that in a bad way. I suppose it's like being an astronaut who has walked on the moon. There's a lot of people involved in getting you to the moon, but you're the only person who will know first hand what that experience is like. You can't explain it to others. People say to me, "What was it like in The Smiths?" I can't explain to somebody what it's like - it's too difficult.

So it was friends first, band second?

Well, we were certainly a band first, because I didn't know any of the guys before we started playing together. But once we were playing we rehearsed every day. It became our lives. And then because of that, we were seeing each other all the time and when we'd finished practising it wasn't like, "Alright, see ya, bye." We'd go out and have a couple of drinks or a bite to eat and then we'd go back to somebody's house. It was like that all the time. People say it's not about the one hour on stage, it's about the other 23. For years I'd wake up and the first face I'd see would be [bassist] Andy Rourke. And even when we weren't on tour, when we'd come back, I'd go round to Johnny's house and hang out there until 4am smoking dope and listening to records.

I imagine the tiniest of cracks in a friendship are magnified when you're constantly on tour with someone or with someone every single day?

Yeah, I mean when people talk about our last album they say, "Well you can hear the cracks starting to appear by Strangeways." You can't. Strangeways is my favourite Smiths album and I think I've heard all three of the other lads saying the same thing. It was the best time for us, we had nothing to prove by that point. I mean, we had nothing to prove after The Queen Is Dead to be honest, but by the time Strangeways came along we had an affinity with each other as friends too. The two of those things together was a powerful force.

From hearing you speak about The Smiths previously, I get the impression that just being a member of that band gave you a sense of confidence, as though you felt you were in the right place?

At the beginning, I'd come from a couple of punk bands prior to The Smiths, so I had to learn to be a different drummer really in order to adapt. Andy was into a lot of funk and a lot of artists like Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young and that was quite a departure for me. So, when we first started playing together, I struggled because I just wanted to play faster and louder.

Was that frustrating, in terms of your own ability?

I always felt a little bit frustrated just because I was self-taught, so I didn't learn to read music or play rudiments. I never practised, I never rehearsed and I felt it. When we were recording the first album, I found it difficult when it came to the delicate playing in the studio. But hey, I've got the gold discs. So it can't have been that bad (*laughs*).

So you didn't feel like you fit in at first?

I think if I hadn't come up with the goods I would have been kicked out, and rightfully so. I think there was a time when there was a discussion about. "Is this going to work with Mike?" And that's absolutely understandable because Johnny and Andy were such great musicians. But we ploughed on and I got more confident like anybody would. I also think that having John Porter as the producer, who was the bass player in Roxy Music, was pretty terrifying because of the pressure and expectation. But I was only

"I never practised, I never rehearsed and I felt it. But hey, I've got the gold discs. So it can't have been that bad."

* * *

20, which is quite young to have that level of responsibility without having a proper musical grounding.

When you consider many of the other popular bands at the time, like Duran Duran for example, they're now quintessential 80s bands. But people don't seem to think that about The Smiths.

Absolutely. There was an album that came out a few years ago that was called Best of the 80s. The Smiths weren't on it,



which I took as a compliment. But when you think about it, 1982 to 1987, we couldn't be any more 80s really, in terms of timescale. We just didn't belong there, in that genre, with that sound.

What set The Smiths apart, musically, from that time?

Well it was very simplistic. Not in terms of the musicality or instrumentation, but as an overall sound: bass, drums, guitar, vocals. You can't really go wrong with that. We could recreate

what we did in the studio in a live situation. I also remember hearing some of our records for the first time and it was mind blowing. There were tears shed. The last thing when we made a record was that Morrissey would go in and put the vocals on. That was always a great moment because it really brought everything to life. The first time we'd hear the lyrics - as they were being put on to the record.

People often find Morrissey's lyrics quite melancholy, which has lead to people dismissing The Smiths as a "depressing" band. You'd disagree?

I never found it depressing.

As a fan I'll admit that there are some songs I do find quite hard to listen to, such as I Know It's Over...

Well, sitting there listening to him singing that, it was like, "Ok stop the fucking tape, come here, give us a hug, what the fuck is happening in your head?" It was intense. Morrissey used the lyrics to convey his feelings, but he never used to convey his feelings to anyone in the band, as far as I'm aware. But I didn't find them depressing, I just found it intense. Powerful.

When it came to playing it live, did you feel the same intensity with the material? Did it ever become draining?

It wasn't draining. I mean, I was 20. When your album goes in at number one and you're playing in front of 30,000 people – you know something is happening. And you feel it. It was massively intense. Certainly not draining. I know people do frequently say that about The Smiths, but there's a lot of humour in there too. Saying that, my wife got me this old jukebox, I was putting

all these CDs in, and she said, "Are you going to put in a Smiths CD?" Eventually she persuaded me that I should, so I put in Strangeways. So one evening we're having dinner and the jukebox is playing on random. Then Last Night I Dreamt came on. After it finished, there was a bit of (exhales intensely), "Right, well, anyway, more wine?"

Do you still feel it's important to have a connection to Manchester?

I love Manchester, but it was a dark place in the 1970s and 80s. There used to be a fair at Platt Fields Park. It was the only bit of

entertainment in that area for the entire year, and it would be overrun by these gangs of lads trying to stab each other. That's why it got closed down (*laughs*). We were certainly known as being from Manchester, but I don't think it's that obvious for the most part in the songs.

You've been in an ad for Lexus too, right?

Oh yeah. The director was a Smiths fan, that's how that happened. There were a lot of drums involved in it. I hadn't

ALBUM THAT CAME
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"THERE WAS AN

COMPLIMENT."



played for ages so I was pretty nervous about it. They'd hired this kit and it sounded like shit. And they wanted me to just play. I'm not a guy who just sits there playing chops and stuff. I need something to play with, a riff, a bass line. I don't have any chops or licks. But I didn't get a Lexus unfortunately.

How do you feel about your playing currently?

I really enjoy it and I've been playing a lot more. I've been making an effort to focus on specific areas of my playing too. In the past I never bothered. But you get out what you put in. But I've never been happier, which seems a bit odd really - you'd think that I'd be harking back to the glory days of playing in front of 10,000 people, but I don't, I'm playing for myself and not thinking about anyone else. It's becoming a bit of an obsession again, and it's a great thing to be addicted to. Mrs Joyce disagrees, I think. But she knows it's what I do.

As you're from Manchester it would be rude not to ask. United or City?

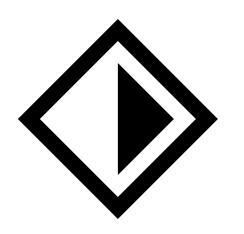
Oh City, they're my local team. And there's a lot of back and forth between the Reds and Blues. United have ruled the roost for the last 20 years and now it's time for the Blues to knock on the door. It's great as it makes it more exciting. United fans probably disagree. But let Manchester slug it out. The cockneys have fallen by the wayside. Well. After last season I can't really say that.





