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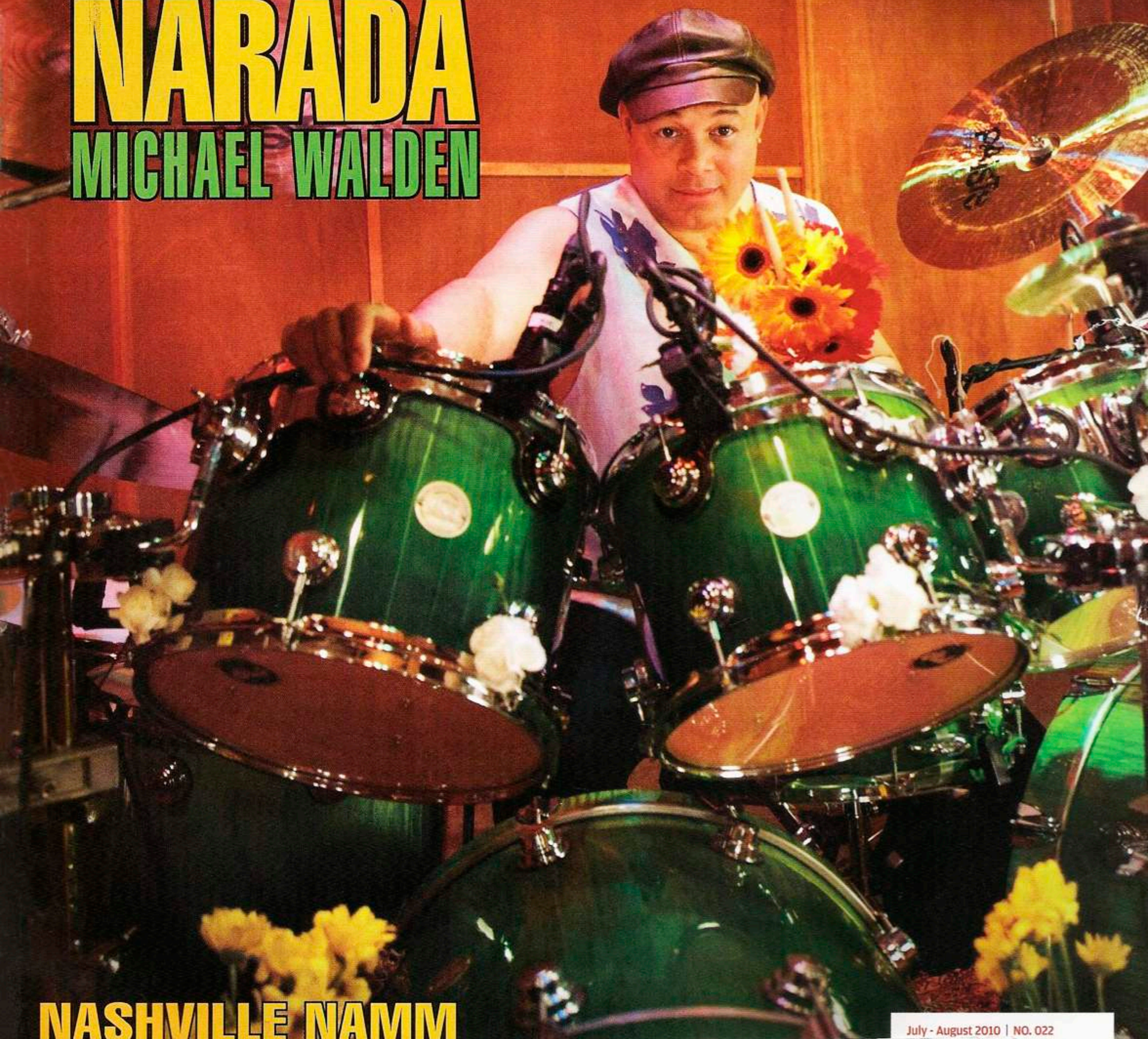
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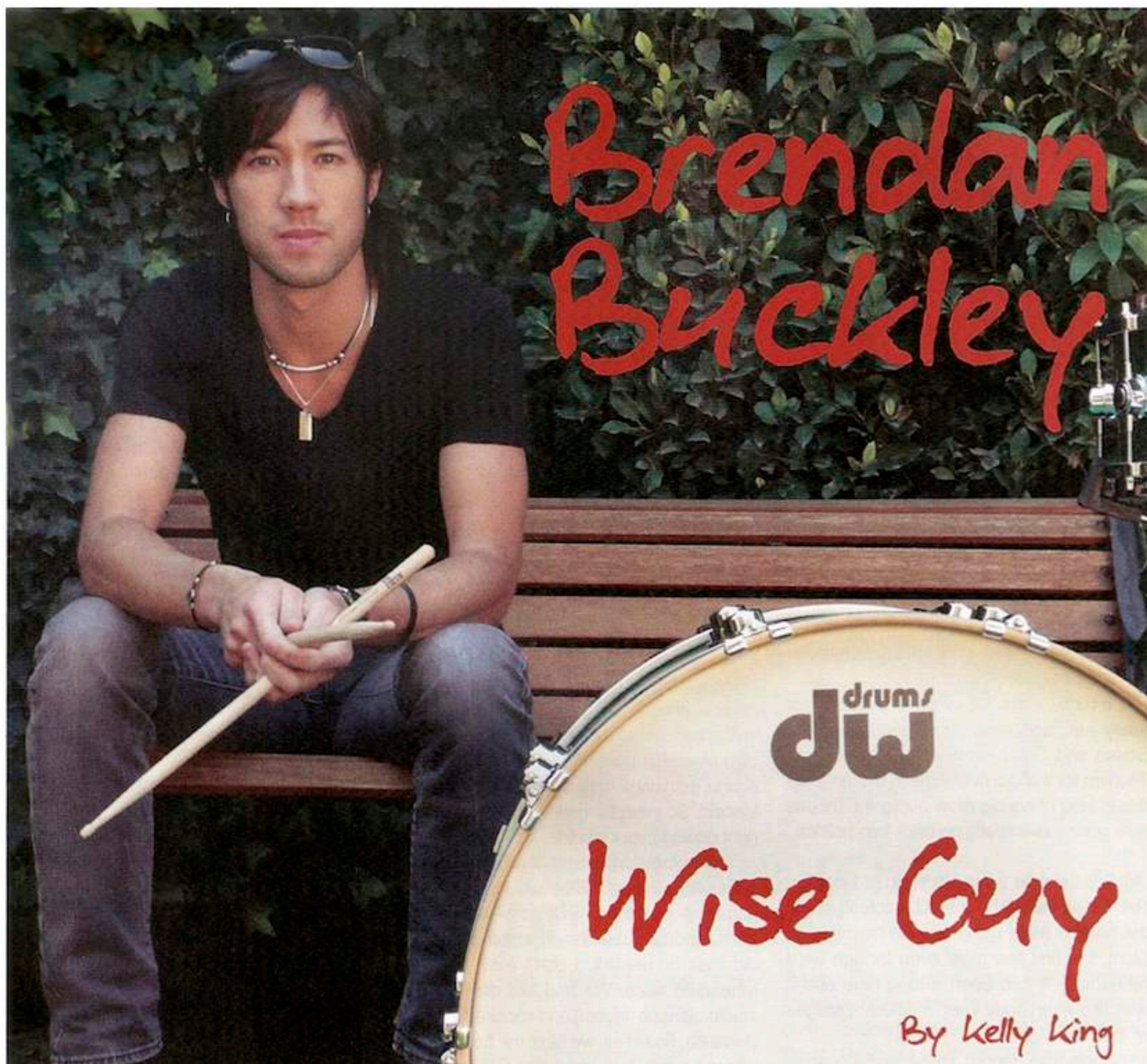
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One of the least understood elements to success is “Vibe.” What does that mean? It can mean different things to different people. It’s the kind of thing that you recognize when you’re in its presence. Ninety percent of the articles you read in a drum magazine are about rudiments, bass drum size or a particular pattern that is played. This is not that kind of article. Yes, there is the need to be aware of all of those things, but there is a different set of tools that many musicians never concern themselves with. A conversation with Brendan Buckley is very different than with most drummers. Brendan loves drums and can geek out all day, but he doesn’t need to discuss drums to talk about music. Drumhead is a drummer’s magazine, so we do need to discuss things from a percussive point of view. If anything, Buckley is accommodating. We had an organic discussion of the wisdom he has gained throughout the years.

