

# Percussive Notes

The journal of the Percussive Arts Society • Vol. 37, No. 2 • April 1999

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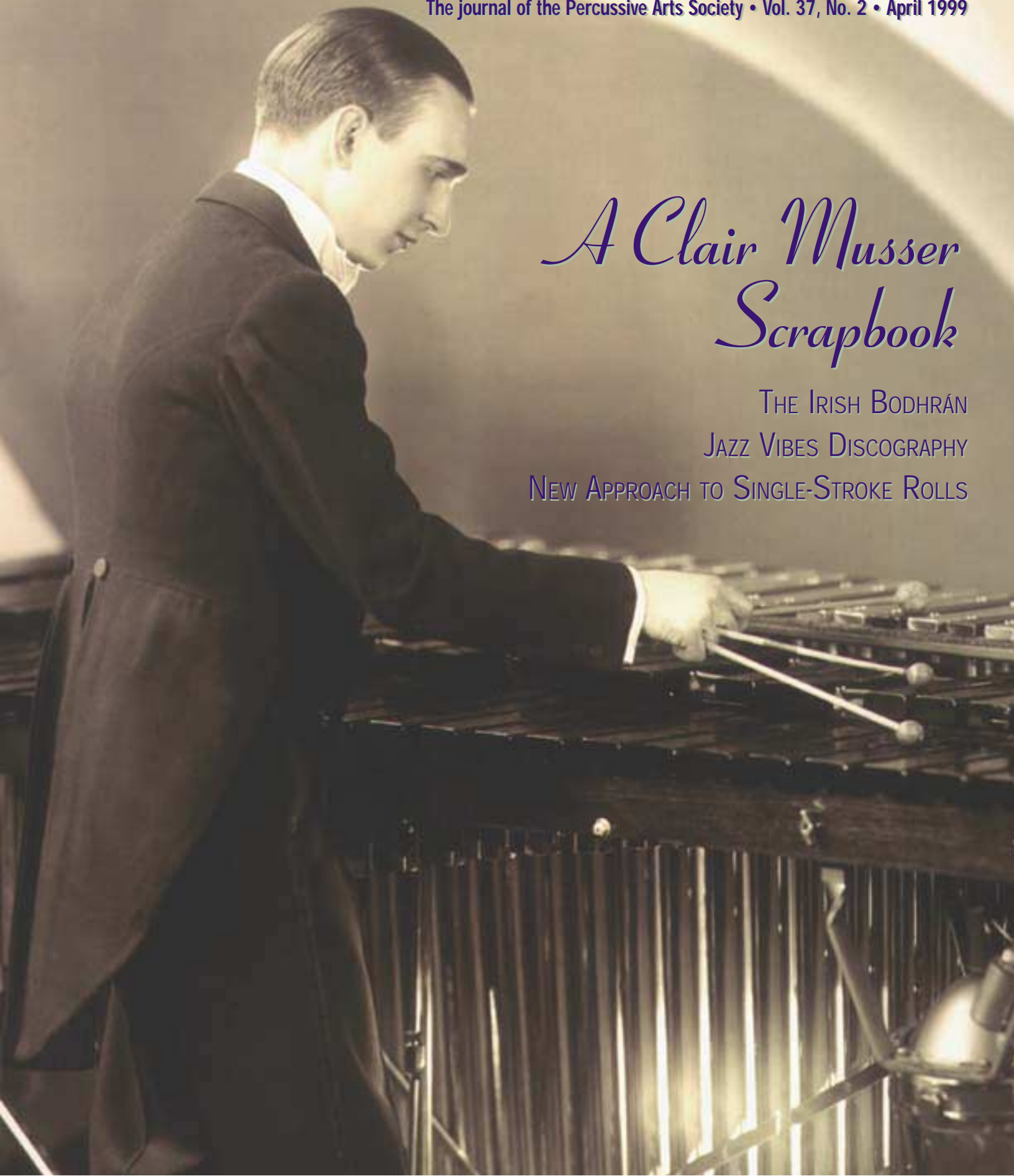
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## *A Clair Musser Scrapbook*