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AN INDEPENDENT DRUM MAGAZINE

TECHNICALITIES

Thoughts of a Drum Tech

Words & Photography by Joe Cox



Joe Cox spent this summer on the road as a drum tech for Catfish and the Bottlemen. He jotted down some thoughts on his experience. This was my first teching job doing major festivals, especially in Europe. Previously I've just done festivals in the UK and a few European tours. There's not all that much difference in reality but it's cool to see how different festivals work. Unfortunately, my language skills are terrible, which can be frustrating when trying to talk to a stage manager who doesn't speak English. There's been rolling risers too which makes it a little bit easier, especially when you're packing up because there's less chance of a local crew getting hold of your gear until it's cased. Every gig is the same for me, though. Everything has to go to plan.

I got the job because I met the band's drummer, Bob, about five years ago at a house party in Leeds and just kept in touch since. We

were discussing this on a day off in Ibiza the other week, right after he made me cycle up every hill on the island with him.

I do get nervous and I think it illustrates that you care about what you do, no matter what work you're doing. There's always a point during the set for me where I feel assured because I know everything on my end has gone to plan. For my first Catfish gigs, I was more nervous about the logistics of all the travelling around. Two days before the Radio 1 Big Weekend gig, I travelled down south on two hours sleep to collect all the gear from a studio the band were in, saw the kit for the first time, then travelled across London to set the gear up and unpack all the new hardware and prep the kit. Then I came back up north that night, had three hours sleep



and went to play a festival on the other side of the country, whilst the band had a rehearsal. On show day I got delayed thanks to the trains but everything was a total dream.

Although being a geek is fun, knowing your bearing edge profiles isn't really going to cut it (pun intended) if you can't get a band on stage with a 15 minute changeover, or re-head and set up a kit for the first time whilst the band before are on. I think it's the same with a lot of jobs, you always know more than you need to in order to execute your main responsibilities.

The most rewarding part is looking out from the stage after line check at a festival and seeing a tent or field packing out. That's pretty

rad. I mean, I doubt they're all flooding in because they love the sound of the first rack tom, but it's sweet enough.

In terms of worst case scenarios, the worst thing that could go wrong is putting the floor fan on the wrong speed. I mean, that's a game changer!

I've never really had a stage disaster, touch wood, but I don't want to jinx anything. Earlier in the year I was working for a band that didn't carry a spare snare. As I was setting the snare wires, the strainer fell to pieces and the threads stripped. I had to rebuild it in complete darkness and get it through the show. But I love that kind of stuff. Like turning up to a hire gig and opening up a snare case to see a

"Knowing your BEARING EDGE PROFILES ISN'T GOING TO CUT IT IF YOU CAN'T GET A BAND ON STAGE WITH A 15 MINUTE CHANGEOVER."

*** * ·**





* * *

"Coffee. Steal the Guitar tech's gaff tape. Coffee. Spend 10 minutes telling the airport security staff what an SPDSX pad is. Drums. Coffee. Sleep."

Black Beauty with the wires upside down, or noticing the leg mounts on a floor tom are bust, then having to fix it all in 35 degree heat.

The average day in the life of a drum tech goes: Coffee. Steal the guitar tech's gaff tape. Coffee. Spend 10 minutes telling the airport security staff what an SPDSX pad is. Drums. Coffee. Sleep. I wouldn't really describe it as glamorous. But saying that, what is glamour? Who am I to say. I think my scrappy old Radio King snare is glamorous. My girlfriend thinks her new nail polish is glamorous. We're definitely maybe both wrong.

On tour, I never get enough showers. In terms of sleep, sometimes I can get way too much. When you wake up on a bus and you're still

moving it's just a cue to put your head back down. That's not really a complaint though, just an observation.

The biggest misconception is probably that techs just eat and drink the band's rider, but in reality we're always in festival catering reviewing the desserts out of 10.

When not on the road, Joe Cox lovingly restores vintage drums at his workshop in Leeds. You can find out more, <u>here</u>.





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SANDY WEST

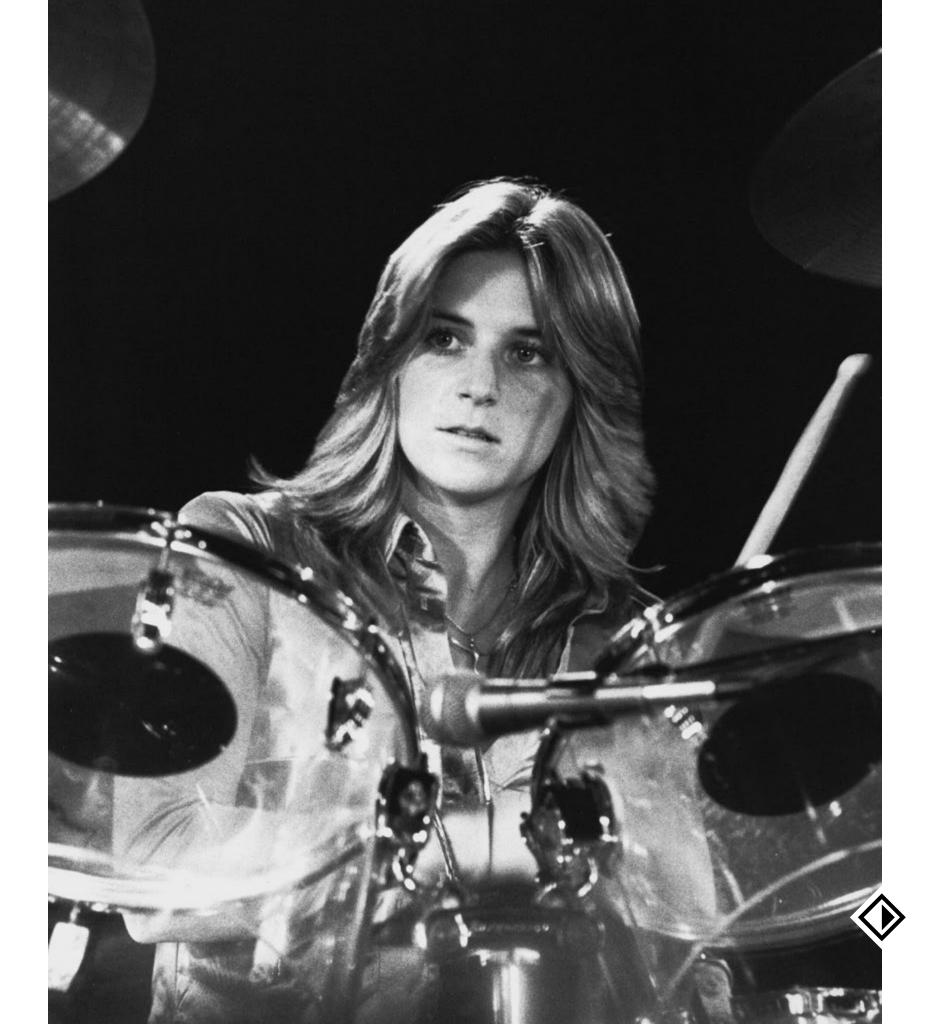
In Photos

Images by Chris Walter

* * *

In 1975, a drummer called Sandy West formed a band with guitarist Joan Jett. Along with Lita Ford, Cherrie Currie and Vicki Blu, they became known as The Runaways. They released four studio albums and attained mainstream popularity in Europe and Japan before disbanding in 1979.