Brendan may be best known through his work for more than a decade with pop sensation Shakira, but he has played with a wide variety of artists too lengthy to list. He is also an integral part of the LA music scene and is ensconced in a variety of playing situations. On any given night you might find Brendan playing at the Staples Center, performing at a tiny club in Silver Lake or even sitting in on keyboards at a jam in Hollywood. It seems that every musician in LA either knows Brendan or knows of him. His career is the envy of many, and those who have had the good fortune to play with him understand why. Perhaps the secret to Buckley’s success is that he understands the importance of the state of one’s own mind, as well as that of others, affects the music...and everything else.

A Rolling Stone Gathers No Moss

Complacency has been the final blow to many a career, and not just a musical one. Everybody likes to be happy and comfortable. But the trick is to figure out how to be happy and comfortable all of the time. Well, maybe most of the time. The solution is simple but elusive. You must become comfortable with being uncomfortable. Brendan is constantly putting himself into unusual situations in an attempt to become relaxed with whatever is thrown at him. It is his goal to make music sound and feel good regardless of the tools or the situation. This isn't the dilemma of using a 24-inch kick over a 20-inch. It goes way beyond that.

Brendan describes his perspective by stating, "I've never really played with just one band. It's not what I do. I've been in lots of bands and projects over the years, and I feel very fortunate to have worked with all these different artists. I really enjoy the variety and challenge of switching gears, adjusting, adapting. I might be playing a stadium with a pop artist one day, and then doing a tiny gig at a coffee shop the next. The arena gig has its certain set of challenges with everyone in the band being spread out, monitor issues, etc...and the smaller gig has a different set of obstacles. A small club might have a house kit with broken heads, or you might be crammed into the corner of the stage with your elbows hitting the wall. I like taking gigs that force me out of my comfort zone. After a while, you learn that it's not about the pedal tension, or the seat height, or the type of snare drum head. I've actually showed up to gigs where there was supposed to be a kit, but none was supplied. They'd say, 'Sorry, we don't have a drum set tonight.' And I'd just say, 'All right, what do you have? A bucket, a pot, a pan? It might sound weird, but we'll make it work.' When those kinds of things happen, and you can somehow make the show go on, you then gain a confidence that allows you to work in almost any situation."

In facing these hurdles, Brendan finds the purity of his job. It's his desire to make the show as seamless as possible. The true goal is to make the songs sound right, while capturing the mood of the artist, and doing it consistently throughout the show, night after night. For example, if the show consists of pensive, melancholy, beautiful songs, then it's the drummer's role to sink into that mood. Conversely, if it's all about excitement and high-energy, then you have to rise to that level. Buckley relates the idea to a conversation, "Whether you're aware of it or not, you probably change the way you speak depending on whom you're speaking to. If you're hanging out with your buddies, you might be raising the volume of your voice and swearing. Then, if your cell phone rings and it's your mom, you immediately change the way you speak. It's not just that you stop swearing, you speak in a different tone of voice with a different energy. It's amazing that we do this unconsciously. We can do that with drums as well. You don't have to just play one style with every different artist...unless that 'one style' is the only thing you've ever practiced. But, I don't really think that most drummers practice just one thing anyway."

This training began in Brendan's early days back in Miami, Florida. While playing gigs and sessions, he was constantly thrown a curve ball. This became a lightbulb moment for him. Buckley recalls, "If some producer or artist asked me to play percussion on a gig, I'd woodshed like crazy and then go do it. Then, I might go play a hip-hop gig with just a kick, snare and hi-hat. Later, I might go sit in at a rock club where the house kit was one of those gigantic '80's metal sets with four rack toms, two floor toms, and two 24-inch kicks. I was always switching things up, and not necessarily by choice. At the time, I was also playing lots of symphonic and marching percussion. My perspective was, if I only practiced on a four-piece kit, then that was all I'd ever feel comfortable playing, and that's not realistic. I mean, have you ever played on one of those stand-up cocktail kits? They're actually kind of awkward to play, while making it feel good...unless you're Steve Jordan. I saw him play one once, and he was ridiculous. He made it look easy, and it's not as easy as it looks."

Be Prepared

It sounds too simple, maybe even obvious, but being prepared is the cornerstone. There's being prepared, and then there's *being prepared*. The later being "preparation on a very serious level". Have you ever gotten in a car, driven from work to home, and then pulled into the driveway without remembering the trip? That's the kind of unconscious "knowledge" that's being discussed here. It's the kind of comfort that comes when the active thought of remembering is no longer necessary. Brendan's work ethic is a result of his enthusiasm in his early drumming years. He recalls, "When I went to the University Of Miami School Of Music, I'd have my regular courses, and then my practice schedule. I'd practice from around eight pm to midnight on the weekdays, and then for about twelve hours a day on the weekends. I had a hunger and excitement to learn. I'd watch all kinds of drummers and drum videos. Only recently have I gotten into studying martial arts, but I recognize the same kind of passion presenting itself in this part of my life as well. One very positive result from those college years is my work ethic. It resulted in a process that I use when learning songs. Brendan explains his process this way:

1) "I learn the tunes exactly as they are on the recording: Verbatim. I listen for the different voices on the kit, as well as the tuning and overall sound of the drums. If there are electronics I'll make two lines on a chart and put the electronic part above the acoustic part. If there are certain drums that stick out, for example a 12-inch auxiliary snare, I'll make a note and find a way to put that in. I think this is essential in hearing what the artist was going for during the making of their recordings.

2) "I'll practice the tunes exactly the way that I learned them. It's not enough for me to know the parts. I have to work until I get them to feel and sound good. Just playing the right groove is not enough: it needs to feel right, or at least as close as humanly possible for me."

"I didn't know whether I was going to end up playing a jazz gig, or a Latin gig, or a rock gig, so I practiced all of it."



3) "After I've completed both of the previous steps, I'll throw all of that out and re-learn it my own way. Maybe I feel that a slight change in the groove would compliment the bass guitar. Maybe I don't think a certain fill on the recording is the best choice. Maybe I don't feel comfortable with either the clutter or the emptiness of a certain groove, and I'd prefer to play something else. What's most important is that I only go on to this step AFTER steps one and two.

"All of this helps me to be prepared for a multitude of different variables once I'm at the audition, rehearsal or gig. Some artists want the parts to be played exactly as they are on their record. I can respect that. Keep in mind, they've probably spent a year or two crafting these parts and songs to be just right. It's important to empathize with that. On the other hand, there are artists who don't care what you play as long as it feels good. By working out all of the possibilities, I not only know the songs well and am comfortable with

I think the way that I practice now is different in the sense that, when I was younger, I practiced hypothetically. I practiced everything on the map. From day to day, I didn't know whether I was going to end up playing a jazz gig, or a Latin gig, or a rock gig, so I practiced all of it at once. I mean, I loved all of it, but I felt as though I needed to be prepared for everything. Now, I basically practice whatever is around the corner. If I have an up-coming tour, I practice for that. If I have a Latin gig, I work on that. If it's a session, I'm learning the songs. I prioritize and work on the most urgent thing coming up."

Be Creative

Being creative doesn't necessarily mean doing the craziest linear, metric-modulation drum fill. It could mean that, but Brendan treats "being creative" as more of a general attitude. It's about being open to just about any possibility musically. It's not thinking



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different parts, but there is less of a chance of being thrown off by a curveball when someone changes something on the spot.