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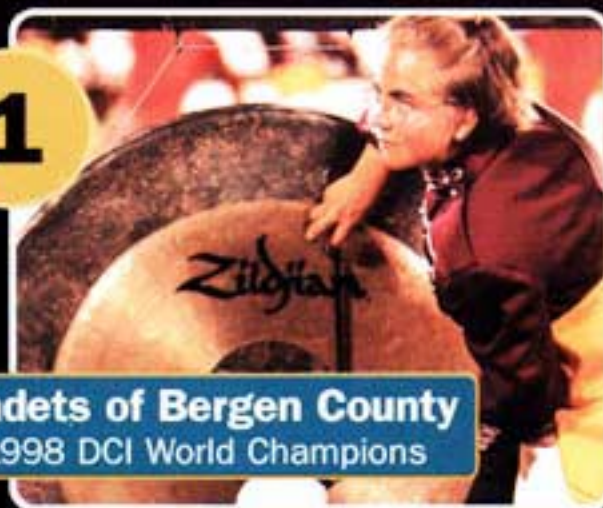


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(year specifies date of induction)

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<b>Henry Adler, 1988</b>
<b>Frank Arsenault, 1975</b>
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<b>Louis Bellson, 1978</b>
<b>James Blades, 1975</b>
<b>Carroll Bratman, 1984</b>
<b>Harry Breuer, 1980</b>
<b>Gary Burton, 1988</b>
<b>John Cage, 1982</b>
<b>Jim Chapin, 1995</b>
<b>Vida Chenoweth, 1994</b>
<b>Bobby Christian, 1989</b>
<b>Michael Colgrass, 1987</b>
<b>Alan Dawson, 1996</b>
<b>Cloyd Duff, 1977</b>
<b>Vic Firth, 1995</b>
<b>Alfred Friese, 1978</b>
<b>George Gaber, 1995</b>
<b>Billy Gladstone, 1978</b>
<b>Morris Goldenberg, 1974</b>
<b>Saul Goodman, 1972</b>
<b>George Hamilton Green, 1983</b>
<b>Lionel Hampton, 1984</b>
<b>Haskell Harr, 1972</b>
<b>Lou Harrison, 1985</b>
<b>Roy Haynes, 1998</b>
<b>Sammy Herman, 1994</b>
<b>Fred D. Hinger, 1986</b>
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<b>Jo Jones, 1990</b>
<b>Roy Knapp, 1972</b>
<b>William Kraft, 1990</b>
<b>Gene Krupa, 1975</b>
<b>Alexander Lepak, 1997</b>
<b>Maurice Lishon, 1989</b>
<b>William F. Ludwig II, 1993</b>
<b>William F. Ludwig, Sr., 1972</b>
<b>Shelly Manne, 1997</b>
<b>Joe Morello, 1993</b>
<b>Clair Musser, 1975</b>
<b>John Noonan, 1972</b>
<b>Red Norvo, 1992</b>
<b>Charles Owen, 1981</b>
<b>Harry Partch, 1974</b>
<b>Paul Price, 1975</b>
<b>Buddy Rich, 1986</b>
<b>Emil Richards, 1994</b>
<b>Max Roach, 1982</b>
<b>James Salmon, 1974</b>
<b>Murray Spivack, 1991</b>
<b>George L. Stone, 1997</b>
<b>William Street, 1976</b>
<b>Edgard Varèse, 1980</b>
<b>William "Chick" Webb, 1985</b>
<b>Charley Wilcoxon, 1981</b>
<b>Tony Williams, 1997</b>
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*The Percussive Arts Society (PAS®) is a not-for-profit service organization. Its purpose is educational, promoting drums and percussion through a viable network of performers, teachers, students, enthusiasts and sustaining members. PAS accomplishes its goals through publications, a worldwide network of chapters, the World Percussion Network (WPN®), the Percussive Arts Society International Headquarters/Museum and the annual Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC®).*