PREVIOUS PAGE

The Roxy, Los Angeles, 1978

L-R: Laurie McAllister, Sandy West, Joan Jett and Lita Ford

West was a gifted drummer and came from a musical family. At 15 she knew she wanted to be a drummer and began actively seeking other musicians to form a band. Once The Runaways formed, they signed to Mercury Records in 1976 and recorded and released their debut album that same year. By 1977, they began a world tour playing sold out shows.

LEFT

Sandy West, The Roxy, Los Angeles, 1978

As teenage women, the band regularly encountered sexism and misogyny. It wasn't unusual for articles or interviews to state the band members' bust, waist and hip measurements. Despite being proficient musicians, they were often treated as a gimmick by the mainstream rock press.





Previous page

The Roxy, Los Angeles, 1978

L-R: Laurie McAllister, Joan Jett, Sandy West, Lita Ford

The band were regularly cited as influential to others, helping inspire the likes of White Flag, Germs and The Go-Go's. Joan Jett went on to achieve further commercial and critical success with the Blackhearts. West started the Sandy West Band and recorded sessions with John Entwistle, but would never again recreate the success she'd experienced with The Runaways.

LEFT

England, European Tour, 1976

L-R (Top) Lita Ford, Sandy West, Jackie Fox. Below: Cherie Currie and Joan Jett

Sandy West died aged 47 from lung cancer in 2006. Her later life was marred by drug addiction and various spells in prison for drug related offences. Despite this, she remains one of the most underrated musicians of her generation.



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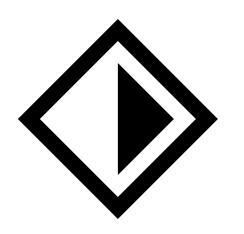
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had gets up on the ledge. It's windy, wet and the drop on the other side is about 150 feet. A fall from this height would mean it'd take Chad about 3.2 seconds before he hit the ground at a speed of 70 miles per hour. I did not want to be responsible for the death of Chad Smith.

Chad begins to mimic losing his balance. His publicist is telling him sternly to get down. Instead, he lights a cigarette and begins to emulate walking along a tightrope, steadily placing one foot in front of the other. When he reaches the end, he does a small jig, at which point his publicist loses patience, grabbing his feet and pulling him back on to the balcony.

Introversion was a term coined by renowned psychologist Carl Jung. You're likely familiar with it. It's probably not how you'd describe any member of a band famed for embracing full frontal nudity. But, earlier on that morning as we sat in a hotel restaurant eating breakfast, it's how Chad had described himself.

Sometimes flecks of Chad's spit would make their way across the table and land on my pancakes as he spoke. I didn't mind too much, largely because I was ravenously hungry and I'd spent a substantial part of my childhood idolising the band in which he plays.

* * *





Pното ву: Pasquale Capasso

Chad Smith: How are the pancakes?

The Drummer's Journal: Great. Thanks. Going back to what you just said - you don't strike me as being particularly introverted...

It's a performing I think. I enjoy performing – I think it's important to convey energy out to a crowd. To be animated. And yeah, sure, people think that's how you are. And the band does have a reputation for being (*pauses*) entertainers. But it doesn't mean you're like that all the time. Hendrix was this whirlwind on stage but this shy, soft-spoken guy off it. So people look at how you perform and think that's what you must be like. Of course, in part that is who you are otherwise it's not very authentic, but I'm not "on" all the time, I probably fall somewhere in the middle. I mean, I still get pretty nervous doing anything on TV.

You did good on The Tonight Show with Will Ferrell though...

Yeah, but I didn't have to say anything. Whenever I do something on TV I have to write whatever I'm going to say on the floor tom. Thankfully I usually don't have to say anything. I never really do chat shows where I have to talk, except for (*adopts robotic voice*) "I'm really happy to be part of this show."

You were nervous about it?

Yes. Very. I was standing there waiting to go on thinking, "I'm not going to be very good at this," and Will turned to me and said, "What about if I'm you and you're me?" Then the curtain goes up! Music! Lights! So that saved me, he's a pro, that's what he does.

I thought you'd be used to doing TV shows with the band.

Yeah, we do them all the time but we're usually just the performers at the end. And if there's any talking, Flea and Anthony do it because they're chatterboxes. They're much better at that than I am. I'm not a fan of the attention in that respect to be honest.

I'm more than happy to be in the back obscured behind the cymbals (*laughs*).

Have you ever thought about writing an autobiography?

No. I've been approached a couple of times to do that. But, I don't know, it just hasn't really appealed just yet. I think it'd need to be another 10 to 15 years, so then my mom would be dead. I'm just kidding of course (*laughs*). But, in all honesty, there's a lot of stuff I'd be quite happy for her not to know about.

How would you describe yourself when you were a kid?

I had a pretty standard Midwestern upbringing. My father worked for Ford Motor Company in Detroit. I was the youngest of three, my brother was two years older than me and he played guitar. I really looked up to him and the music he liked, English music of the early 70s mostly. But he did what you're supposed to as a kid and followed the rules. I did not. I was very rebellious, and I think my parents were challenged by how to deal

with this kid who was outside of the box, who didn't want to go to school or do well in his studies. I just wanted to play the drums, not because I wanted to be a rockstar, but because I enjoyed it. My parents were supportive and let me play in the basement of the house. But I was a troublemaker. By the time I was 16, I just wanted sex, drugs and rock and roll.

And Detroit provided that?

Yeah. Drugs were everywhere, even in my high school. I started to smoke a lot of pot and play music. That's not a great recipe for doing other things, outside of those two things.

"You've got to work hard and if you're given an opportunity you absolutely have to go for it. Also: don't be an asshole."

* * *





But you still graduated from school, right?

Yeah, I did somehow. Then I started playing in bands all over Detroit and the Tri-County area. The city is not as big as it once was as it's fallen on hard times, but I think it'll come back. Detroit has a rich history, certainly musically. And it was really good to play all those clubs, six nights a week, three sets a night. That was my schooling instead of going to university. I was in a ton of bands and record deals came and went, but it was a really important part of my professional upbringing. I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Do you still feel an attachment to Detroit?

My mother still lives in the house I grew up in. It's weird because, when I go home there's still the blue shag carpeting and Kiss posters on the wall. It's been like 40 years, and I'm like, "Mom, seriously, do you not want to get rid of some of this stuff?" And she's like, (adopts high shrill voice) "Do you not want to sleep here?" The bed is like five foot long. But I love Detroit. I lived there for 25 years. The thing about Detroit is that it's largely working class, you know, like the north of England. It's industrial. They work hard, and when they finish work

they want to go and relax and blow off some steam. They want to be entertained and if you're good they'll appreciate that. But if you're not, they'll let you know. And it was great to have that – you had to bring it. And it's the same in Belfast or Glasgow or Manchester; places that, historically, have industrial ties where music played an uplifting role in society. And I've taken that outlook with me – you've got to work hard and if you're given

an opportunity you absolutely have to go for it. Also: don't be an asshole.

You've done a lot of educational outreach for schools and various charities, including an anti-bullying charity...

Yeah. The first fight I ever got into when I was a young kid was with a girl who wanted to beat me up. It was pretty traumatic. But I'm proud to support these causes. I'm passionate about them. Bullying is a terrible thing. I saw it with my own son on the school bus, and I have my own personal experiences when I was younger in high school. And it's not an easy thing to talk about, if you're being bullied, especially if it's happening online. Kids do awful things, bullying can drive them to commit suicide.