"This same approach translates to different areas of my drumming. If I'm about to record a song in 6/8 or 7/4, I might spend some time practicing different ways of approaching that time signature. I don't want to have only one way to play that particular time feel. For example, I might have one way to play in 6 that sounds great, but what if I get to the session and that's not what the artist has in mind? Maybe they changed their part and they want something totally different. All that preparation and flexibility allows me to make seamless changes while keeping everyone else comfortable, and that's my goal.

of yourself as a rock drummer or a jazz drummer. Maybe not even thinking of yourself as a "drummer", but more a musician who plays drums. Brendan loves to talk about his favorite drummers, or gear that he is fond of, but when it comes down to playing, he prides himself on not having preconceived ideas. He recalls his early work with Shakira as an example. Buckley reminisces, "The first gig that I did with her [Shakira] was a MTV Unplugged concert back in '98. We did all sorts of grooves, loop-oriented stuff, world rhythms, but I was playing them on big acoustic drums. It worked at the time.

Then, around 2005, we began approaching some of her new Reggatone songs. I had done my homework preparing the songs,

but Shakira commented that they didn't sound right to her ears. I had tuned the drums like the ones on the record, and learned all the parts verbatim, but something was still missing. Then we discussed the option of using samples. I took the individual tracks off the record, chopped them up, and put them into my Drumkat and Akai sampler. I set the electronics off to the left side of my kit, and played those parts whenever it seemed appropriate: She loved it. I then realized that

I needed to approach the newer electronic-oriented tracks that way because hearing those exact sounds was part of what she was envisioning. Again, I see that as 'meeting the needs of the artist'. She shouldn't have to concern herself with all the technical jargon. It's my job to figure out what she needs, and get it to her as quickly as possible. That way, everyone isn't waiting around for hours and hours before we can go to dinner simply because we can't figure out why it doesn't sound right."

Brendan embraced electronics early on. During his first drum lessons in New Jersey with Tommy Igoe, he was instructed to bring the Jim Chapin Book (*Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer*), a blank spiral notebook, and a drum machine. Igoe encouraged him not only to use the drum machine as a metronome, but to program beats as well. It was advice that Buckley took to heart. At that young age, he was listening to everything from Hendrix to Public Enemy, as well as Led Zeppelin and Depeche Mode.

He had eclectic musical tastes and began using electronics to express himself. Buckley recalls miking his snare and running it through effects pedals to get delays, flanges, etc... His interest in experimenting with more than just acoustic drums would continue to grow. It served him well on Shakira's recent promo tour. During the pre-tour meetings in 2009, Shakira and her musical director Tim

Mitchell challenged the drummer to be even more inventive. Brendan relates, "The whole new record is electronic. It's all Timbaland tracks, Neptunes' tracks, stuff like that. Her vision was to keep everything very futuristic. On napkins, I sketched out ideas for the 'look' of the drums. I remember her telling me 'I want you to design a drum set that doesn't look like a drum set.' I drew several different ideas. One of them looked kind of like a keyboard rig. She liked that concept the

most, especially the idea of the keyboardist and I having identical looking racks facing each other at a forty-five degree angle. I remember thinking to myself 'Now, where do I put the kick drum? Where do I put the snare drum?' I started rehearsals with a hybrid kit. There were acoustic drums and trigger pads everywhere. I was using my Drumkat and a laptop. Each day, when we learned a new song, I'd take the Pro Tools sessions, chop them up, and assign all the parts around this "Starship Enterprise" that I was constructing. I approached it more like a multi-percussion setup rather than a drum set. It didn't have the feel of a drum set. I envisioned it almost like an electronic version of Stomp. I could sit down, or I could stand up to play it much like a marimba or vibraphone. Sometimes I'd play the kick-drum part with my left hand, sometimes with my right, sometimes with a trigger pedal. Each song had its own set of coordination hurdles. On one tune, I might play like a left-handed drummer, and on the very next song it would reverse. At first, I wasn't sure how to make it all work, but part of my job was to figure it out. It ended up being quite a fun experience because it was different from any other gig that I do."

