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Transcriber's Notes

This section contains some notes about the transcriptions in general and explains the style of transcription that I've used in this book and why. I will also describe some of the difficulties inherent in transcribing recorded material and the choices and tradeoffs that a transcriber has to make in doing so.

A quick educational aside before we go on: I would like to say that I strongly encourage you to try some transcribing of your own. It doesn't matter what instrument you play or what style of music you like, just pick one of your favorite songs or solos and give it a try! I can't tell you how much transcribing drum music has not only helped my reading skills, but has also made me listen to and think about familiar music in a whole new way. By examining another musician's performance on a technical level, you will begin to appreciate it much more, and you just might discover something new about a piece of music which you thought you knew inside and out. Now let's move on.

When I began transcribing some of the material from Mike's *Liquid Drum Theater* video in March 2000 for the Hudson Music web site, I had the advantage of having the video itself to aid me in the transcription process. Being able to hear the performance and see which drums and cymbals were being played on made the job quite a bit easier than it was for the book you have in your hands. One example of where the video helped me was in seeing the many ghost notes that Mike played on the snare drum or hi-hat during those performances. While these notes were clearly visible (and sometimes audible) on the video, they are not visible (obviously) and are frequently inaudible on the audio recordings. In Mike's style of playing, he uses these ghost notes not only to enhance the groove he's playing, but also to "fill in" the sixteenth notes between consecutive dotted eighth-note or sixteenth-note triplet phrasings. The decision to include or

not include these notes in the transcriptions when they are not clearly audible (but are almost certainly there) is a judgment call on my part as the transcriber. As a general rule, I tried to include whatever notes (ghosted or otherwise), articulations, metronome markings, dynamic markings, and the like that were essential in order to properly articulate the drum part to you as a reader.

Another one of these types of judgment calls was deciding exactly which drum or cymbal was being played on. The tom toms used during drum fills are a good example to point out. The problem is that sometimes Mike's 12" tom doesn't really sound very different from his 13" tom, especially when played very quickly as in a drum fill. The same thing applies to a lesser degree to the high and low timbalitos on Mike's LTE drum kit. Cymbals are another example, and crashes and splashes are notated on a single staff line each; no attempt has been made to try and distinguish which crash or splash was being played, only that it was in fact a crash or a splash. The china cymbals are also notated on a single staff line, but the various Max Stax pairs were usually distinguishable from one another and so were notated separately.

With all of this in mind, I will also say that every effort has been made to accurately transcribe every note of these performances. In certain areas, special computer software was used to enhance the drum parts and to slow down fast musical passages so that I could hear exactly what was happening on the drums. Every fill was tested for "playability" on my own drum kit to make sure that it made sense the way it was notated and was logistically playable. And last, but certainly not least, Mike was kind enough to take time out from his busy touring schedule to answer my many questions about various drum fills, grooves, and phrasings. I can't thank him enough for that, and the book you are reading is that much better because of it.

As far as my style of transcribing is concerned, one thing you may notice right away is that I've chosen not to notationally isolate the bass drums from the other instruments, as you may have seen done in other transcriptions. What I mean is that very often you will see the bass-drum notes written out separately on the bottom part of the musical staff, while the rest of the drums and cymbals sit up top and are not connected to the bass-drum notes. I've always found this to make things more difficult when trying to sight-read a transcription or when trying to mentally piece together where your hands and feet will strike. This results in forcing you to focus your eyes on two different things at once and to mentally overlay the two things to figure out where all the notes fall. I've chosen to combine the bass-drum parts with the rest of the drum kit so that everything is connected in one continuous stream of notes. I hope you will find this style easier to read and work with, as I do.

Another thing I felt important was to distinguish the closed hi-hat from the partially opened hi-hat sound, which is used to give the hi-hats a sustain very similar to crash cymbals. The hi-hats are usually played partially opened when both feet are on the bass-drum pedals, as they are during double-bass grooves. You can see the special note heads used for each of these distinct sounds in the

notation keys. You will also notice that the majority of the time I've indicated when the open hi-hat gets closed again by the foot. This is important to know because how quickly the hi-hat is closed after being played in the open state entirely changes the sound you get.

Metronomic settings have been included as well as standard dynamic markings wherever I felt it was important. Those of you who have access to the official guitar tab books for these songs may notice that the time signatures and phrasing differ in some places between the two books. This was done intentionally, because the purpose of this book is to show you how Mike was thinking about the music when he created his drum parts, which is not necessarily the only way to interpret the music or how other musicians in the band think about it.

I wish you the best of luck in working through the transcriptions. Remember to take it slow and work through the more difficult sections one bar at a time. Using these transcriptions in conjunction with the recordings and Mike's *Liquid Drum Theater* video will give you the maximum benefit and most enjoyment from this work. See you in Volume 2!

—Steve Ferraro

PULL ME UNDER



Well, this is where it all began. Not our career, as we had already been together for about 7 years and had one relatively unknown CD under our belt, but this is the song that introduced most of the world to me and Dream Theater.

The drumming is not too difficult—a lot of straight double-bass sixteenth-note patterns—but it is interesting to see the way that the patterns develop and build (from halftime feels to straight 2's & 4's on the snare, to straight downbeat patterns, to fast upbeat patterns). The drums are constantly developing and increasing in intensity to give the entire song a feeling of constant forward and upward motion.

I suppose one of my most well-known fills is the pattern coming out of the guitar solo which leads into the last chorus. It is the type of pattern between snare and toms and the kicks which has become a bit of a signature for me. I specifically break down this particular fill in my *Progressive Drum Concepts* video as well as discuss these general kinds of fills in my *Liquid Drum Theater* video and DVD sets.