Didn't you also lobby government for music education reform in schools?

Yes. It's not only important but it's a genuine privilege for me. I learned to play drums in public schools. And the first thing that gets cut is music and arts funding. To give kids the opportunity to be exposed to music and art is the best way for kids to learn and think creatively. I went to a suburban school in the late 70s just outside of Detroit and studied symphonic band, concert band, marching band, jazz band as well as music theory. This was a regular high school, not some fancy arts school. But none of that stuff exists anymore in schools. Now kids might have one music class, where they probably don't even play an instrument. I'm not saying everyone should be made to do it, (*shouts*) "You will learn to play the flute, Johnny!" but they should have the option. Where's the next Steve White, Bill Bruford or Bob Dylan going to come from? They all learned to play in school, it's where you meet your buddies.

Going back to when Blood Sugar came out, that must have been a point when your life changed?

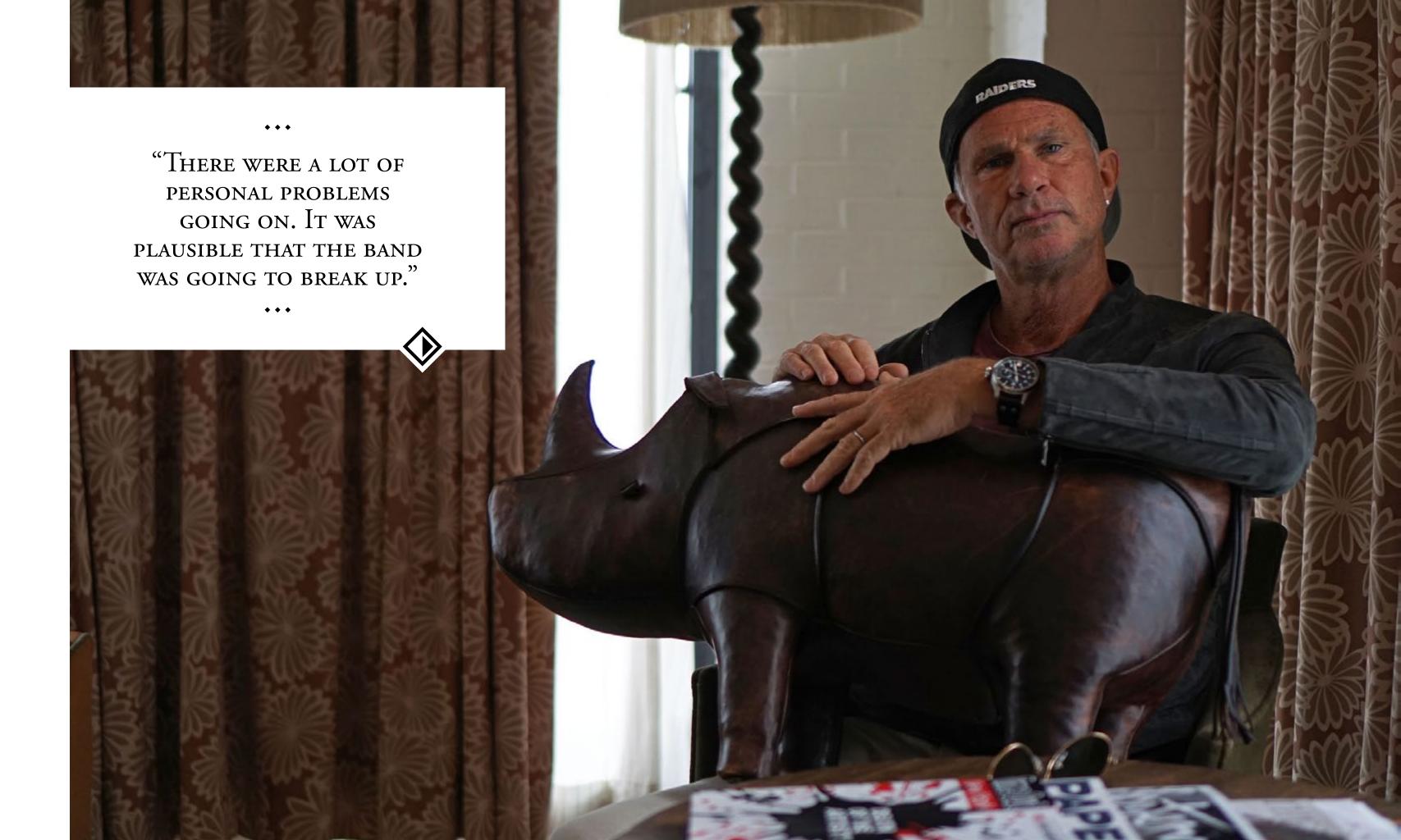
I got rich! (*Manic laughter*) I became a millionaire! Sorry, that was the first thing that came to my mind. I'm kidding. Sort of.



Photo by Clara-Balzary

50







But I did buy a house.

How to do you look back on that time?

Blood Sugar is my favourite Chili's record. John Frusciante and myself had just joined really. I mean, we'd made Mother's Milk, but Blood Sugar Sex Magik was when we all sat down and felt, "Ok, this sounds like us." We all shacked up in this house and recorded it there. Anthony was singing more. The song writing had taken a step up. We just struck it lucky I think. I have real fond memories of that time. They're probably a bit rose tinted. And it was a time when music was changing, especially in America. Metal was starting to tail off. I don't think we really got lumped into the grunge thing, but we were certainly part of the alternative scene. We got really popular, we were playing arenas. And I think that became hard for John. The first band he'd really been in, and he eventually quit.

Why does success affect some people and not others?

John came from a punk rock aesthetic where popularity isn't something you strive for, whereas Flea and Anthony just wanted to do something positive that they really believed in. They wanted to put good energy out, good music. I never had a problem with that. I mean, when it happens it freaks you out. Songs you've made in a garage a year ago, now there's 20,000 people singing them back to you? I was 27 at that time, John was 19 I think. That's pretty young, right? For me it had been gradual, it'd taken 10 years of playing pubs and clubs to get to that position. But for John, he'd just joined a band then immediately began playing arenas. That must fuck with you.

Californication was another huge step up in terms of the band's exposure, what did that mean for you?

Prior to that record, we were in a total no man's land. John had left and had a serious drug addiction. There were a lot of personal problems going on. It was plausible that the band was going to break up.

This was 1997?

Yeah. Not a lot happened that year. Flea went on a Jane's Addiction tour with Dave Navarro, who had also replaced John in our band, and came back like, "That is Dave's thing, I've never seen him act and play like he does with Jane's Addiction like he does with us." So that was eye opening for him. So Dave said, "I don't think I can be in the band anymore, and the only

person you should get to replace me is John." And of course, that wasn't going to happen. John was in real bad shape. But we floated the idea and it was typical John – "Ok, I'm done with doing drugs, I'm ready to go." So that was why Californication was what it was. I often think how rare that was, how we got a second chance like that. It was certainly a break point, like a second chapter really, because having him back was pretty magical. He's the best musician I've ever played with. No question. It felt like a new band. So those two records - Californication and Blood Sugar Sex Magic, yeah, they really do mean a lot to me. I still love them both.