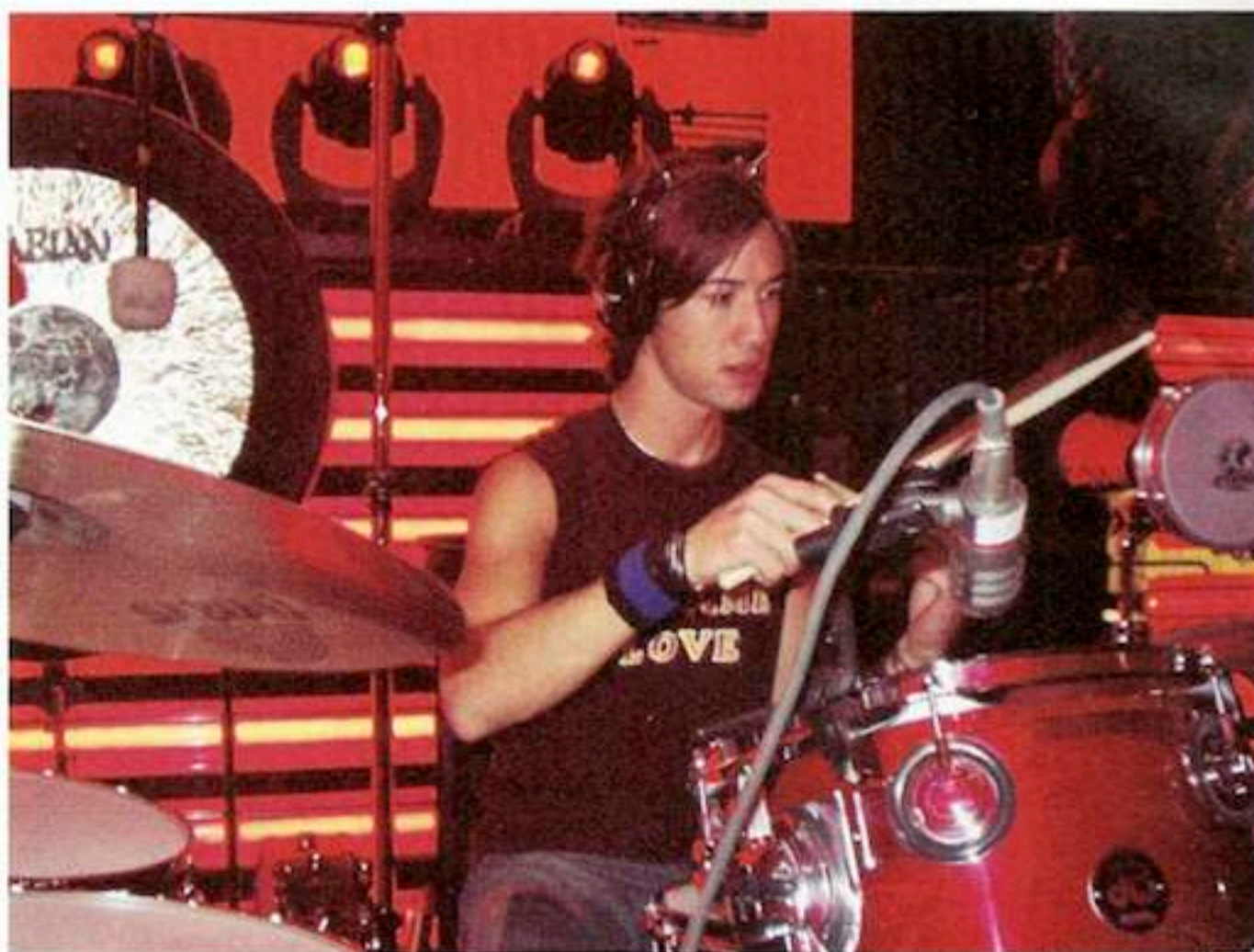
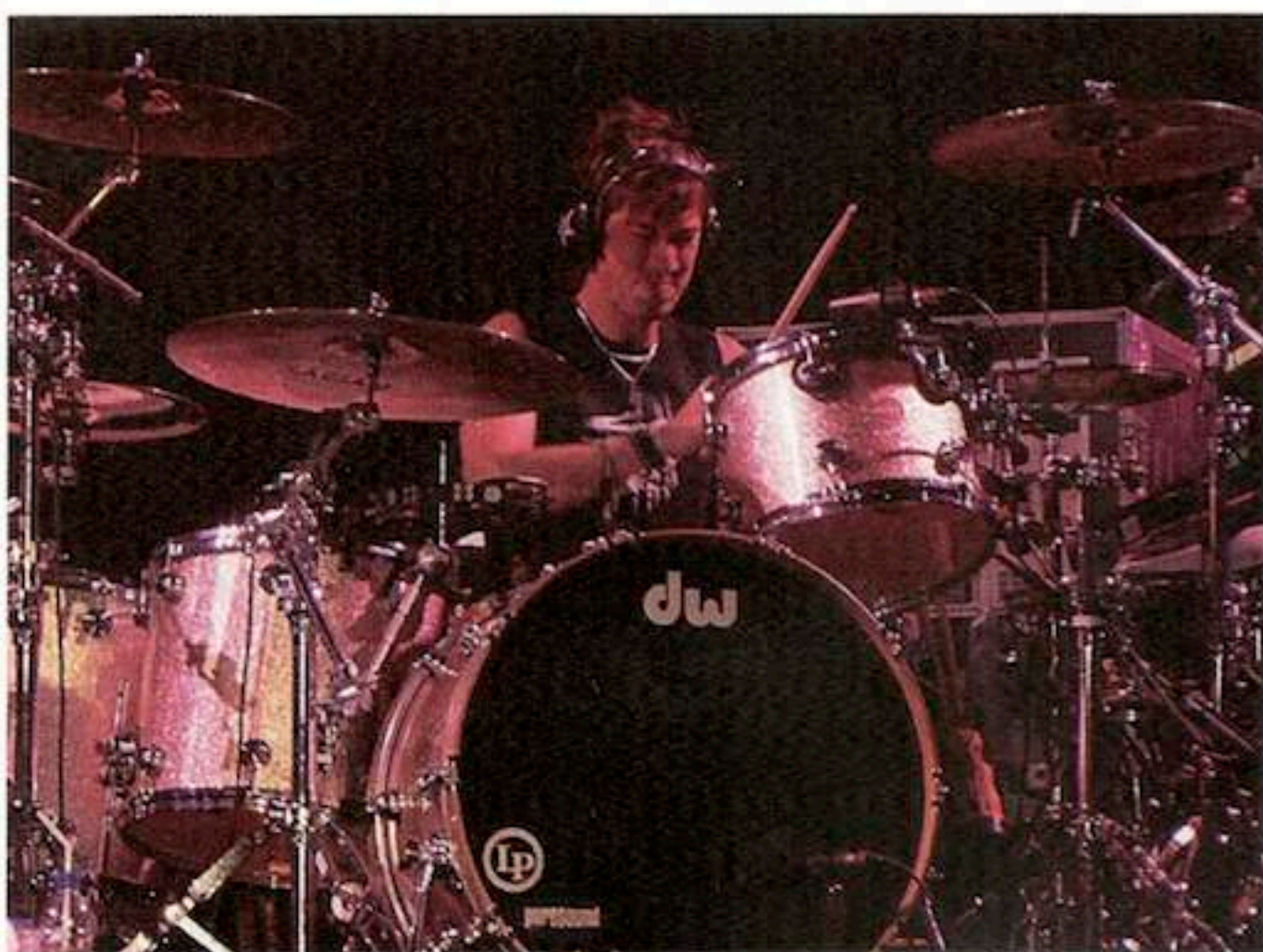


Photo: Sesame Love

"I basically practice whatever is around the corner...I prioritize and work on the most urgent thing coming up."



When Opportunity Knocks

Keeping an open mind when it comes to unexpected opportunities is something that has served Brendan well. His constant endeavors to help other musicians realize their goals has led to a new role—that of a producer. It's not a job that he initially saw himself doing, but he admits that, as a drummer, people often turned to him for guidance. It

usually started out as advice regarding tempos or grooves, or maybe an arrangement idea. Ever since high school, Buckley has been into making home recordings with his 4-track recorder and drum machines. These situations slowly morphed into directing a whole recording project. It's a situation that is best illustrated by his work with Michael Miller's *I Made You Up*.

Brendan recalls, "I never planned on being a music producer. If a friend asked me to cut some drum tracks, program electronic loops, overdub percussion, record background vocals, edit some Pro Tools sessions, I would just say 'YEAH.' I'm into all of the above. I met Michael while playing drums on Minnie Driver's tour. Michael was the opening act. One day he asked me if I would be interested in coming onstage and performing with him. I thought to myself 'Well, the drums are already set up. Sounds like fun!' I told Michael that I'd grab a quick dinner, and then come up and play the last couple of songs. Afterwards, we struck up a friendship. We both live in Southern California, so when he began recording his follow-up album, he asked me to play drums. That record never came out. When I saw him some time later, I asked him whatever happened to that lost record. He said that he wasn't happy with the overall mood of those songs, and that he was now in a different place mentally, which I can respect. We decided to sit down and listen to it together. We picked out three songs that were keepers, and trashed the rest. I asked if he'd be interested in trying to record any of his newer material. He, in turn, asked if I'd be willing to produce it. I thought it would be a good opportunity to see a friend make some great music."

In his attempts to help other artists succeed, Brendan opened up a completely new vocation and outlet for his own creativity. Instead of being focused on himself, he saw a way to help someone else

create music. It was a win/win scenario, that led to more production work. Over the years, he's produced songs and albums for artists like Shakira, Pedestrian and Fulano (a.k.a. Elsten Torres). Buckley states, "It's easy for a drummer to feel under-qualified in the world of studio production, especially if he is not familiar with guitars, keyboards, harmonic theory, recording gear and computers. Fortunately, over the years, I've managed to pick up a bit of everything. In the

