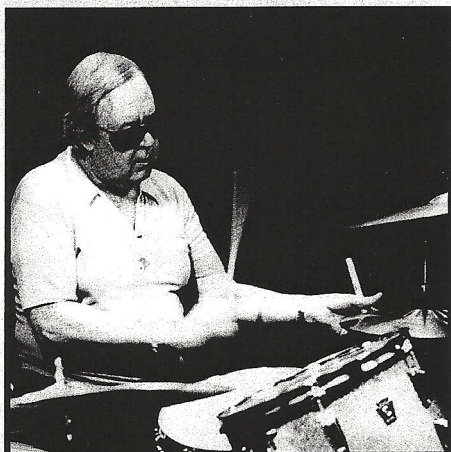


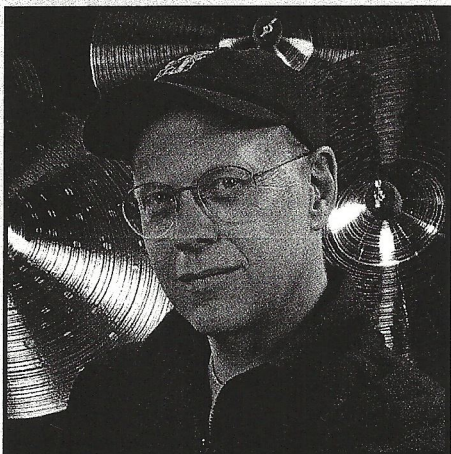
## JIM CHAPIN

TECHNIQUE MASTER CLASS  
THURSDAY 11:00 A.M.  
ROOM 109



## JOE MORELLO

TECHNIQUE MASTER CLASS  
FRIDAY 11:00 A.M.  
ROOM 109



## GORDY KNUDTSON

TECHNIQUE MASTER CLASS  
SATURDAY 11:00 A.M.  
ROOM 109

# Chapin, Morello and Knudtson

BY JIM COFFIN

No, the title of this article doesn't refer to a baseball team's infield, but to a PASIC Master Class trifecta. Trifecta is a horse-race betting term (which is appropriate for the upcoming PASIC in Louisville, home of the Kentucky Derby), and if you attend these three master classes, you will definitely come out a winner.

Jim Chapin is no stranger to PASIC, a familiar figure with practice pad and sticks at the ready to instruct players on how to get through his seminal 1948 instruction book, *Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer*, without jumping off a cliff. In the early 1940s he was playing with the famed jazz saxophonist Flip Phillips at New York's Hickory House jazz club when Uncle Sam told Chapin "I Want You," and he was off to World War II. After Jim got out of the army he continued playing jazz gigs, toured with the Casa Loma orchestra for awhile, and finally put together the Jim Chapin Sextet in the mid-'50s.

Chapin didn't begin playing the drums until he was 18 years old, and several people, including Gene Krupa, suggested that he study with Sanford Moeller. The main thrust of his PASIC master class will be explaining and demonstrating the Moeller system of sticking. In a 1981 *Modern Drummer* article, Chapin said, "Moeller made you play things with a continuous motion. The motion was the message. You made the motion and the stick played it. After a while, it almost played itself.

"Moeller analyzed everything and stressed taking everything apart. If you played a paradiddle, you would learn what each hand did by itself. So from the time that Moeller showed me that, I was able to think in terms of doing one thing with one hand and one thing with the other. That was the reason I got into things that later developed into my book."

Chapin watched other musicians and came to the conclusion that if pianists and organists can play a line with one hand and a counter-line with the other, why do drummers have to play every-

thing hand to hand? Show up at his master class and get the answer.

The second PASIC 2003 master class installment of sticking techniques will be presented by Joe Morello, who became a household name during his 12-year stint with the Dave Brubeck Quartet and has not only amazed the drumming world with his technical skills but with his musicality. On the quartet's recording of "Take Five" he performed one of the most famous drum solos in jazz. Commenting on that solo in a *Modern Drummer* interview, Morello told writer Rick Mattingly, "When people use the word 'technique' they usually mean 'speed.' But the 'Take Five' solo had very little speed involved. It was more about space and playing over the barline. It was conspicuous by being so different."