## It's Your Board

BY ROBERT BREITHAUPT

In this issue of *Percussive Notes* you will see a very important notification: the call for nominations for the PAS Board of Directors. Unlike boards of many organizations or corporations, the PAS Board of Directors reflects your direction as members. Membership on the Board is not an "appointment" and, most importantly, not a paid position. The nominations come directly from the membership of PAS, and then are passed to a nominating committee comprising members of the Executive Committee and the current PAS Board of Directors.

I am proud of the composition of the current Board of Directors, and appreciate the effort of these individuals who represent performance, education, and industry. All of these individuals were nominated by fellow percussionists who felt that their expertise or perspective

would be valuable for the collective good of the society.

Now it is time to repeat this process, and I call upon all members of PAS to think about who would best represent you as board members. The process is clear and fair, but requires your participation.

In other news, we are pleased to announce that PASIC 2001 will return to Nashville, Tennessee. This will be the third time PASIC has been in Nashville, and I am pleased to say that we will have the entire Nashville Convention Center at our disposal to accommodate what will certainly be a large crowd.

On a final note, plans are moving forward for a great PASIC '99 in Columbus. Mark your calendars now!

<b>BOARD NOMINATIONS DEADLINE SET</b>	<p>The deadline for nominations for members to the 2000 PAS Board of Directors is May 1. All PAS members are eligible for nomination. Self nominations are acceptable. Nominations must be made in writing and should include nominee's name, address, telephone number, fax number (if available) and e-mail address if available.</p> <p>In September, official ballots will be included in <i>Percussion News</i> and sent to all PAS members. All votes must be received on official ballots at the PAS office by December 1. The final results of the election will be published in the February 2000 issue of <i>Percussive Notes</i>.</p> <p>Send letters of nomination to PAS, Board of Directors Nominations, 701 NW Ferris Ave., Lawton, OK 73507-5442, or fax to (580) 353-1456.</p>
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## REBOUNDS

### GIVING CREDIT WHERE DUE

I read with interest and enthusiasm Darren Duerden's article "Unaccompanied Marimba Literature of David Maslanka" (June, 1998). It is heartening to see *Percussive Notes* recognizing someone like David, who has contributed greatly to our literature. While I think the magazine is better than ever, I would like to read more articles devoted to our important percussive composers. However, it is important for these articles to be complete and accurate—otherwise they may do the percussive arts a disservice.

One of the stated purposes of the article was "to provide some background on these works..." Although I am the publisher of both "Variations on Lost Love" and "My Lady White," and the marimbist who performed the world premiere of "Variations," I was not contacted nor given a chance to comment on the accuracy of the article. Had I been given the opportunity, I would have pointed out an important omission.

While Darren gives credit to the New York State Music Teachers Association for the commissioning of "Variations," he fails to document the far more important and interesting circumstances surrounding the commissioning of "My Lady White." After hearing me perform "Variations on Lost Love" at the 1978 PASIC in Tempe, Arizona, Harvey Vogel of Lone Star Percussion commissioned Maslanka to write a less difficult work for his daughter, Lauren. "My Lady White" was the happy result. Harvey went on to participate in the financial backing of Maslanka's "Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble."

Commissioning of works is vital for our future, but few among us "put our money where our mouths are" and actually spend our hard-earned dollars to sponsor the creation of new music for percussion. Harvey Vogel has done so, not just once, but repeatedly. For instance, in addition to the two Maslanka works mentioned above, I know he commissioned marimba music from Raymond Helble.