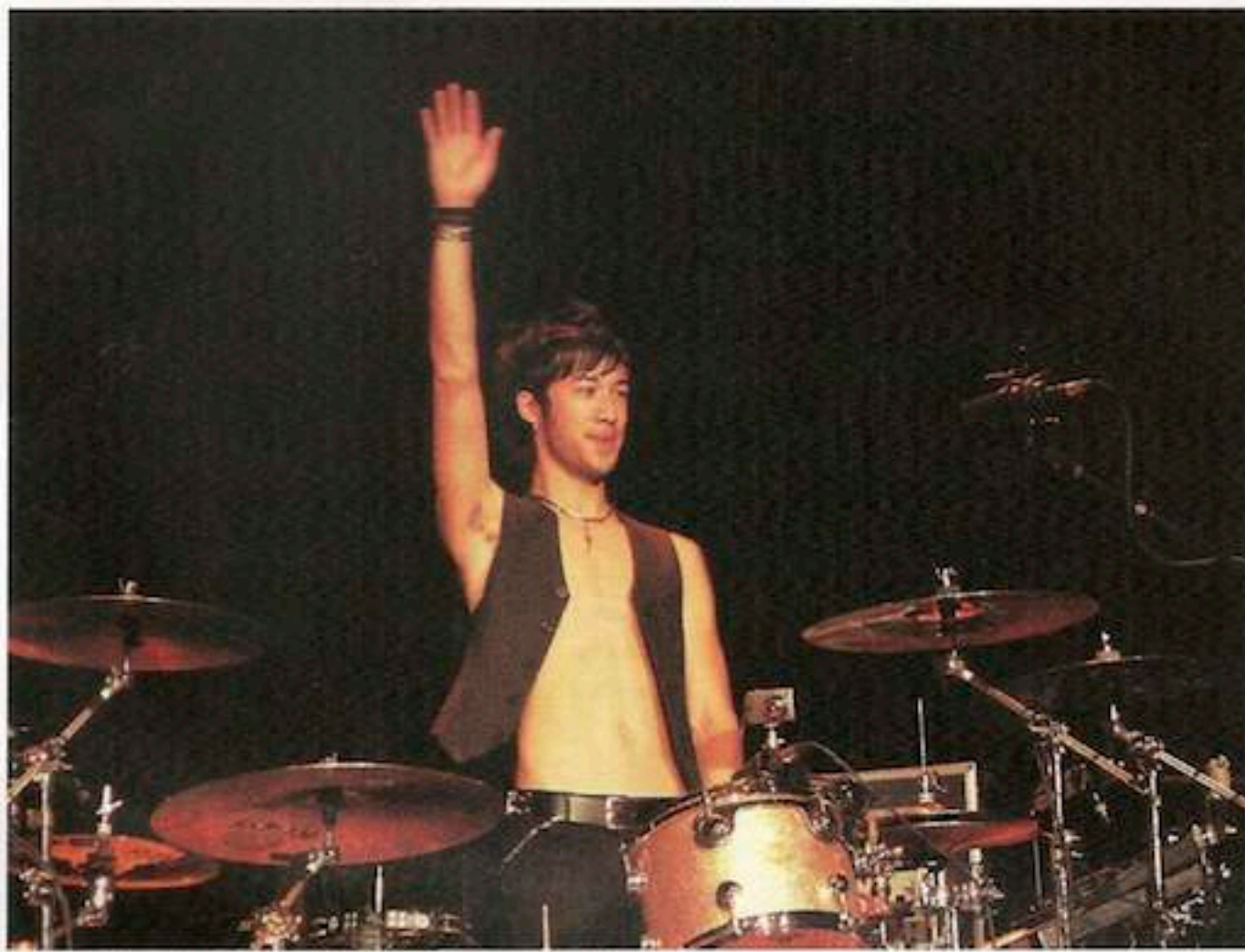
end, I think producing is really just a way to help an artist get from point A to point B. There are many different skills that producers can bring to the table. I think, as a drummer, I have a natural ability for organization. And, in the chaos of record-making, that's one of the most important things a producer can offer."

Be A Team Player

Most drummers remember when they first noticed the drums. Maybe it was the look of them, or just the fact that they were loud. An inseparable part of that moment is the person behind the kit. Maybe it was Ringo, or Peart, or Buddy Rich. Whoever it was, there was a charisma that struck a chord. In the search to attain that same magnetism, many drummers fall prey to overplaying in an attempt to make "magic." It works for some, but not for most. Having ability is one thing, but feeling the need to show it off is another. Ask most working drummers about the job that they're called to do, and the answer you'll most likely receive is "to play with good feel and good time." Brendan is well aware of this. He'll even take it one step further by stating that

part of his job is "to make others feel comfortable and relaxed." For him, this lesson was learned over time.

Buckley adds, "When I was 18, I was just trying to play faster and louder than the day before. [Laughs] Now, the most satisfying compliment I can receive is when someone turns around and says how great something feels." Brendan is very honest about not



"The most satisfying compliment I can receive is when someone turns around and says how great something feels."



having any desire to be the star of the show. He continues, "The role of a drummer is a fun one. It suits my personality. You're not up front like the lead singer or lead guitarist. You're in the back of the stage surrounded by cool gear. I feel very comfortable being there. It's almost as if you're operating behind the scenes. But in a way, you're also very much a leader. You control so much of what's going on around you. I love being in charge of the tempos, dynamics and moods onstage. I don't look at those subtleties as being unimportant."

When it comes to being appreciated by the rest of the band it goes deeper for Brendan. It traces back to that preparation he discussed before. He comments, "When I play with someone, they appreciate the work that I do to make them more comfortable. They know that I've spent the time learning the songs on the record, even the ones that we haven't been playing. They know that I have the tempos nailed down. For instance, I'll keep track that it's 84 bpm on the record, even though we've been doing it at 88 bpm for the past two weeks. They understand that I'm aware of all the stuff that's going on throughout the day, and I can adjust very easily. A lot of the time, it's just as simple as that."

It's this "Big Picture" perspective that helps to keep Brendan in demand in a variety of situations. He sees the necessity of knowing his role in what's happening in the music. His confidence comes across in his ability to *not* showboat. It affects the parts he plays as well as the sound of his drums. He credits the wise words of a drummer who once told him, "It's not only important to think about what it sounds like from the drum chair. It's equally as important to consider what it sounds like from the audience's perspective, or even from the back of the room."

