



Curt On Call: Bisquera's beats power a range of great '90s albums

James Cumpsy

# STX OF THE BEST

DRUMMERS PICK THEIR DEFINING RECORDS

His time, groove and positive attitude are just a few of the reasons why **CURT BISQUERA** is one of America's most sought-after session drummers. He guides Richard Mangicaro through his finest cuts

## BONNIE RAITT LUCK OF THE DRAW (1991)

'Something To Talk About', a hit single from this album, was Curt's introduction to the Los Angeles recording scene. He was introduced to producer Don Was by the keyboard player for Was (Not Was), Jamie Muhoberac



"I was called in after they had worked on the track for a while and still weren't getting the feel they wanted. I did a couple of takes and we were done... it just fell

into place. From there, I played various shows with Was (Not Was) when they had a hit single called 'Walk The Dinosaur'. To this day, I still work on Don's sessions. It's been a great relationship. 'Something To Talk About' became a hit single, selling over seven million copies worldwide and also winning Bonnie the Grammy for Best Pop Vocal Performance."

## SEAL SEAL (1991)

Produced by Trevor Horn, Seal's debut record featured the single 'Crazy', which reached No 1 worldwide. Curt played on and did the drum programming for all the album's tracks



"I believe the combination of programming and live drumming gave that record its unique, punchy and highly danceable sound. A lot of what you hear on that album is me playing my parts on

the 'Drum Kat', the electronic tool of that day. What people today may not know is that, back then, what is now called Pro-Tools was called Sound-Tools, stereo audio files manipulated by computer. Trevor Horn was on the cutting-edge of the technology. After we finished the recording, I ended up playing a few shows with Seal but never actually toured, since I got busy in town with more recording projects."

# SIX OF THE BEST

## BOZ SCAGGS

### FADE INTO LIGHT (1992)

Jeff Porcaro gave Curt the call to assemble a band for this album from American blues-rocker Scaggs. It was to be the breakthrough record for Porcaro as a producer but, tragically, he passed away in August of that year



"This project is closest to my heart. This being one of Jeff's few producing efforts, I was honored that he asked me. We were only halfway through the project when Jeff passed away. It was just

so devastating for all of us. When I'm asked what it was like working with Jeff, it was - with his great musical ear and his production choices from a drummer's perspective - a dream. Really. He had the ability to specifically direct what he wanted, while allowing me the freedom to do what I wanted. Think about that - that's a fine line to be able to do that. That takes a gift. I felt most free when I had Jeff producing."

## MICK JAGGER

### WANDERING SPIRIT (1993)

Produced by Rick Rubin, Mick Jagger's third solo album was Curt's first time working with Rubin, and the two continue to work together regularly on further musical projects



"This one was a 'cattle-call' audition, and I knew quite a few of the other guys who were trying out. Not to mention any names, but there were some heavy cats. I was asked what I wanted to

play and, knowing that Mick was a James Brown fan, I called 'Cold Sweat'.

"After a 10-minute jam (amazing, by the way) Mick said, 'You got the gig!' The recording process lasted about a month, recording basically live in the studio with Mick singing scratch tracks.

"After finishing the record, we did a few highly visible appearances, including 'Saturday Night Live'



**"He allowed us to bring to the table what we do as individual artists — a mark of a great leader"**

**Curt on working with Elton John**

James Cumiskey

and a few other dates. Mick is a real gentleman, a true professional and - what can I say? - a legend. It was a pleasure to work with him."

## TOM PETTY

### SHE'S THE ONE (SOUNDTRACK) (1996)

Tom Petty's drummer Steve Ferrone chose to tour with Italian star Eros Ramazzotti in 1996, giving Curt the chance to work with Petty. In a strange twist of fate, 10 years later Curt toured extensively with Ramazzotti himself! Again, this album was produced by Rick Rubin



"I worked with Tom Petty on this, a soundtrack album, while simultaneously working on Johnny Cash's album, *Cash*, and also on *Go Cat Go* from Carl Perkins. '96

was busy for me, and to work with these three legends was a real thrill [...] Following the recording, we did various live dates and TV appearances, giving me a chance to be a Heartbreaker for a while.

"Playing with that band was some of the most enjoyable live performing I've done... just such great songs."

## ELTON JOHN

### GREATEST HITS — ONE NIGHT ONLY (2000)

Prior to this project, Curt had played on Elton's *Road To Eldorado* and *Duets* albums and, when Elton decided to record the live DVD concert, he wanted Curt to work with Nigel Olsson



"I grew up learning all of Nigel's parts, so this was a dream come true for me! He was such a groove to play with and we complemented each other really well.

"Both our shows at New York's Madison Square Garden were recorded top to bottom, and the final outcome featured the best of those nights. Throughout the shows, Elton was just fantastic to play with. He's a brilliant musician. He allowed us to bring to the table what we do as individual artists - a mark of a great leader." ■