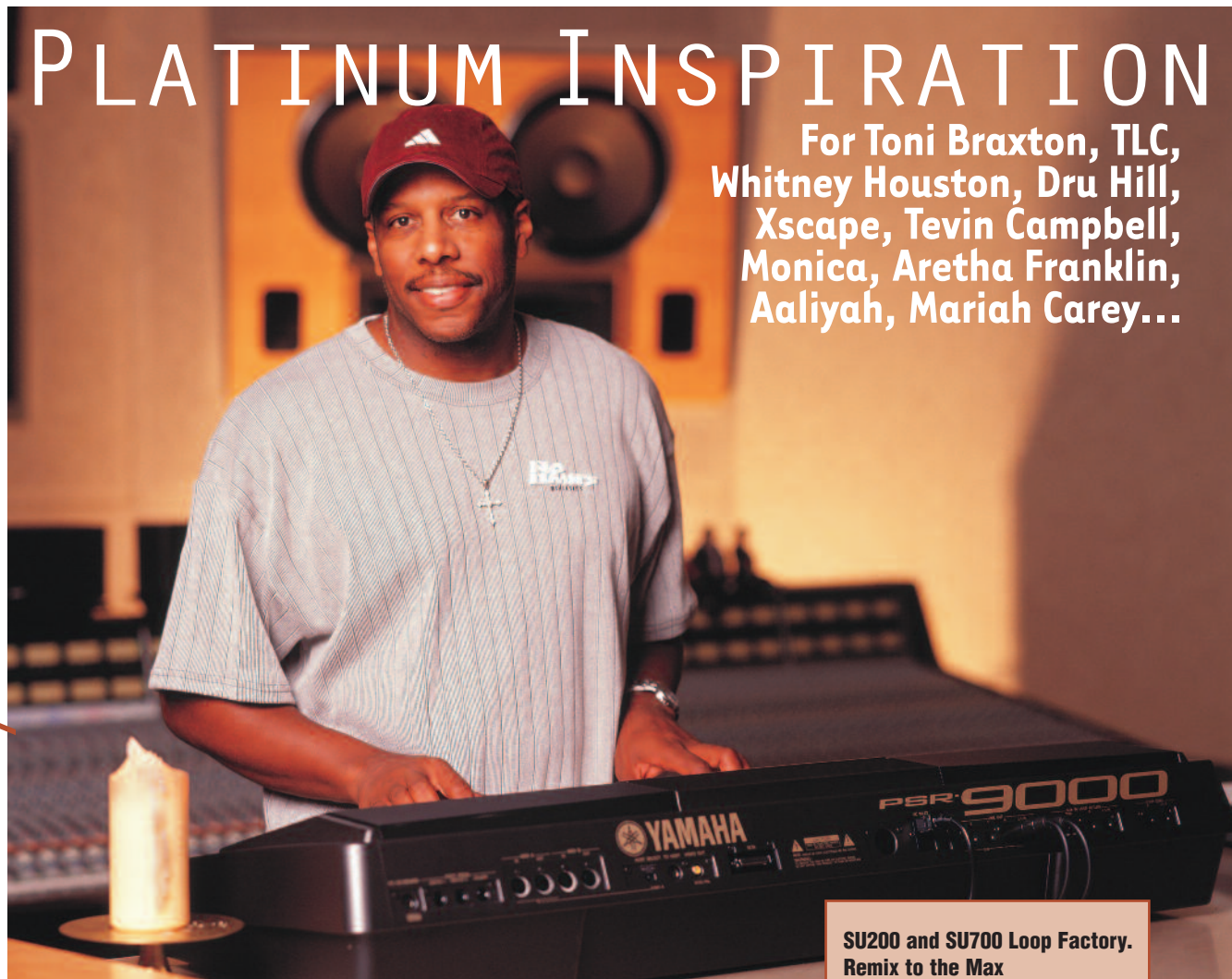


PLATINUM INSPIRATION

For Toni Braxton, TLC, Whitney Houston, Dru Hill, Xscape, Tevin Campbell, Monica, Aretha Franklin, Aaliyah, Mariah Carey...