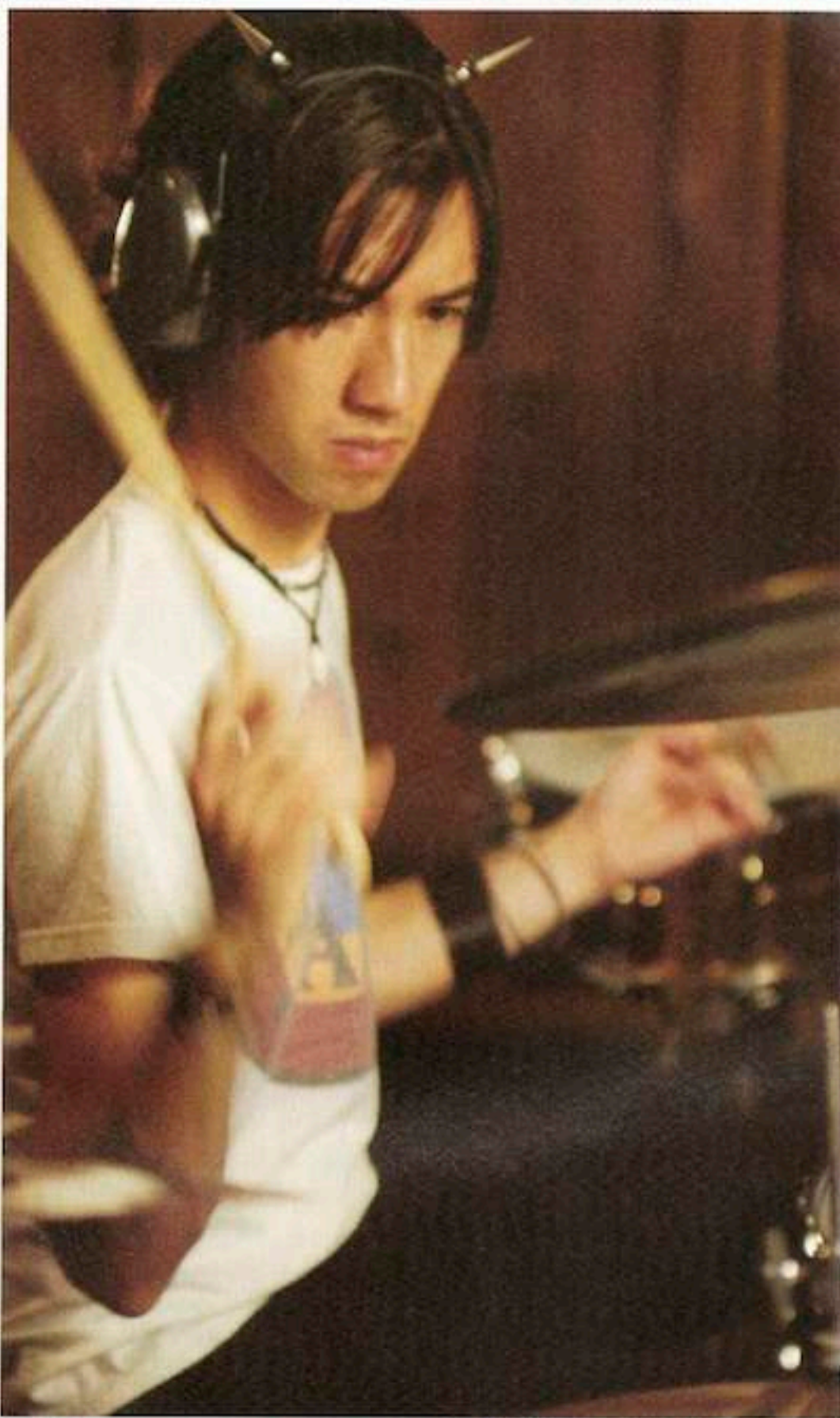
Keep Your Friends Close

That's it. Just keep your friends close. One of the reasons that Brendan makes other people so happy in a variety of environments is because he, himself, is actually happy. Basically, he enjoys the people he is playing with. It's very calculated. Brendan chooses to take those opportunities in which he genuinely enjoys those around him. "When I get a call to play a gig," Brendan states, "my first question is almost always 'Who else is on the gig?' That's usually what will make or break an experience for me. It's not where the gig is, or how long it is, or how much it pays? Those are all things that I can sort out later. If I know that the people on the gig are not only great musicians, but also great people, I'm totally into doing it. That's

where you're going to get your enjoyment. It comes from sharing the stage with these great people. Those are the opportunities that I seek out. I wind up both learning a lot, and laughing a lot. On the other hand, if the job entails being in close proximity with someone who has a really dark outlook, or maybe I don't like the way that they approach music, then all the money or prestige isn't going to make that gig fun for me. The idea of spending three months on a tour

bus with someone who has an ultra-negative attitude isn't very attractive to me. That's why I have no problem doing smaller gigs if the band is cool. It's the driving force that makes me want to continue playing music."

It's Brendan's conviction that money and exposure won't make you happy, not in the long run. In fact, he believes that negative experiences can far overshadow the music, and in turn, lead to a negative attitude toward playing music altogether. If you're not happy offstage, you probably won't be happy onstage. He also states that "technique is fifty percent of the game, at most!"



"You can't allow self-doubt and insecurity to get in the way of your confidence."

Don't Count Your Chickens

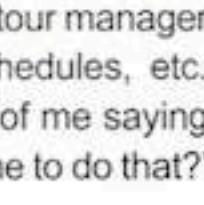
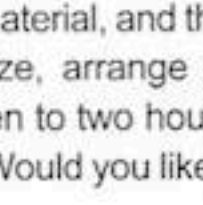
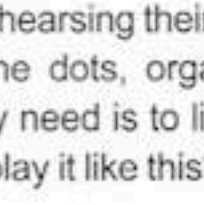
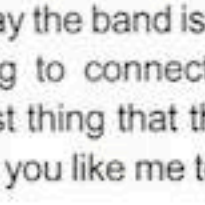
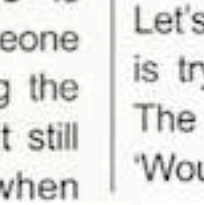
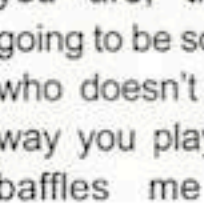
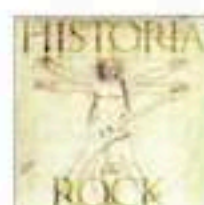
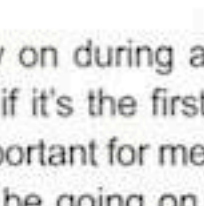
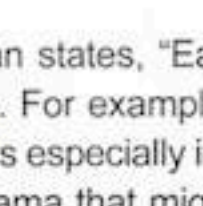
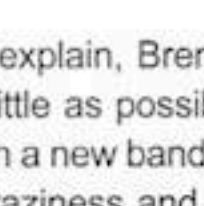
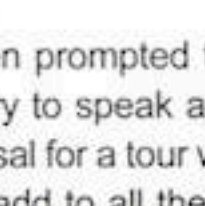
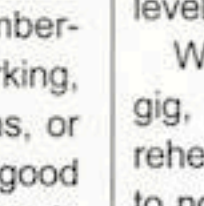
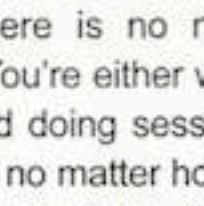
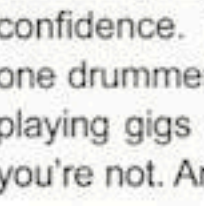
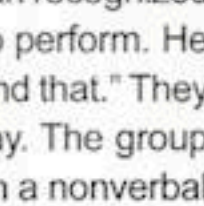
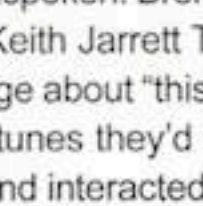
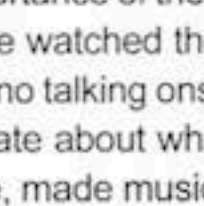
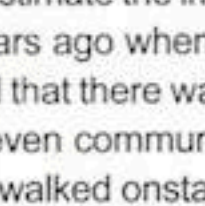
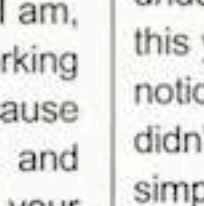
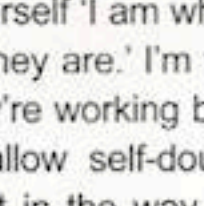
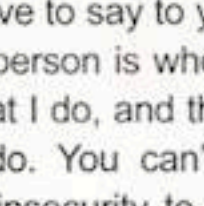
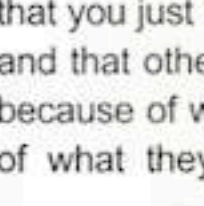
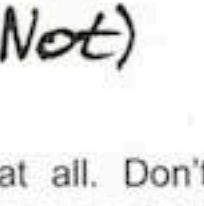
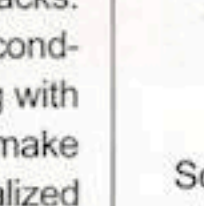
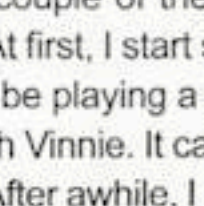
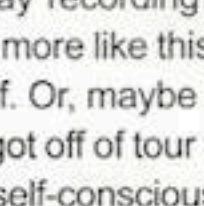
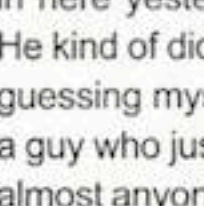
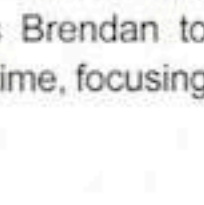
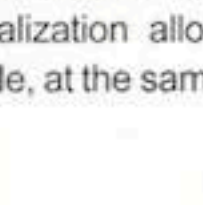
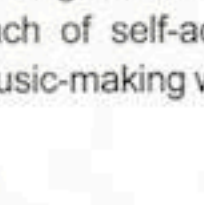
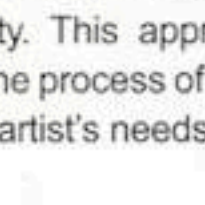
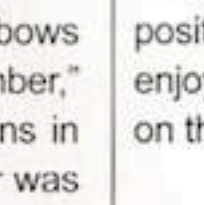
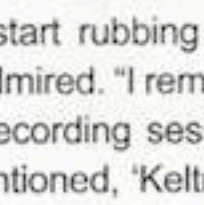
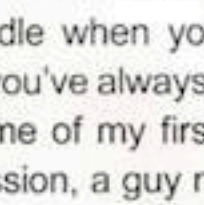
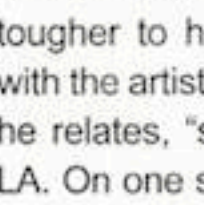
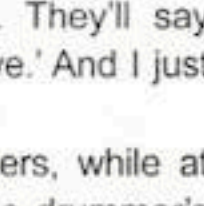
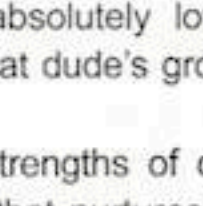
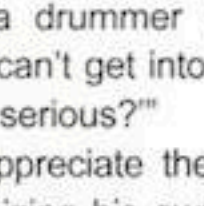
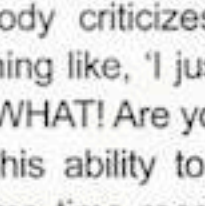
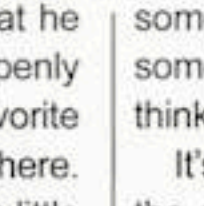
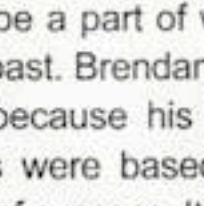
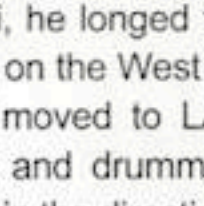
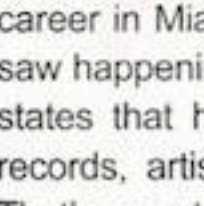
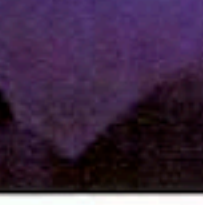
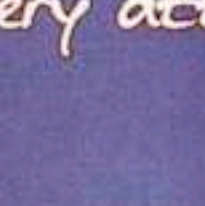
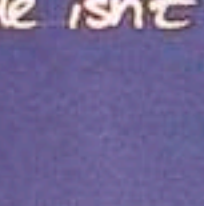
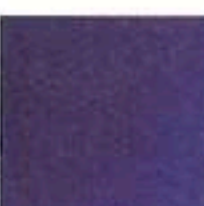
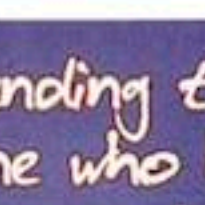
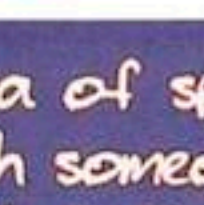
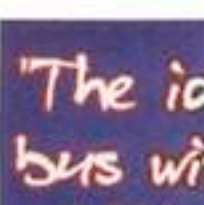
Be in the present. That's a mantra for Buckley. The music business is a constant state of inconstant variables. With all of the fragile egos in the world, it's easy to have your hopes crushed. The pendulum can swing way up, and then way down. It's important to not let things affect your state of mind. "I've learned that it's best for me to not get too excited before something actually happens," he says. "If I want to play with a certain artist, or do a certain gig, great! But, I don't really think about it too much before it comes to fruition. So many things can happen that are out of your control. Also, I try not