My kit during this recording was my trusty ol' black Tama Imperialstar kit, with a set of Remo Roto Toms as the 6", 8", and 10" high toms. I was also still using Zildjian cymbals at the time.

—Mike Portnoy

Transcription Notes

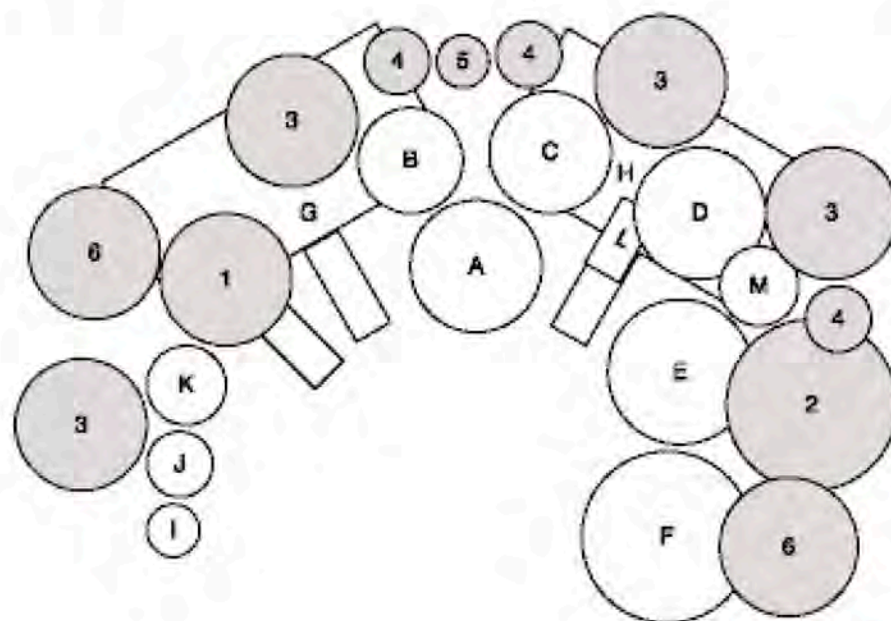
This was the first Dream Theater song I ever heard, and it's still one of my favorites. As Mike said, the drumming on this song is pretty straightforward—well, it is by Mike's standards anyway. The tempo starts out at a nice easy 102 beats per minute and stays there for the entire song, although the shifting drum patterns sometimes may make it seem like it speeds up a bit. There are only three different time signatures to deal with here as well: 4/4, 6/4, and a few bars of 7/8 thrown in for good measure.

The first thing I would like to point out is in measures 37–39, where Mike displaces the beat forward by an eighth note, which gives listeners the feeling of having the rug pulled out from under them. Then, at measure 40, everything's all right again! Next, in bars 60–63, you can see how Mike takes a very simple double-bass pattern and spices it up a bit by adding a changing ride pattern on top of it. This is also done in bars 116–123.

Also, check out the bars of 6/4 at measures 94 and 130, where the band is playing quarter notes on the downbeats: here the drums play not only with the band, but also around the band to give these bars a very cool and unique feel. Finally, at bar 167 is the infamous drum fill that MP mentions in his notes for this song.

—Steve Ferraro

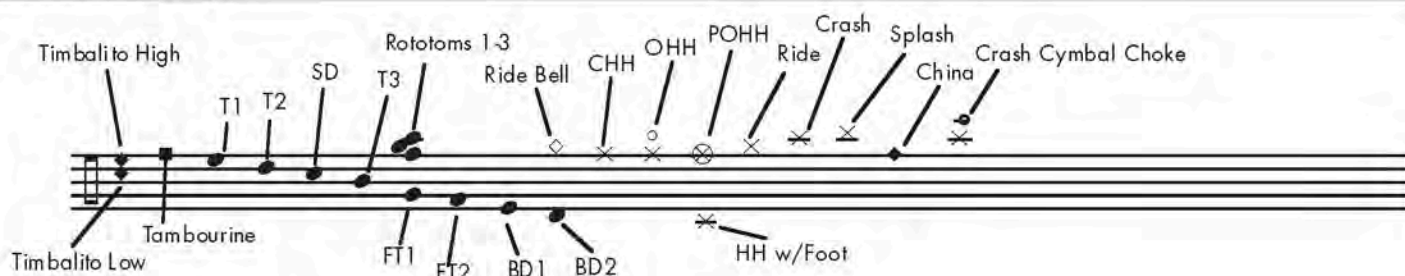
Kit Diagram



Legend:

- A. Snare
- B. Tom 1
- C. Tom 2
- D. Tom 3
- E. Floor Tom 1
- F. Floor Tom 2
- G. Left Bass Drum
- H. Right Bass Drum
- I. Rototom 1
- J. Rototom 2
- K. Rototom 3
- L. Cowbell
- M. Tambourine
- 1. Hi-hat
- 2. Ride
- 3. Crash
- 4. Splash
- 5. Bell/Bell Chime
- 6. China

Notation Key:



Abbreviations: SD - Snare Drum
T1 - Tom 1
T2 - Tom 2
T3 - Tom 3

FT1 - Floor Tom 1
FT2 - Floor Tom 2
BD1 - Bass Drum 1
BD2 - Bass Drum 2

CHH - Closed Hi-hat
OHH - Open Hi-hat
POHH - Partially Open Hi-hat

Pull Me Under

From the Dream Theater album *Images And Words*

Words and Music by James LaBrie, Kevin Moore,
John Myung, John Petrucci, and Mike Portnoy

• = 102

4

1 Fade in

8

12

16

20

24

28

32