Although Morello appeared with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the age of nine as a soloist performing the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto, he switched to drums at age 15. His studying with the legendary George Lawrence Stone and later with Radio City Hall percussionist Billy Gladstone gave Morello a very secure technical foundation. Recalling Stone, Morello said, "I'd work out of his book *Stick Control*, and after I could play the sticking patterns I'd start throwing in accents in various places." Impressed with Morello's ideas, Stone incorporated them into his next book, *Accents and Rebounds*.

"The secret to technique is relaxation," says Morello. "It's a matter of natural body movement. When your hand is relaxed, your thumb isn't squeezing against your first finger and your wrist isn't at some funny angle. The stick just rests in the hand in a very natural position. When you strike a practice pad, you should be able to hear the ring of the wood stick. The average person chokes the stick and that comes through on the drum. The whole thing is relaxation and letting the sticks do most of the work."

Morello has written several drum methods, including *Master Studies*, and

Photo by Rik Seena

made an instructional video. "Technique is only a means to an end," he stresses. "The more control you have of the instrument, the more confidence you will get and the more you'll be able to express your ideas. But technique is only good if you can use it musically."

The third PASIC 2003 master class on sticking is the result of a 12-year quest by Gordy Knudtson, a Minneapolis-based drummer who tours with the Steve Miller Band, is head of the Percussion Department at Musictech College, is heavily involved recording jingles and industrial film scores, and has backed such luminaries Ernie Watts, Diane Schurr, Bobby Shew, Phil Woods, and many others. As a result of a student asking Gordy why he couldn't conquer an old multi-stroke technique, Knudtson ultimately developed what he calls the Open/Close Technique—a revolutionary new take on an old drumming technique that, until now, drummers have only used in one hand at a time.

"Over time I began to understand that this technique wasn't just a method to produce a fast stream of notes," Knudtson says, "but rather could be used to create a new way to approach, explain, and understand the mechanics of drumming."

In April 1999, Knudtson's article "A New Approach to the Single Stroke Roll," was published in *Percussive Notes*, and at PASIC 2000 he presented a master class on the same subject with additional information on short rolls. "At this presentation," Knudtson recalls, "I defined and named the fundamental components of the Open/Closed technique. Along with demonstrating the basic hand movements and basic strokes, I also showed some simple ways to synchronize these strokes to create various types of long and short single stroke rolls."

The publication of *The Open/Close Technique* Books 1 and 2 in 2001 was followed by an instructional video in

2002 by GK-MUSIC.com that Ed Shaughnessy endorsed by saying, "You have developed a historically important form of technique that ranks with the Moeller System." In his 2003 PASIC Master Class presentation, Knudtson will review and explain the fundamentals of the technique as well as demonstrate some of the interesting possibilities it creates. (For further information, see "A Physiologic Analysis of the Open/Close Technique" by Michael Croy in the August 2003 issue of *Percussive Notes*.)

These three master classes present a rare opportunity to learn about those special sticking techniques that the professionals make look so easy. Plan on attending and keep your eyes and ears open.

PN

**BRUCE KLAUBER**  
 DRUMSET PRESENTATION  
 FRIDAY 9:00 A.M. ROOM 201

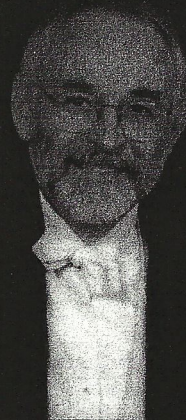
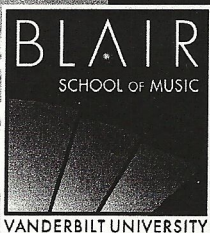
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**blair school of  
 music at vanderbilt  
 university**

**William G. Wiggins, M.M.**  
 Assistant Professor  
 of Timpani  
 Principal Timpanist,  
 Nashville Symphony  
 Orchestra

AUDITION DATES:  
 December 6, 2003  
 January 30 & 31, 2004  
 February 13 & 14  
 February 27 & 28