

THE APOCALYPSE NOW SESSIONS

Rhythm Devils

PLAY RIVER MUSIC



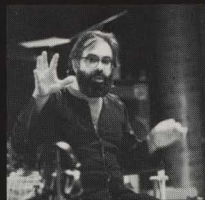
- ① Compound 3:17 ② Trenches 3:52 ③ Street Gang 2:14
 ④ The Beast 4:12 ⑤ Steps 2:26 ⑥ Tar 1:38 ⑦ Lance 2:50
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 ⑪ Napalm For Breakfast 3:25

All music written by the Rhythm Devils and published by 360° Productions—ASCAP

In search of the missing percussive underscore for the soundtrack to "Apocalypse Now," Francis Coppola attended a Grateful Dead concert at the invitation of Bill Graham, and found inspiration in the music of drummers Mickey Hart and Billy Kreutzmann. This meeting of musicians and filmmaker provided the final link for Coppola's musical accompaniment to his cinematic vision of the Apocalypse.

Coppola wanted a performance in which the very breath of war permeated every gesture, every moment. For Mickey this required playing directly to the images of the film as a whole, not broken up into isolated scenes, moving continuously along with the film, attempting an aesthetic fusion of the visions of eye and ear.

It takes a major film project like "Apocalypse Now," to make music of this sort possible. For to create anything radically new or to recreate something ancient is both time-consuming and expensive.



Mickey's extensive collection of percussion instruments was added to by instrument builders Jim Loveless and Gian-Carlo Coppola, updating ancient designs with modern materials and some electronic processing. To simulate the awesome sound of napalm (which became a symbolic sound underpinning much of the film) we used "The Beam," a long aluminum I-beam with twelve bass piano strings stretched along its length; the vibration of the strings is sensed by a very large magnetic pickup. The sound is amplified through Meyers speakers and sub-woofers, whose loudness can be varied with a foot-pedal allowing a controlled degree of acoustic feedback.

The participating musicians all brought their personal collections of instruments, resulting in a unique and massive assemblage of possible sound colors. In a very large studio this jungle of percussion was carefully arranged in maze-like pathways. The instruments were grouped according to sound color: glass, wood, stone, metal, and spaced so quiet instruments could be heard even if played at the same time as louder ones. It was a sound-garden with paths for the musicians to move through, changing instruments whenever they wished: every mallet, every shaker, every drum in reach as a natural tool for instantly expressing our gut reactions to the flow of imagery.





Mickey and Billy invited several colleagues to join the Rhythm Devils for these sessions. While the film was screened, they moved through this battery of instruments and played what they felt. As Mickey explains it, "We were asked to play 'the jungle river'. All movement in the jungle is either towards food or away from danger. The jungle itself is a constant killing ground, and we were forced by the story to go to war. As musicians, our war didn't have to be savage or frenzied, but there was no way that this sound could turn out 'pretty'. In the jungle percussion is concussion, and one's survival depends upon the accuracy of his blow." These sessions were sufficiently intense, however, that many instruments were destroyed through impassioned playing.

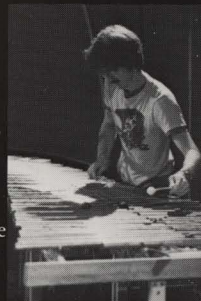
During the recording of this performance, Coppola explained to the musicians that their task was to conjure music not only relevant to Vietnam in the 60's, but which also extended back to the first man at the origins of existence. The essence of the film is the primal myth of the King being killed and his assassin taking his place as the new King. The assignment of the Rhythm Devils was to voyage upriver to the "Heart of Darkness," and sound out the Apocalypse. The music on this album is composed of excerpts from our playing a single time through the film, though not necessarily arranged in the original order.



This re-mix using state-of-the-art digital processing permits a dynamic range and spatial quality that was impossible to achieve in the original 1980 mix. Taking advantage of the extended time available on modern compact discs and audio cassettes, we have also added material from the original sessions omitted from the 1980 L. P. version.

Tech Notes

Various high-quality condenser and dynamic microphones were arranged throughout the studio floor in stereo pairs so that they overlapped each other with phase-coherent imaging. This allowed the musicians to move freely through the space. Certain instruments with particularly delicate sounds were individually close-miked. The Neve A-4302 mixing console routed these tracks to a Studer A-80 16-track recorder, with no noise reduction or equalization. The re-mix was accomplished at Studio X, Petaluma, CA, in December 1988 with the same Neve board and Studer recorder, and then mixed down to a Sony R-DAT digital stereo recorder for transfer to a Sony PCM 1630. It was then transferred to another 1630 "D" to "D" through a Neve Digital Transfer Console for final mastering to compact disc and audio cassette. Recording and re-mixing were both monitored with Meyers 833 Studio Monitors and sub-woofers.



The Apocalypse Now Sessions
The Rhythm Devils Play River Music

Produced by: Mickey Hart

Associate Producer: Gian-Carlo Coppola

Production Assistance: Creek Hart

Composed by: Mickey Hart, Michael Hinton, Airto Moreira
The Rhythm Devils

Mickey Hart, Billy Kreutzmann, Airto Moreira,

Michael Hinton, Jim Loveless, Greg Errico,

Jordan Amarantha, Flora Purim, Phil Lesh

Engineered by: Brett Cohen, Betty Cantor-Jackson, Dan Healy

Assistant Engineers: John Cutler, Bob Mathews

CD Mastering: Joe Gastwirt

Instrument Design and Manufacture:

Jim Loveless (Bird Percussion);

Ramrod (G.D. Productions); Willy John Cashman

and Danny Orlando (F.M. Productions)

Additional Instruments: Zildjian Cymbal Co., Remo, Inc.

Cover Art: Stanley Mouse

Photography: John Werner, Steve Schneider, Snooky Flowers

Package Design: Steven Jurgensmeyer

Coordination: Jerilyn Brandelius, Alan Trist

Liaison: Rock Scully

Protocol: Jeffrey Boden

Support: John Scher, Bill Graham

Recorded at Club Front, San Rafael, CA (April 1979)

Additional Recording at The Barn, Novato, CA (March 1980)

Crew:

Ramrod, Hagen, Steve Parrish, Billy Candelario, Bob

Nichols, Willy Legate, Debbie Eisenberg, David Faust

Series Ethnomusicology Consultant:

Fredric Lieberman, Ph.D.

Special Thanks to Francis Coppola for his inspiration



THE
WORLD


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