to have an agenda when dealing with others. Many people treat others simply as 'opportunities that will benefit me'. If something happens that mutually brings people together, that's cool! But I try to help out my friends no matter how it affects me. As long as I just focus on making music and enjoying that process, I'm good."

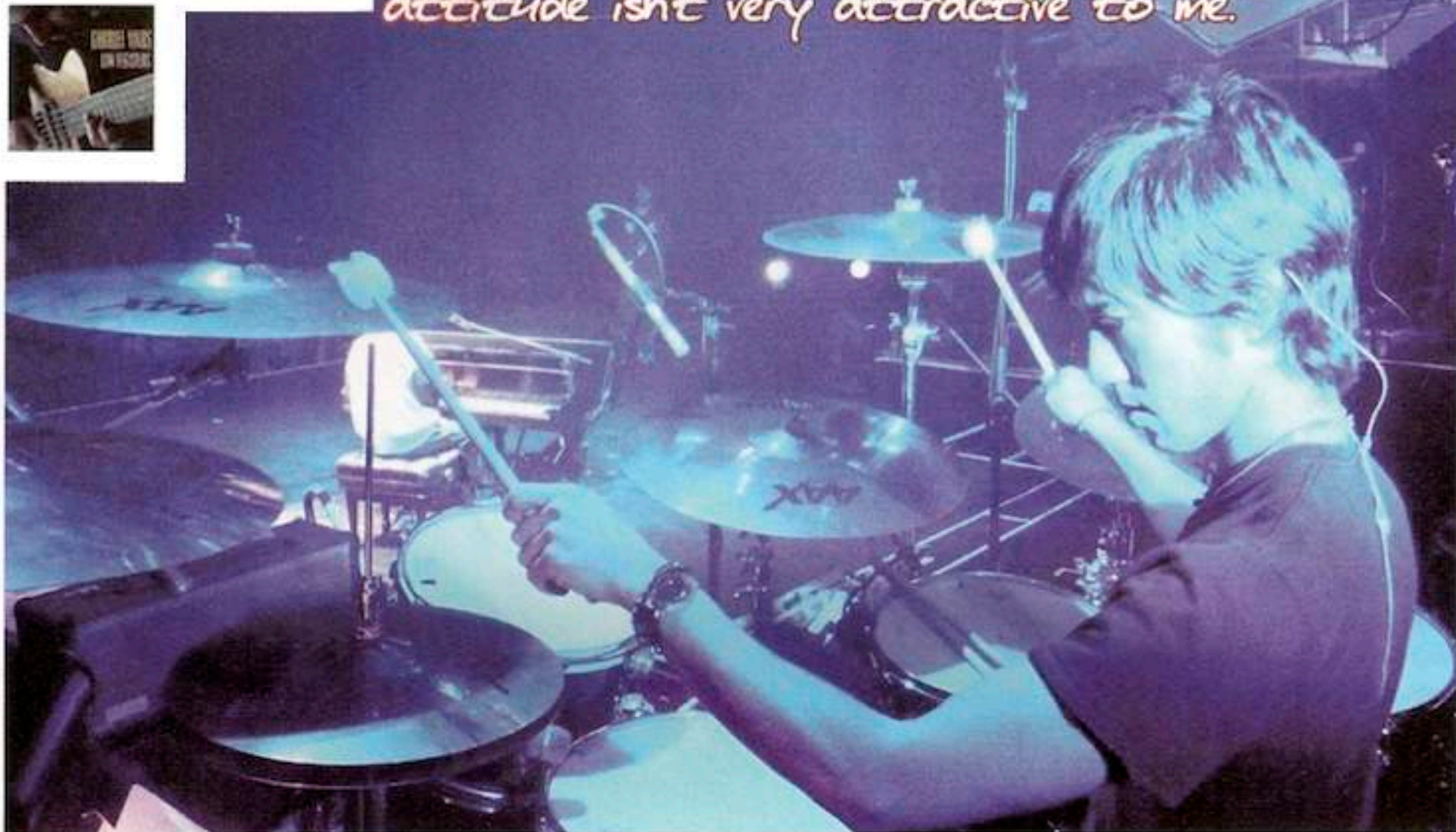
To Thine Ownself Be True

Be who you are. Don't try to be someone else. Everyone has something to offer as long as you cultivate it. No one is going to be as good at being you as you.