Most songwriters learn to accept the disappointment of hearing their songs produced in ways far removed from the composer's original vision. But Daryl Simmons has largely been spared that pain: The mega-Platinum R&B producer (Toni Braxton, TLC, Whitney Houston, Dru Hill, Xscape, Tevin Campbell, Monica, Aretha Franklin, Aaliyah, Mariah Carey, and others) has written many of his biggest hits.

"I usually don't write a song for someone if I can't produce it," says Simmons. "When I write, I already have a vision of how I want it to end up."

Most Simmons songs are crafted on electronic keyboards in his home studio. "I start out just fiddling, usually with a piano sound," he says. "I'm looking for an idea that feels like it could be a record. Once I have a few piano chords I like, the rest usually falls into place."

Most of Simmons' latest songs were born on a Yamaha S80 Synthesizer. "The S80 sounds inspire me to sit there until I come up with something," he says. "I usually start with either a warm electric piano or an acoustic piano sound. I don't like to spend time editing sounds, because I don't want to stop and risk losing my ideas. That's why the S80 pianos are great: you just push a couple of buttons, and you have the right one within seconds. The S80 is also great for setting up a quick beat without having to stop everything to hook up a drum machine. When I have an idea, I want to get it down right away."

Creativity doesn't always happen in the studio. The fact that a guitar can go anywhere explains why a writer can create so many tunes on that instrument. Daryl's use of the Yamaha PSR8000 started with the need of portability. No cables, no boxes, no waiting to be up and running. The surprise was no compromise in sound quality or professional capabilities. This Yamaha PSR lives in Daryl's office, at home, and yes, in the studio. The PSR8000 is way more than portable. It is a world class, no compromise, professional keyboard.

Producers collaborate with other talent and, often, must go wherever they are. The ability to take the studio with you is what the Yamaha PSR Keyboards are all about.

SU200 and SU700 Loop Factory. Remix to the Max

R & B producers like Daryl Simmons are starting to take advantage of some of the cool remix tools that Yamaha has to offer. The SU200 (MSRP \$499) and SU700 (\$1295) Loop Factory products allow you to take loops sampled at completely different tempos and play them back synched together. This amazing technology is at the heart of many of today's hottest remixes. Add phat resonant filters, cool effects and even a ribbon for scratching sampled digital audio just like a turntable and you've got hot products that both DJs and remix producers love.



SU200



SU700

Drum Machina: SMASHING PUMPKINS' JIMMY CHAMBERLIN

While bandleader Billy Corgan deservedly gets much credit for the Smashing Pumpkins' progressive-pop innovation, you can't overlook the contributions of drummer Jimmy Chamberlin. Chamberlin, who played on the Pumpkins' first three albums, rejoined the group for their fifth effort, *Machina/The Machines of God*. A recent chat proves that Jimmy remains one of rock drumming's true independent thinkers.

Bred on big band. "Even though I'm a rock drummer," says Chamberlin, "I think I'm different for having been influenced by Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, and other great masters of the '40s and '50s. I tend to be more of a tom-tom drummer than most rock players because of the influence of guys like Gene Krupa. I tend to avoid the kick/hat/snare thing as much as possible in favor of grooving on the toms."

Ring's the thing. "I'm not a fan of the muffled metal drums of the '80s. I prefer ringy sounds, so I don't use any muffling except on the bass drum. Usually I tune my bottom head about a half-step higher than the batter head, trying to get some sort of tonal agreement between the two heads. I like the ringiness of the Yamaha Maple Custom Absolute set I'm using now. I used to use thick-shelled Maple Customs, but these thinner Absolutes 'sing' a lot more."