"I OFTEN THINK HOW
RARE THAT WAS, HOW
WE GOT A SECOND
CHANCE LIKE THAT.
IT WAS CERTAINLY A
BREAK POINT, LIKE A
SECOND CHAPTER."

Do you ever just have a bad day at work?

First off, I honestly think I've one of the best jobs in the world, because I do what I love, I travel the world doing it and I make a living off it. I could sound like a real whiney little bitch if I was like, "It's so hard to get on the private jet then arrive at the stadium then play for 50,000 people then stay in a five star hotel." I'm certainly not complaining at all. But we have families now, I'm married, I have kids. Your priorities change. But I'm still as passionate about music today, maybe even more so, as I was when I was that 17 year old kid playing at a backyard party







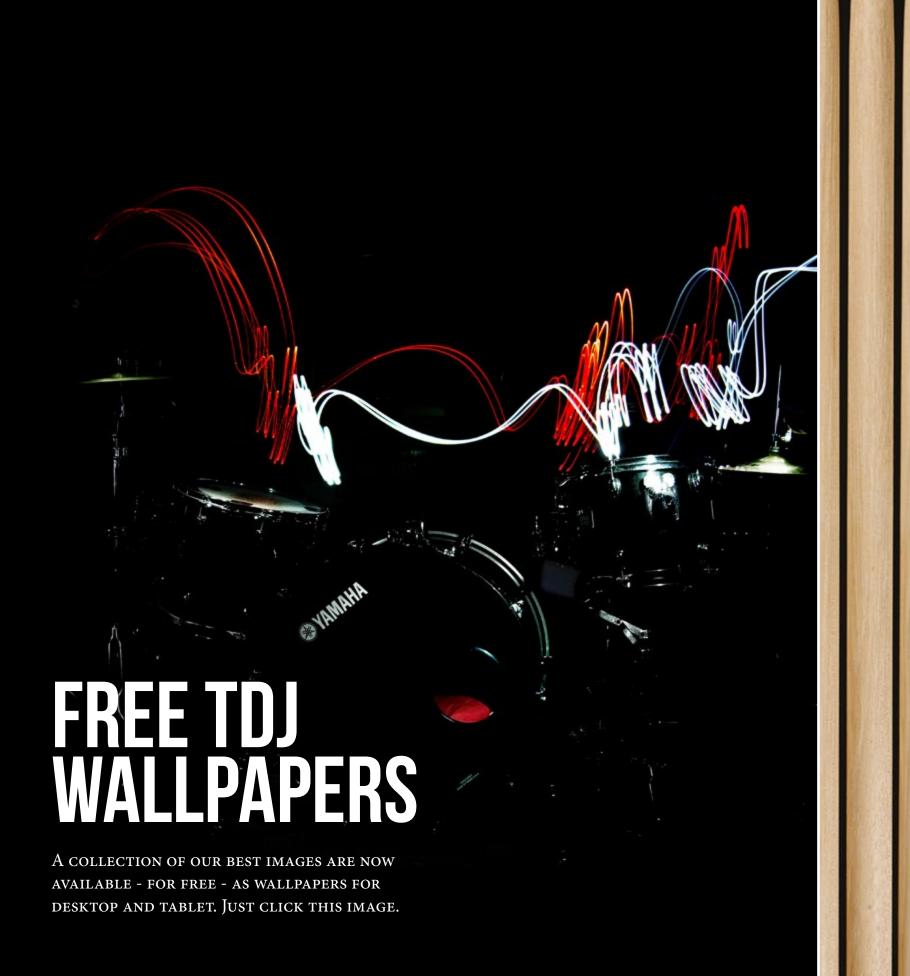
Photo by Clara-Balzary

in high school. I love music and I want to keep growing as a musician. Sure, I miss my family when we're travelling. It can be hard. I'd be a callous person to be like, "I don't miss my two year old, he'll be fine." But no matter what you do, you have to find your passion and follow that. There are some people who will read this and be working a job they hate. You spend a lot of time at your job. And you get bitter, even if you're making a lot of money. You certainly shouldn't sacrifice your happiness for it.

Do you see kids today interacting with music in a different way than you used to?

My daughter is totally fine just holding up her phone and listening to songs through its speakers. To me, it sounds like shit. "Dad, listen to this song," and it's like (*makes abrasive static noises*). "What the fuck is that?!" It's not like I'm an audiophile or just some snotty musician, but it's not a pleasant experience at all. Without sounding like a dinosaur and going on about missing LPs and the artwork and stuff, when I used to look at my Black Sabbath LP, I just thought "Wow, that guy looks totally wasted. Cool." That's the real tragedy about music today (*laughs*).

*** * ***



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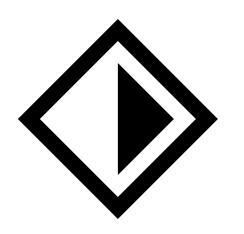






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AN INDEPENDENT DRUM MAGAZINE



Back in 2003, our family home hadn't had broadband for very long. Maybe two weeks or so. The novelty was still such that I was prepared to stay up till 4am on a school night to complete my first eBay transaction ever: a set of hi-hats used by Metallica's Lars Ulrich, being sold by someone across the Atlantic in Washington DC.

The seller must have thought he'd hit the jackpot. In hindsight, I think I paid more than what it would have cost to buy them new in the local music shop, especially after transcontinental shipping costs and an eye-watering import duty. In total, it equated to an alarming amount of money for someone who made £2 an hour washing dishes in the local pub on Sunday afternoons.

After I'd won the auction, it took a total of 25 weeks to conclude the transaction. This was largely my fault. I didn't have a bank account and there was no way my parents were putting their card details into "the machine." So, I sought fiscal security in the form of postal orders from the Post Office. I then opted to ship them at the cheapest possible cost. Airmail costs 40p extra? No thanks.

The result of that decision was that it took roughly six weeks for a very irate American to receive what were, in the US at least, worthless scraps of paper. I promptly received them back in an envelope with red and blue stripes round the edge and an angry note from the seller requesting either cash or a cheque.

So I repeated the process with a cheque begrudgingly bearing the details of my parents' joint account. This cheque spent another six weeks on a boat, and then a further 13 weeks in the vaults of some American bank as it sat and refused to clear. Safe to say, the seller was not happy, his displeasure evident in the feedback he left which read simply, "Total nightmare. Never again."

The cymbals sounded shocking but I didn't care. I didn't care because they were the same type played by Lars, and at that time, I idolised him.

Art/Artist

We all like to think that we're somewhat immune to advertising. I certainly did, largely based on the assumption that I've never consciously seen an ad then immediately gone out and bought what was being advertised. Of course, the effects of advertising are a lot more subtle. If you take the slogan "I'm loving it", the association to a restaurant which, until very recently, used to bathe its burgers in ammonium hydroxide to make them safe to eat, is immediate.

Looking back, I obviously wasn't quite as immune to advertising as I thought, given that I bought anything and everything Lars put his name to. I coveted his signature sticks. I used the same drumheads. I taped coins to my bass drum head and used wooden beaters to get that same "clicky" sound. If I'd had the money I'm pretty

sure I would have bought his signature kit too, all simply thanks to the marketing manager's best friend: fandom.

