The One Major Fault of the Glyn Johns Technique that No One Talks About

What is the Glyn Johns Technique?

Glyn Johns, who recorded Led Zeppelin, had just finished up recording an acoustic guitar track when he placed the microphone that was he was using over by John Bonham’s right shoulder. He already had a mono overhead placed above the kit, and the old acoustic guitar microphone was still at its lower height. Without realizing it the side microphone was coming in through the mixing board panned hard to one side, while the mono overhead was panned in the center. He realized it had a cool sound, and thus the “Glyn Johns Technique” was born.

What is the fault of this technique?

The height of the side microphone can line up with a radiation pattern of the cymbals. When a cymbal by the side microphone is struck, the cymbal rocks, creating a momentary dip in the sound just as the edge of the cymbal points directly at the microphone.

Why should we care about radiation pattern of the cymbals?

When mixing the side microphone with the center overhead microphone, you will get a difference in loudness. It will appear that cymbal is moving across the stereo image because one microphone is receiving very little sound, and the other (mono overhead up top) is receiving very even sound.

How do I prevent this cymbal effect from happening?

The height of the side microphone can be raised up so that the edge of the cymbal can not point directly at the microphone when it swings. You could also raise the cymbals and lower the mic which will achieve the same effect, and get that mic close to the floor tom.

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