

## WILL LEE'S PARTY FUNKHOUSE

Will Lee's loft in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood is exactly what you'd expect from a well-heeled session ace who has logged thousands of hours performing on hit records, TV shows, and jingles. His-and-hers computer stations line one wall across from a row of large windows revealing a penthouse view of the Big Apple. An autographed John Lennon lithograph hangs in the bedroom, a gift from Paul Shaffer. But the real action takes place in Will's home studio, which occupies a soundproof 10x10 room. Beatle memorabilia fills the space, as well as Will's favorite gear.

"I love the M-Audio FireWire 410," Will says. "It's a recording interface; you can plug in mics, instruments, basses. I also love the Radial Tonebone Bassbone. It lets you really crank the mids. I also use it as a direct box in the studio and live. The Sadowsky 4-strings that I tend to play the most have tons of highs and lows, but they are missing this little midrange area. I accentuate and bring that back out again with the Tonebone."

Will Lee's axes are as varied as his workload. The Sadowsky is his current workhorse; he also uses a fretless 1963 Fender Precision and a Line 6 Variax 700. Will uses both fingers and picks when he plays, as he did in a recent Fab Faux New Jersey performance through a mock Vox amp/cab combination.

"The Line 6 Variax is really cool for *Letterman* and in the studio," he explains. "It gives me so many sounds, including an upright. It has two Precision Basses modeled from different years, as well as four Jazz Basses, and lots more. And I also dig this Music Man 4-String Bongo Bass. It has all these frequencies that really cut through. It is high-tech sounding but also really warm."

"I use a custom Ampeg amp for *Letterman*," he continues. "I have an Ampeg SVT-5 Pro off the set which is powering this cabinet that looks like an Ampeg B15 but is really a 4x10 cabinet. The SVT-5 Pro sounds so good through it that I haven't even tried another head yet."

## STAYIN' PUMPED

"At times, the *Letterman* gig is too easy—the audience is just as fascinated with seeing the cue-card guy as they are the band. That is why I have to go out and get my ass kicked musically on a regular basis.

And Paul Shaffer knows to let me do other gigs so I can continue to bring what I do to the party. He never asks me to play any part on the theme, so I play it differently every night. I have played it 1,015 different ways so far."

Will's most celebrated "other gig" of late is with his longtime cover band, the Fab Faux. There may be Beatles cover bands that look more like the Beatles, and there may even be a band with vocals that more closely resemble the golden throats of John, Paul, and George. But there is no band on the planet that sounds more like the Fab Four than the Fab Faux. Using period instrumentation (Ricks galore, 1963 Ludwigs, Vox amps), the Fab Faux take it a step further. Remember the lush string parts of "She's Leaving Home"? These guys carry a harp player and full string section just for that song. Ditto for "Lady Madonna"

# HAVE GEAR, WILL PLAY

**BASSES:** Sadowsky 5-string and 4-string Jazz, Pedulla 4-string and 5-string fretless Buzz, fretless 1963 Fender Precision, Ernie Ball Music Man Bongo, Sixties Hofner, Rickenbacker 4003, Line 6 Variax Bass 700

**AMPS:** Walter Woods Electracoustic Hi-Power amp, Vox head/cab combo housing Hartke 4000 electronics and 2x12 cab designed by EARS Expert Audio and Repair Service (with Fab Faux), Ampeg SVT-5 Pro/4x10 cab (on *Letterman*)

**STRINGS:** Custom Will Lee Dean Markley SR2000: .047, .067, .087, .107, .127

**EFFECTS:** Mike Ferrante effects box, T.C. Electronic Stereo Chorus/Flanger, Danelectro Wasabi AD-1 Forward-Reverse Delay, Voodoo Lab Pedal Power, Boss DD-3 Digital Delay pedal, Boss Harmonist HR-2, DigiTech Whammy 2, EBS OctaBass Bass Octave pedal, Electro-Harmonix POG Polyphonic Octave Generator, Boss Tuner TU-2, DOD VFX25B Envelope Filter pedal, Boss Bass Chorus CEB-3

**MISCELLANEOUS:** Radial Tonebone Bassbone, Hipshot D Tuner, Spectraflex Braided Cables, 1979 Yamaha WXY 10R Diversity wireless receiver