It's easier said than done, but it's important to be confident and find what you can bring to the table. This is something that is especially difficult when you're living in a city where most of your heroes live. While Buckley enjoyed a very successful live and studio



"The idea of spending three months on a tour bus with someone who has an ultra negative attitude isn't very attractive to me."



career in Miami, he longed to be a part of what he saw happening on the West Coast. Brendan openly states that he moved to LA because his favorite records, artists and drummers were based there. That's one step in the direction of success. It's a little tougher to handle when you start rubbing elbows with the artists you've always admired. "I remember," he relates, "some of my first recording sessions in LA. On one session, a guy mentioned, 'Keltner was in here yesterday recording a couple of the tracks. He kind of did it more like this.' At first, I start second-guessing myself. Or, maybe I'd be playing a gig with a guy who just got off of tour with Vinnie. It can make almost anyone self-conscious. After awhile, I realized that you just have to say to yourself 'I am who I am, and that other person is who they are.' I'm working because of what I do, and they're working because of what they do. You can't allow self-doubt and insecurity to get in the way of your confidence. There is no number-one drummer. You're either working, playing gigs and doing sessions, or you're not. And, no matter how good you are, there is going to be someone who doesn't dig the way you play. It still baffles me when

somebody criticizes a drummer I absolutely love. They'll say something like, 'I just can't get into that dude's groove.' And I just think, 'WHAT! Are you serious?'"

It's this ability to appreciate the strengths of others, while at the same time recognizing his own, that nurtures the drummer's positivity. This approach of self-actualization allows Brendan to enjoy the process of music-making while, at the same time, focusing on the artist's needs.

The Squeaky Wheel (May Not) Get The Greasing

Sometimes the best thing to say is nothing at all. Don't underestimate the importance of the unspoken. Brendan recognized this years ago when he watched the Keith Jarrett Trio perform. He noticed that there was no talking onstage about "this and that." They didn't even communicate about what tunes they'd play. The group simply walked onstage, made music and interacted on a nonverbal level.

When prompted to explain, Brendan states, "Early on during a gig, I try to speak as little as possible. For example, if it's the first rehearsal for a tour with a new band, it's especially important for me to not add to all the craziness and drama that might be going on. Let's say the band is rehearsing their material, and the tour manager is trying to connect the dots, organize, arrange schedules, etc. The last thing that they need is to listen to two hours of me saying 'Would you like me to play it like this? Would you like me to do that?'"



My job is to make things easier for them, not more complicated. I'm only concerning myself with making the drums and the music sound good. If I've already done the necessary preparation, there shouldn't be much to talk about anyway. There will always be a few things to discuss, but I can do my part by not adding to the clutter. Music should be felt. It's not going to be perfect the first time. But, you have to get it to a really good place before you arrive, and then allow it to become what it needs to be organically.

"I'll record the rehearsals and listen to them on the way home in the car. I make personal notes, and listen to any comments that the artist and other musicians make. I can make adjustments to my playing based around that. It's important to try to make everyone as comfortable as possible. You can't TELL someone that, you just have to find a way to make it happen."

Know Why Your Heroes Are Where They Are

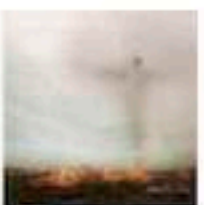
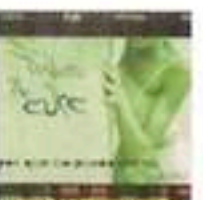
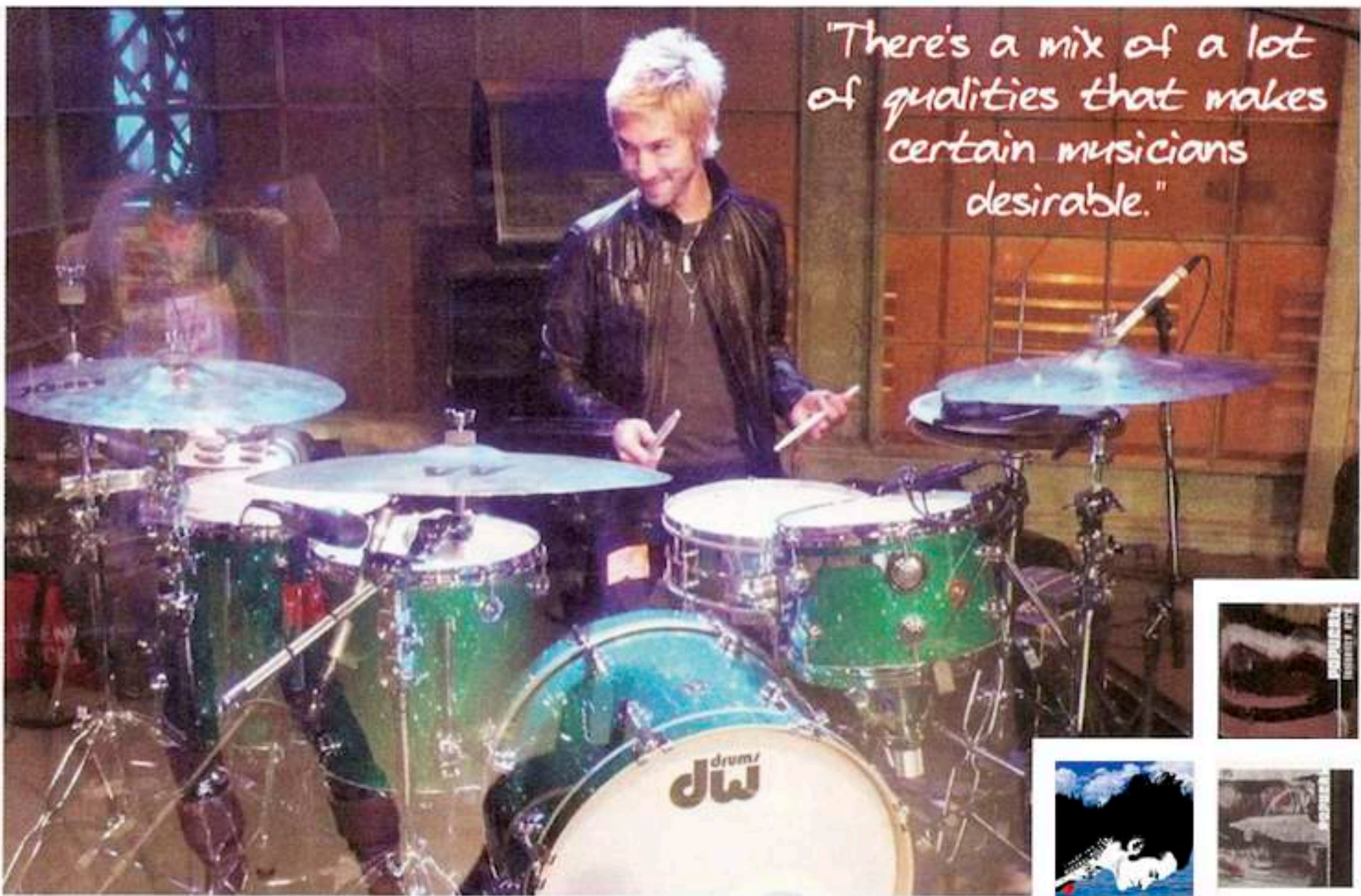
Many bands have two guitarists. Some have more than one singer. It's quite rare however to have two drummers. You can cite The Doobie Brothers, The Grateful Dead and a few others, but it's a short list. You might hang at PASIC or a drum clinic with another drummer, but for the most part, you're on an island by yourself. If you get lucky enough to meet a drummer whom you admire, Buckley suggests you take in more than just the obvious. He relates, "You should absorb their energy and their attitude. Learn from your role models. If there are certain guys whose careers you admire, or you love the way that they play, meet them. But don't just talk to them

about ratamacues. Talk to them about who they are as a person. Talk about how they approach life, gigs, attitude, and all kinds of things. If you do that, you'll slowly realize why they work so much. It's not just because they have a good backbeat. Thousands and thousands of drummers have a good backbeat. There's something beyond just the playing. There's a mix of a lot of qualities that makes certain musicians desirable. It's a combination of talent, work ethic, attitude, and the aura that someone brings into the situations that they're in." Brendan states that having the right people or being the right person raises everyone's game, not only musically, but also on an emotional level. He mentions the Eleanor Roosevelt quote, "Great minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, small minds discuss people." This illustrates that you can either contribute by taking your relationships to a higher level, or by lowering them. And, as we all know, music is a language. ✱

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