This obsession wasn't to last, and the beginning of the end came in the form of the 2004 documentary, Some Kind Of Monster. Instead of a film about the world's biggest heavy metal band recording their new album, what the cameras actually captured was Metallica on the brink of implosion, its members wracked by alcohol and drug addictions, personal crises, litigation, and self-obsession.

As I watched it, I realised I'd never considered Lars to be anyone other than Metallica's drummer; that the drums on Master of Puppets were recorded by a person with opinions and agendas. I watched in horror as my idol came across as egotistical, arrogant, and hypocritical; a bully who embodied an ethos that was the polar opposite of the one promoted by Metallica's music.

This was probably the first time I ever consciously made a distinction between art and artist, and it confused me greatly. Can I like Lars as a drummer but dislike him as a person? Is liking Metallica's music, by extension, liking Lars? Did this mean I have to stop liking Metallica altogether?

It wasn't long until I found out. Armed with a 1Mbps internet connection, I read more about Lars the man. But the more I read, the more resentment I began to feel. This soured not just my opinion of him, but my opinion of his work and Metallica as a band. I found myself unable

to listen to what had been my favourite albums without feeling severely jaded. I stopped liking Metallica's music. I stopped liking Lars. I took the eBay hi-hats and scrubbed the logos off, making them not only devoid of recognition, but, as I later discovered, also any subsequent resale value.

This might repulse those who advocate an appreciation of art based entirely on its own merits, never taking into account the personality or private lives of those who create it. It's certainly

"Was I a hater?

YES. I WAS SAT AT

THE FRONT OF

THAT BANDWAGON

LASHING THE

HORSES."

true that if you delve into the private lives of those who are widely considered to have produced some of the greatest music in history, it's not a pretty Wagner picture. was a notorious antisemite. Michael Jackson's career was almost destroyed by accusations of sexual abuse, of which he was later acquitted. In 2004, four years

before he was nominated as the greatest producer ever by The Washington Times, Phil Spector shot and killed model Lana Clarkson. He's currently serving life in prison. Would knowing that affect you when listening to the Beatles' Let It Be?

When put in this context, taking issue with Lars' behaviour does seem ridiculous. It is simply not

comparable in any way, shape or form. I would like to stress this point again: it is not comparable.

However, the fact remains: if you were to boycott artwork based upon the moral shortcomings of its creator, there likely wouldn't be a great deal left to enjoy. Yet, there is something that makes me uncomfortable about such a clear-cut distinction, especially in cases where the boundary between art and artist becomes blurry. Woody Allen for example, in light of accusations of sexual

molestation. has, on more than one played occasion, whose characters love interest has been a minor. I know for a fact I can no longer watch Manhattan widely considered one of the finest films of all time - without that wedged in the back of my mind.

To argue that art must be uniformly judged devoid of any

context seems condescending and out-dated. It's like being told to "suspend your disbelief" when it comes to plot holes in movies – it's patronising.

In music, especially in terms of live performance, it becomes even harder to maintain a distinction between art and artist. When you go to see Metallica live, they don't appear on stage as an

amorphous blob, but as James Hetfield, Kirk Hammett, Rob Trujillo and Lars Ulrich. Lars himself described Metallica as "real people, writing real songs." That's exactly why I stopped going to their concerts.

Lars the Phoenix

For many, Lars' ultimate downfall came from the lawsuit Metallica launched against online file sharing service Napster in 2001. What began as an anti-copyright infringement campaign quickly morphed into Lars' systematic character assassination. By directly attacking the band's fans and branding them "thieves", Lars crossed the boundary from the authentic, alternative rebellious musician to money grabbing, sell out rock star. "It's sickening," Lars wrote in a column for Newsweek, "to know that our [Metallica's] art is being traded as a commodity rather than the art it is. We are not a product – we are not toothpaste."

In the semantics of the music industry, being a "product" is seldom a good thing and, to varying degrees, this separation of art and market has traditionally been a powerful measure of authenticity in the minds of consumers. Perhaps more recently, however, the association between art and commerce has become more widely accepted. Debates around streaming services, notably Spotify, have shown there is widespread public support for recognising that artists, particularly emerging artists, should receive payment for

their work. It's common to find ads for energy drinks or cars flanking the stages of most major festivals. Hearing your favourite band's music in an insurance commercial doesn't quite inspire the same knee-jerk reaction as it once did. Certainly not for me, at least.

Of course, there is still a limit and the reaction to a group of wealthy musicians highlighting the industry's moral elasticity under the moniker TIDAL is a good example. Having some of the world's richest musicians try and explain that underground artists struggle to make a living from music was not the best way to get that message across. It was certainly not too dissimilar to the mistakes Lars made 15 years before.

That sickly-sweet scent of alienation is one I know well. For over 10 years I held Lars in contempt – a decade spent loathing Metallica. Was I a hater? Yes. I was sat at the front of that bandwagon lashing the horses. "Lars isn't even a good drummer," I'd tell myself. That is, of course, nonsense. The shame is all mine.

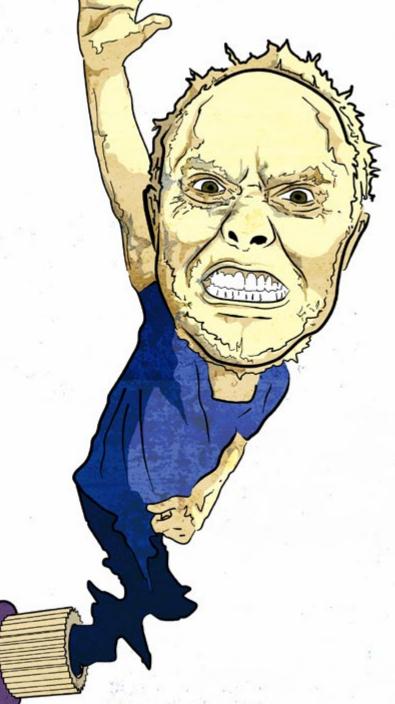
Recently, I was offered the opportunity to go and see Metallica perform live. Initially, I was hesitant, unable to get over my own snobbery. But I went, intent on standing at the back and gazing disapprovingly, whilst perhaps making some snide notes on "the state of heavy metal today."

It was one of the best concerts I've ever attended. My contempt for Lars disappeared, presumably into whatever that sticky black sludge is on venue floors, along with my little notebook. "What a fucking great band," I found myself thinking. "Those hi-hats sound amazing." So I'm a fan, born again.

What have I learnt from my relationship with Lars? Well, you shouldn't listen to anyone who tells you how you should perceive whatever you consider to be art. That is entirely up to you. I also realised that although Lars has his faults, he's certainly not the ogre he's made out to be. Did he make some questionable personal choices? Yes. Do I regret letting that affect my perception of what had previously been my favourite band? Yes.

I never thought I'd say this: Long live Lars!





