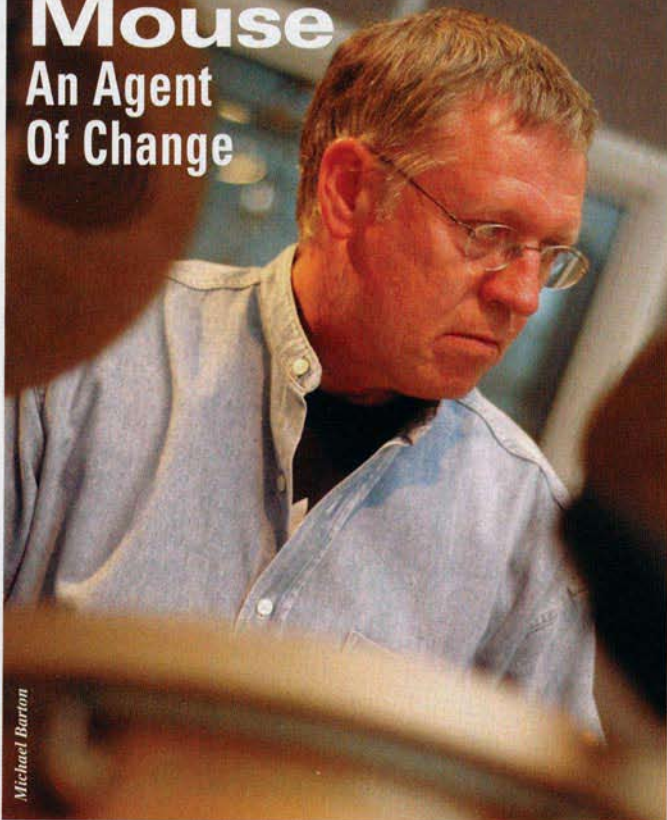


VETERAN JAZZER

Jack Mouse

An Agent Of Change



Michael Barton

On singer Janice Borla's recent album, *Agents Of Change*, drummer Jack Mouse isn't relegated to keeping time. He also enjoys a lot of freedom to color the songs. "That is a luxury," Mouse says. "Of course, I had a lot of input because Janice is my wife. And I was very comfortable working with the other musicians on the album. Pianist Dan Haerle, bassist Bob Bowman, and I have been playing together off and on since 1975, so there's a lot of trust there."

One of the notable cuts on the album is the Abbey Lincoln tune "Throw It Away," which features just drums and vocals on the first chorus. "Drums and vocals were the first two instruments, so there is a hookup that goes way back in history," Jack says. "That little stick-and-rim thing I do developed in the studio. We had been performing it live with me playing the drums with my hands, but when we did a couple of takes, it didn't sound as good as I thought it would. So I came up with this other idea, which was inspired by the little drum march on 'Concierto de Aranjuez' on Miles Davis's *Sketches Of Spain* album."

Jack also gets the spotlight at the beginning of Joe Lovano's tune "Blackwell's Message." "I've always been enamored of Ed Blackwell's playing," Jack says. "Every time we do that tune, we do it differently. The only time I ever played the intro like that was on the album, but I am very pleased with the way it came out."

The Chicago-based drummer's résumé includes work with Stan Kenton, Clark Terry, Herb Ellis, Joe Williams, Randy Brecker, Dianne Reeves, Bob Mintzer, and numerous others. To accommodate a variety of artists and styles, Mouse prides himself on being able to get different sounds for different tunes. "That came about when I moved to Chicago," he explains. "Chicago is a great jazz town, but the busiest guys are the ones who can play anything with anybody, anytime, anyplace."

"When I first moved to Chicago, the big showrooms were still open. I'd play with singers who might start out with a big band number, and the next tune might be funk. So by loosening a couple of lugs, I could get that 'wet' rock sound. People used to love the fact that I could do that, but it's no big deal. You can do a lot with a drumkey. My inspiration for that was Shelly Manne, who could get more sounds out of a four-piece drumkit than anybody."

Rick Mattingly