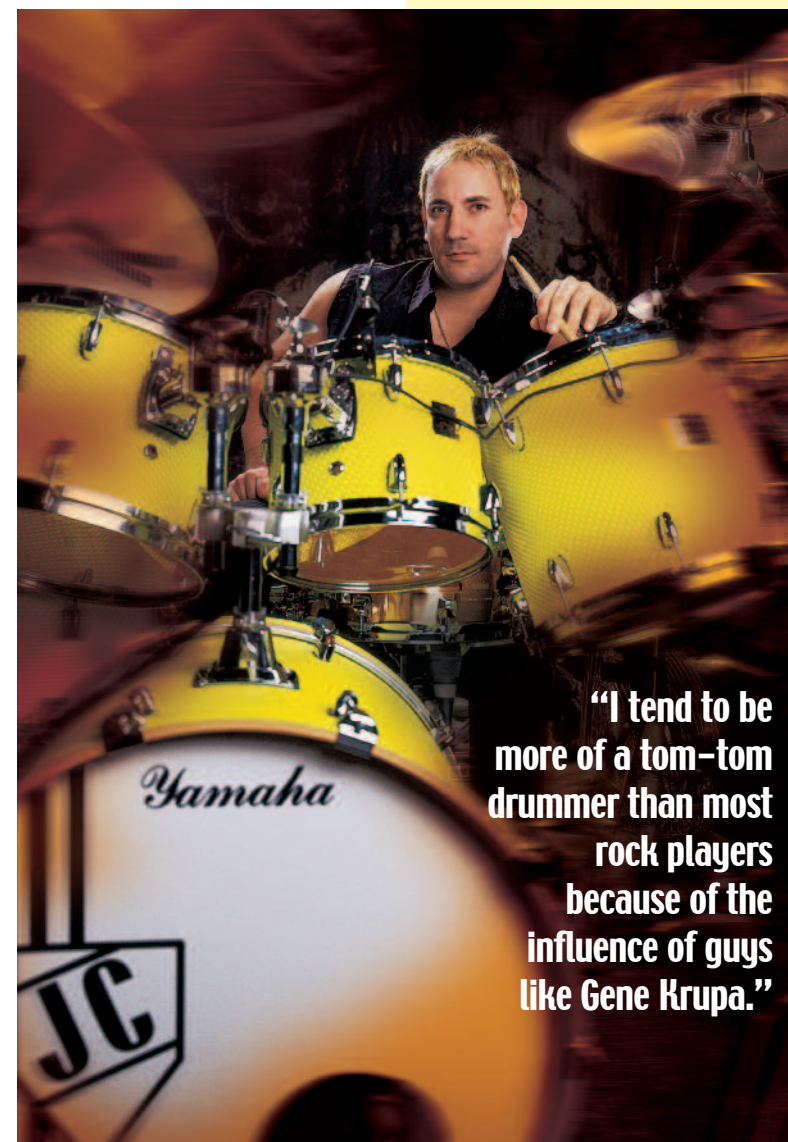
Bigger is not always better. Chamberlin tried a portable Yamaha Higgig kit for the small venue gigs that preceded the Pumpkins' current world tour. "It was unbelievable!" he reports. "Obviously, the kit doesn't sound gigantic, but it's very pure, and it packs up so small, my drum tech could carry it onto a plane. Billy and

I are talking about recording with it, because it's such a cool, different sound."

Environmental activist. "The environment where you record the drums makes a huge difference in their tonal quality. We recorded in our big rehearsal studio, where we have a brick wall, a baffle wall with a drum riser against it, and a small control room. We used all three environments."

Mystery miking. "We'd set up a bunch of floor toms in the middle of the room. I wouldn't play them - we'd just mic them to capture the way they'd ring in reaction to the kit I was playing elsewhere in the room. We'd add that ringing to the regular drum mix, bringing it in and out to add ambience and tonal variation. I've tried doing that before with older drum kits, but this was the first time it really worked, because only the Maple Absolutes have had the resonance you need for that effect."

That's a wrap! "I really wanted the finish on my drums to look different. We found this amazing green hologram material, and I got Yamaha to make a wrapped finish with it. It doesn't make any acoustic difference - it's just a cool-looking kit."



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Jimmy Chamberlin