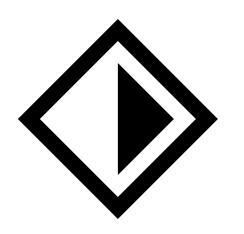
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AN INDEPENDENT DRUM MAGAZINE

FINGER FINGUNT

Interview With An Instrument Thief

Words by Tom Hoare & illustration by Héctor Guzmán

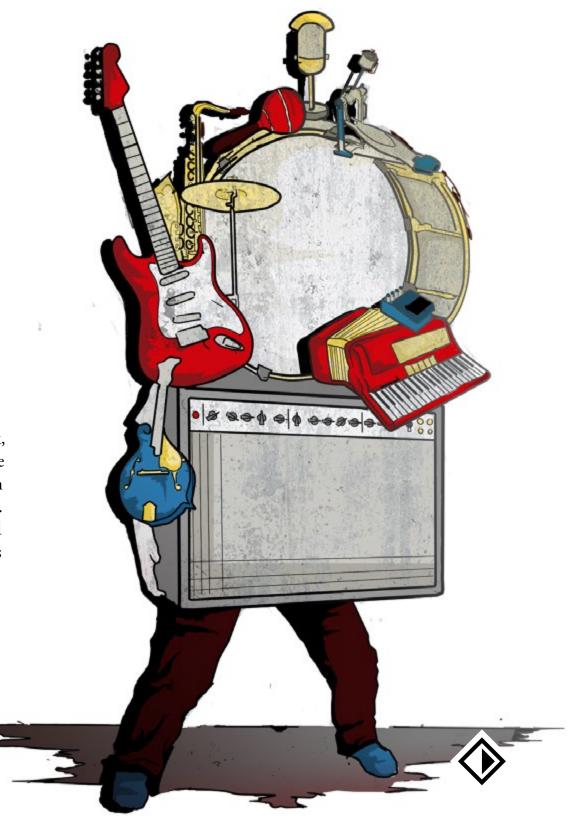
s a small band out on the road, profit margins from touring can be razor thin. So if you were to wake up one morning, head out to the motel parking lot and find that your van had been emptied of its contents, it's likely going to cause some serious problems. Ultimately, having your gear stolen is nothing short of soul destroying.

The vast majority of instrument theft doesn't occur at venues or from homes, but from cars, vans or trailers. After you've done a gig, collapsed all the gear and got it back in the van, the prospect of unloading it again into a tiny hotel room where there's barely enough space for a single person let alone 20 flight cases isn't appealing. But, if one day you should find yourself staring into an empty trailer, you will come to regret this decision more than you regret the fictional existence of Jar Jar Binks.

Unfortunately, being a victim of theft isn't just down to bad luck, which is why instrument specific insurance policies often exclude theft from vehicles. The harsh reality is that your stuff gets stolen because you've presented someone with the opportunity to take it. Preventing theft is down to how easy or difficult you are prepared to make it for a thief. The easier you make it, the more likely it is that your stuff will get stolen. It's pretty much that simple.

After a lot of trawling, we found Simon (not his real name), a reformed thief who was willing to pass comment on what you can do to make sure your possessions remain just that when on tour.

* * *



How old were you when you first stole something?

Simon: I was 17. I'd left school at 16 with no real qualifications, and worked as a labourer on a building site. I hated it and didn't get paid very much.

What was the first thing you stole?

One day I walked past a car and noticed there was a purse on the front seat. The window was open slightly, so I just forced it down, reached in and took the purse. It had about £50 in cash in. I put the purse in the bin at the end of the street and kept the cash.

To clarify, you're not a thief any more?

No.

What happened?

I went to prison and did time.

For theft?

Yeah.

How did you get caught and how long were you inside for?

I can't really talk about that as someone might be able to figure out who I am.

So you've been reformed?

I'm decent now. Those choices ruined my life. I'm ashamed of what I've done. It's partly the reason I've agreed to this. Now I do volunteer work and have an ok enough job. Obviously I can't say where or what.

You dealt in stolen musical instruments?

Yes, but not initially, I kind of just ended up doing that. Like I said, I started out just breaking into cars, just smash and grab. So we'd look for high value items that had been left in cars overnight. Tools from vans was another good one. But instruments are easy to spot, easy to shift. You can get more money for them.

So you worked with others?

Yeah. One of the lads who worked on the site used to steal car stereos and that. But it became difficult splitting the money, so I started going out by myself.

How often?

Infrequently at first as I still had a job as well. Maybe three times a month? But later it got more frequent after I stopped the labouring job.

Every night?

I wouldn't go out every night, but it probably wasn't far off. I'd spend a good few hours scouting around, mostly residential streets or hotel car parks. Then I'd work out which cars or vans to hit. I'd be out until about 3am usually. I could do about five in a night, depending on what I was taking.

Would you go out specifically looking for musical instruments that people had left in their cars?

No, not specifically. I'd steal whatever. But when you see a trailer or van parked up, covered in stickers, I'm not an idiot. I know what's inside.

What about if you can't see what's inside the van or car? What tips you off?

Large vans and trailers are still pretty easy to rock back and forth so you can tell if anything's inside. And 90% of the time, in my experience, there is something worth having in there: a laptop, guitar, even a merch tin. Obviously a drum kit is heavy so you need to have a van handy to load in to. But don't sticker up your van or trailer. If you have band or instrument stickers on your van, you're simply

advertising that it's highly likely that you have expensive equipment in it.

So you began targeting vans and trailers?

Yeah.

"If I CAN SEE WHAT

IS INSIDE, YOUR CAR

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A DISPLAY CASE, A

SHIT, BREAKABLE

DISPLAY CASE."

How would you break into them?

Depends. For trailers, most are just secured with padlocks that you can crop off in about 10 seconds with a cheap set of bolt croppers.

A hand-held drill or cordless angle grinder will do bigger locks. Just takes a bit longer. Even trailers with cages in are usually only secured by a cheap padlock. Big sets of bolt croppers will also get through most things, but they're expensive. Plus they're not easy to walk around with, and if the police see you with them they'll stop you.

