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application of sampling technology was stamped with a truly individual voice. And he never brought any attention to himself — always playing the magician behind the scenes! Kevin Monahan, who first brought Herb to E-mu's attention and worked with him on many projects, remembers: 'I met Herb in the early '80s when we were developing sounds for the first Emulator. He was a master of his art. I will miss him! As will all who were fortunate enough to have known him. Herb is survived by his wife, Vi, and three daughters.' ■



SUSAN JENNINGS

Ryan Lum may have tamed the breakbeat. His duo with vocalist Suzanne Perry, Love Spirals Downwards, has turned out three brilliant albums of majestic, guitar-wash dream-pop on the Projekt label, rife with heavenly ballads that conjure images of exotic cultures. But on *Flux*, the group's fourth album, Lum adds breakbeats to the mix without compromising the band's signature sound.

A follower of the dance music scene since the acid house of the late '80s, Lum had wanted to do a more electronic Love Spirals Downwards album for years, but never found the right style. "When I first heard the more ambient, ethereal breakbeat stuff, I was amazed," he says. "I haven't heard music that moved my soul like that in years." So when work began on *Flux*, the multi-instrumentalist/producer built many of the tracks on breakbeat foundations. "I'm used to making pop songs, like an A section, a B section," Lum says, "but half the songs on *Flux* don't follow that traditional pattern. It's like having all these different parts and having them make sense as they flow together."

Some beats were crafted from drum 'n' bass loops, Steinberg ReCycle, or a Roland TR-606. Also included is a heavier dose of synths — a Roland Juno-106 for bass lines and string pads and a Korg Prophecy for arpeggiated leads and washes. The mix is rounded out by Lum's expertly treated guitar strums and drones, though he admits

MASSIVE ATTACK



Meet the fathers of trip-hop: Mushroom (Andrew Vowles), 3D (Robert Del Naja), and Daddy G (Grant Marshall). Massive Attack was first formed in 1983 as a DJ/rapper collective called the Wild Bunch, and released their full-length debut, *Blue Lines* (Virgin), in 1991 — a disc that hybridized reggae and



LEFT: DONALD CHRISTIE

hip-hop, and added a dose of downtempo electronica and organic sounds. They entertained a revolving door of vocalists and musicians including Tricky, Everything But The Girl's Tracey Thorn, and Portishead's Geoff Barrow.

Massive's third album, *Mezzanine* (Virgin), is their darkest and most melancholy. It features the dreamy warbles of Cocteau Twins' Elizabeth Fraser and the soulful voice of their longtime collaborator, Jamaican-born Horace Andy. Winding down a long '98 world tour, Mushroom and live keyboardist Michael Timothy (pictured right) talked about bringing *Mezzanine* to the stage.

Stage Prepping. "With *Protection* [Massive's second album on Virgin], it was quite hard taking the album onto the stage, because it was so electronic. We did rely a lot on the turntables," admits Mushroom, "but this time around we brought live musicians in the studio first. We wrote all the stuff electronically and then got the musicians to play, then sampled the musicians' stuff, looped it up, and added it back to the electronic stuff." But aside from some dark and distorted guitar and live bass on *Mezzanine*, keyboardist Timothy still had his hands full. "When I first heard the stuff," says Timothy, "my jaw did drop, like, 'God, how am I going to do that?' We just spent a couple weeks in the studio listening and sampling the key bits, putting them together in the sequencer, trying to play the parts that are possible to play, then deleting those from the sequence and keeping the rest. A lot of juggling and fiddling had to be done."

The Curtain Rises. Onstage Timothy plays a Kurzweil PC88, Yamaha TG77, and Roland JV-2080 and JP-8000 "for analog-type textures." He couldn't get along without his Kurzweil K2500. "That does the main bulk of the work. I use it for synth-type sounds, and I've got the piano board, the contemporary block, and the orchestral block. I also use it for some string sounds, and I use it as my main sampler as well. It's a great machine, really versatile." The ringleader of Timothy's live setup is a little piece of German electronics. "I just got this great new bit of gear: the MIDItem PMM-88W. It [triggers] MIDI files and audio from hard disk. So I'm using that now to play the sequences. It's got a remote panel which sits on my keyboard. I do all the programming beforehand and I just press the footpedal in between songs. It selects my first set of patches and the first song, and when that song's finished, it automatically steps to the next sound and the next set of patches." Meanwhile, Mushroom works a pair of Technics 1200s. "It's a combination of instrumentals of the tracks that we cut into the music," he says, "like some street beat sounds, and then there's the instrumental version of the album and normal version of the album that I cut in."

In the Studio Days. Using an E-mu SP-1200, Akai MPC3000, Roland S-770, Clavia Nord Lead, Kurzweil K2500, Roland TR-808, Mutronics Mutator, Cubase VST, and Digidesign Pro Tools, Mushroom has enough gear to suffocate under. "The whole thing is, you just want to get on and make music. I try to keep things simple in the studio and not get too much into the sophistication of all of it. You can spend five hours trying to stretch a hi-hat, but I can't really get with that. I'd rather just rock a simple beat on the SP-1200 and play a grand piano alongside it." —Kylë Swenson

LOVE SPIRALS DOWNWARDS

BEAUTY AND THE BREAK

that on this album guitars were added as "an afterthought." Some of the seemingly endless sustained guitar notes were run through a Lexicon PCM 70. "It's a very thick, gorgeous reverb," he says. "The album wouldn't have been as lush without that thing." Lum also used a Sony MDMX-4 to sync Perry's vocals to his MIDI sequences.

Lum's year and a half working with his mechanized friends resulted in an album of uncommon character. Perry maintains her elegant shyness rather than adopting a diva's brash stance. And the organic feel of Lum's experienced guitar playing smooths out the gushing beats by adding mellow polyrhythmic contrast. Neither raging club music nor the subdued lull of the band's past records, *Flux* is a musical anomaly that fits with Lum's outlook on drum 'n' bass as a whole. "It used to be kind of lifeless, mindless dance music," he says. "Now people are putting other things into it: more soul, more emotion. It changed from a purely dancefloor kind of music into something more varied, more diverse. It has a life of its own."

Certain sounds or features on new equipment can inspire Lum musically. "Getting new gear — for me — is what makes records. I am just amazed at how much great stuff is out there. It's such a fun time to be making music." Visit the Love Spirals Downwards Web site at www.projekt.com for tentative tour info. —Markkus Rovito