

Chad Sexton

Style-Mixing 311's Brew

Okay, you're looking for a drummer who can play bits of rap, funk, rock, reggae, and punk, sometimes all in the same song. But where do you look? In the back of a smoky club on the wrong side of the tracks? Nope. During a tracking session in a local studio? Wrong. How about a Fourth of July parade? Ding, Ding, Ding! You got the right answer, because that's where Chad Sexton, drummer for rock/rap/funk/thrash band 311 learned his best lessons.

"That was a real learning experience," he says from a truck stop somewhere in Pennsylvania. "It helped me learn about execution, playing together in an ensemble, phrasing, and dynamics—everything that goes along with playing lines every night." Chad's phoning in from a truck stop because the band has been caught in a blizzard. They're just wrapping up a headlining club tour before they hit the road as the opening act for Lenny Kravitz's tour.

In case you're not in on the secret, 311 is a band that has spent the past five years playing as long and as often as possible. Their debut album on Capricorn Records, *Music*, hit the stands in 1993—and they, in turn, hit the road, selling out clubs and theaters along the way. They followed up *Music* with *Grassroots* in 1994 and the self-



titled 311 in 1995, defining their unique sounds along the way.

According to Sexton, the band listens to everything from reggae to rap to rock to funk, although he says with a laugh, "We're not that influenced by country music." He continues, "We all really like getting into those types of music, which makes it easier for us to want to play those types of music. The hardest part of it, though, is to make it all flow together." To accomplish that flow Sexton says he uses 8th notes as a check pattern and concentrates on laying back on the 2 and 4 count.

All in all, though, the challenge of 311's sound makes drumming fun for him. "I really love playing different types of music and different reggae beats. To me, if I was just playin' rock with quarter and 8th notes everywhere I would not enjoy drumming as much, that's for sure."

David John Farinella

News...

Adam Nussbaum has been keeping very busy over the past several months touring with various artists including Toots Thielemans, John Abercrombie, and Jerry Bergonzi.

Michael Clarke on the newest Rodney Crowell LP, *Jewel Of The South*, as well as live gigs with Crowell.

Jon Knox has recently been on the road with Audio Adrenaline and Code Of Ethics. He is about to begin touring with his regular band, Whiteheart, for their *Inside* tour.

Paul Bostaph has left Slayer to form a new trio, Truth About Seafood.

DRT touring with Mr. Mirainga (pronounced "Meraine-Gay"), supporting their debut self-titled LP.

Brian Prout on new Diamond Rio offering, *IV*.

Derek ("D-Rek") Pierce on Weapon Of Choice's second album, *Hyperspace*.

Brooks Wackerman working with Infectious Grooves and Cyco Miko.

Sue Hadjopoulos recently performed with Basia on a series of live TV dates to promote the release of the Sony disk *Basia On Broadway*.

Jay Reithel is currently on the road with the North American touring company of *The Who's Tommy*.

Giti Khalsa hits the road with Seven Mary Three once again.

Everclear's Greg Eklund

Greg Eklund says the music community in Portland, Oregon didn't immediately embrace Everclear's success.

"Portland has a very close-knit scene, people who grew up together and went to school together. Then we come around—none of us are native to Portland—and we get signed," Eklund says. "There was some resistance and resentment from other musicians. But even the people who used to resent us are coming around. When they put their personal feelings aside, they know we have incredible songs."

For his part, Eklund had no inkling of Everclear's pending deal with Capitol Records when he rounded out the trio in

June 1994. "They asked if I had any problem with living out of a van and starving," he says. "And I told them, 'Hey, that's fine with me, as long as I'm playing.' Things aren't actually that rough, but I wouldn't mind if they were. That's how much I like the songs and believe in this band."

Just a few years earlier, Eklund had shunned the idea of attending the Juilliard School of Music and instead moved from Washington D.C. to Portland. He dropped the drums for nearly two years while going to college in Eugene, Oregon. Though he had short stints in other Portland-area bands, he said Everclear offered his first real ticket back to music.

Eklund's recorded debut with Everclear, the catchy punk-meets-Mellencamp mix of *Sparkle And Fade*, has earned critical claim, along with status near the top of the alternative rock charts.

"I used to think you had to go to Juilliard to make it in music. But what it really comes down to is just playing music you believe in and catching a few breaks," he says. "It's a little ironic that we're getting attention when there are dozens of other great bands around Portland that have been at it a lot longer. But the industry is coming around to what's going on here. And if we have anything to do with that, that's great."

Matt Peiken