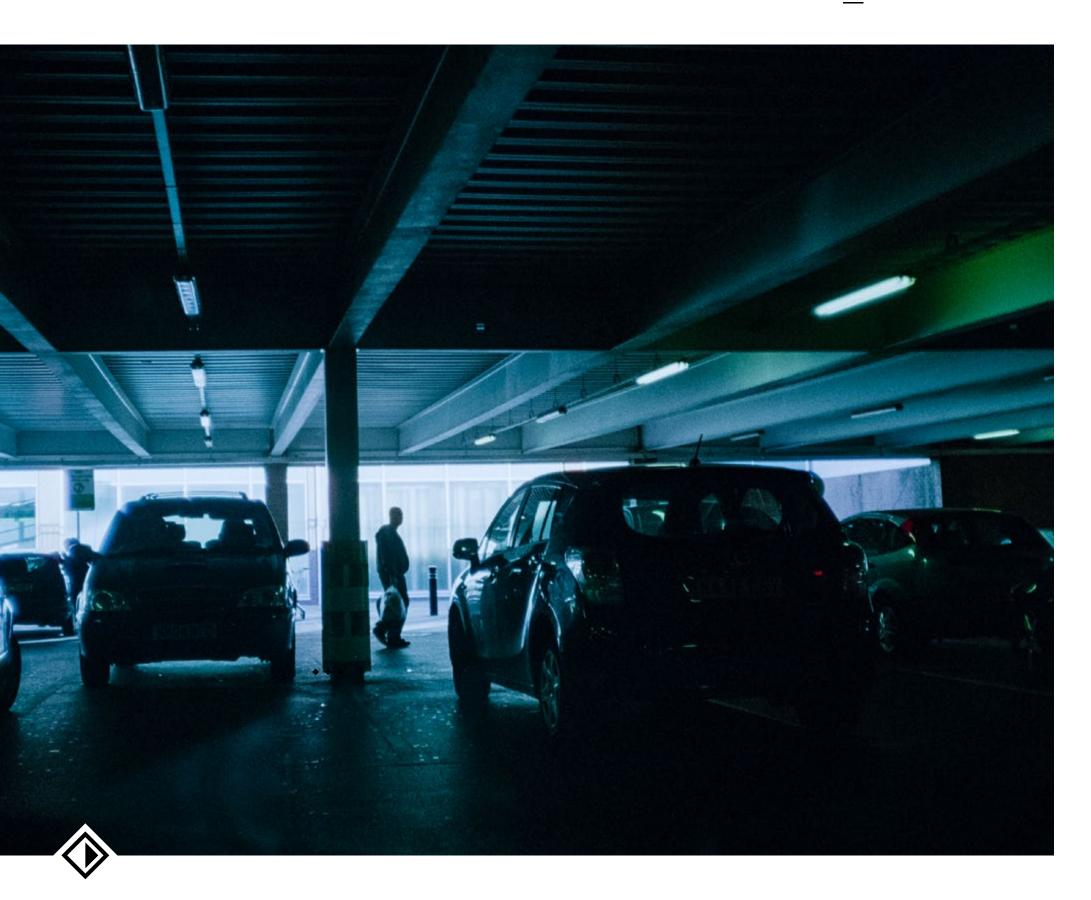
How would you decide what vehicles to target?

It's not about the vehicle it's what I think is in it. If I can see what is inside, your car is essentially just a display case. A shit, breakable display case. If you're going to leave equipment in your car

overnight, you might as well not bother locking the doors because it'll save you the cost of replacing the window.

What about vehicles with alarms? Was that not a deterrent?

If a vehicle has an alarm you just have to be quick. No one really cares about car alarms going off, so they're not actually as big a deterrent as you'd think, especially for smash and grab. Older vans and trailers never have alarms anyway. It doesn't matter how advanced your alarm system is. If your car or van has a window, I can smash it and get inside and be gone all within 10 seconds.



How did it work it terms of selling stuff on?

When it comes to shifting gear, the goal is to get it out of your hands as soon as possible, certainly within 24 hours. I wouldn't sell gear for anything close to what it was worth. I just needed it gone. I mainly sold instruments to a guy who would put them in a storage locker, let them sit for a few months, then sell them on Gumtree [Craigslist] or eBay. I never sold stuff on eBay myself. That way you'd get people looking for their stuff. Fuck that.

How did it work money wise?

I got a fixed price really, no matter what the make or model was. I'd get so much for a guitar, so much for drums, so much for an amp and so on. Again it wouldn't be anything close to what it was worth.

Did you ever take stuff to pawn shops?

Pawn it? Nah. Not worth the hassle really. I knew a couple of guys at shops who would take stuff off me occasionally, but most times you need ID and stuff. Also pawn shops have CCTV and you get the police checking in there from time to time. Not worth it.

So why did you do it?

Because it was easy. And to be honest, I got a rush out if it. I wasn't stealing to support a drug habit or anything. It was my job. The guys stealing to pay for drugs will get caught pretty easily.

Did you ever think about the sentimental value of what you were taking? Or that you were likely ruining people's lives or livelihoods?

Now I think about that. But back then I didn't. You can't think about that sort of thing.

What about stealing stuff from actual venues?

You mean from pubs and clubs and that? I never stole stuff from there but I know people that did. There's never any real security in those places, especially during the day when they might only have a few staff in. If there's a bunch of cases lying around you can pretty

much just walk in and take whatever is there. Like at around 4 or 5pm. But the risk of getting caught is pretty high. Or at least getting confronted.

Did anyone ever catch you breaking into their car?

I once opened up a Transit - the doors were unlocked - and there was just a guy asleep in the back in a sleeping bag. I didn't notice at first, when I did it gave me the biggest fright ever. So he caught me I suppose, he just didn't realise it.

What did you do?

I just took off.

Did you take anything?

No. If a guy is sleeping in a van he doesn't have a lot to lose. It's those people who will fuck you up. Not worth it.

So what can people do to make sure they don't get targeted whilst on tour?

If someone is determined to get into your trailer, car or van, the fact is that they probably will. But, yeah, there are things you can do to make it difficult for them. I'd say the biggest thing is

don't fucking leave things in your car or van or trailer overnight. If you absolutely have to, at the very least make sure nothing is visible. Putting a rug over things doesn't count. A lot of thieves are stupid, but not that stupid. If it's covered up it's likely valuable. If you have a trailer or a van, back it up to a wall and use clamps on the wheels. Don't use the cheap ones because they're easy to get off. Invest in good ones. Get steering and gear stick locks for the car or van. The more you can do, the better.

Did you ever just steal the actual trailer?

No, I never did. If anything is going to have a GPS tracker in, it's the trailer. I'm not up for that. But it is quite common. Just hitch it up and drive it off.

Where are the worst places for people to park?

Anywhere that's dim or deserted. If you're parking in a hotel or Travel Lodge car park, park as close as possible to the building's entrance, as ideally it'll be well lit and there'll be someone there through the night. If you have a trailer, there will probably be

specific, longer parking spaces for bigger vehicles. Never use those because they'll be right at the back of the lot. If you're going to park in a parking garage, be sure it's staffed 24 hours and has CCTV. Some parking garages are little more than shopping centres for thieves. The amount of shit I stole from cars in crappy parking garages is crazy. At 3am when it's deserted and dark, your stuff is going to go.

IN A VAN HE DOESN'T
HAVE A LOT TO LOSE.
It's those people who
WILL FUCK YOU UP.
Not worth it."

* * *

"If a guy is sleeping

If people have their gear stolen, what can they do?

Depending on how organised the thieves were, look around the

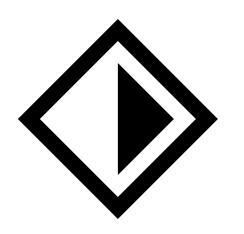
surrounding area for things they may have stashed and intend to come back for. Admittedly, it's unlikely, but worth doing. Look behind bins, round the back of buildings, in bushes and stuff. And tell the police. You should also try and make a note of serial numbers and stuff like that on your instruments so if it is found, then you can prove it's yours.

What about checking pawn shops?

You could, but anyone smart will not pawn something in the same

town they stole from. That said there are a lot of stupid thieves. The police will usually check pawn shops also, but a lot of the time they just don't bother. Stolen instruments aren't that much of a priority for them.

* * *



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*** ***

VISIT THE SHOP











AUX OUT

* * *

A few extra images from the 2015 Meinl Drum Festival







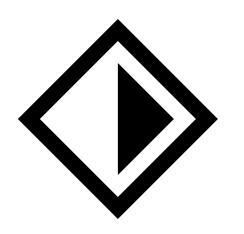












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