Not to take away anything from the New York State Music Educator's Association, but "Variations" is probably the

only piece of marimba music that organization has commissioned in the last 25 years. "Serial patrons" such as Harvey Vogel are rare in the field of music, and rarer still in the field of *percussion music*! They deserve our special thanks and respect. Ignoring Harvey Vogel's important and direct contribution in *Percussive Notes* risks alienating him and other patrons of the arts like him. It is not hard to see how a well-intentioned but incomplete article, like the one cited above, could dampen a patron's spirit of generosity.

LEIGH HOWARD STEVENS

#### ELGAR'S COINS

I have just read the article "Interpreting Elgar's 'Enigma Variations'" by Andrew P. Simco and offer my solution on how to play the timpani roll from rehearsal number 56 of the Troyte. While I appreciate the apparent physical difficulties of moving from coins to sticks, this piece should be approached with the intention of playing the written part if at all possible.

My solution is to hold sticks and coins, the latter being drilled and fixed with very light twine, or elastic thread, attached to a suitable anchorage on the person. At the appropriate moment the coins are released, quietly to the safety of the body, and playing is continued with sticks without compromise to the written part.

This remedy only takes a very short time to get comfortable with and is, I think, one of the simplest solutions available, given these particular circumstances.

DAVE ENGLISH  
Northern Ireland

#### PASIC PALS

I had to write to say a huge "thank you" to all the incredibly helpful and friendly people we met on our recent trip to PASIC '98 in Orlando. As a new company and first-time exhibitors at PASIC we were a little nervous as to how we would be received, but I can honestly say that the manufacturing and playing community welcomed us with open arms.

To give one small illustration, a guy

from the Vic Firth booth noticed that our mallets were coming apart, and without being asked offered us a new pair, which I gratefully accepted. When I attempted to return them at the end of the show he very kindly refused my offer and gave me the mallets. I didn't even get his name, but if he's reading this, then thank you again.

Mike Balter also gave us mallets and good advice, and I must also mention Dave Murphy from D.W. Drums, John Mark Piper, and Chris Waldron from Thoroughbred Music in Orlando whose help, advice, and introductions were invaluable. There were many others too numerous to mention.

Having made a bunch of new friends and given ourselves a mountain of new work to do we are confident that 1999 will see us consolidate on our first visit to the U.S., and we look forward very much to seeing everyone again at PASIC '99 in Columbus, Ohio.

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## Making PASIC Possible

BY JIM RUPP

As I'm writing this, it's early February, and I've just returned from the yearly Los Angeles Winter NAMM Show. At this trade show, musical instrument manufacturers display their products for retailers to see and order. This is a huge trade show that takes up all of the Los Angeles convention center. As I saw many of my friends at the various percussion companies large and small, it was great to hear their excitement about the upcoming PASIC in Columbus. It is also very impressive to see how they cooperate to help make every PASIC happen.

These companies provide most of the clinicians for our conventions, and they also fund many of the large concerts. They also loan many instruments from their exhibits for concerts and clinics. It is their attendance at PASIC, along with their booth-rental fees and their funding of various concerts and clinics, that makes PASIC possible. It is very encouraging to see their commitment to the PAS and percussion education, and also very encouraging to see how they are all eager to come back to Columbus. This is a very sincere thank-you to all the companies whose contributions and help make PASIC happen.

Most of the manufactures are delighted

to come back to Columbus because the last PASIC here in 1993 was a watershed as far as attendance and excitement. Columbus is within driving distance (600 miles) of two-thirds of the population of the United States. It is also the second least-expensive city in the country to fly in and out of. So whether you live close enough to drive to Columbus this fall, or you want to fly from the West Coast, it should be a breeze to get here. Once you arrive, we offer a great convention facility, close-by hotels, and a town teaming with great restaurants and nightlife.

So when you get to Columbus this coming October, enjoy the artists, concerts and clinics, thank the many volunteers and companies who make it all possible, and be sure to have a great time.

For your convenience you will find a PASIC '99 registration and hotel reservation form on pages 26 and 27.

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# Clair Omar Musser

October 14, 1901 — November 7, 1998



*As a tribute to the single most influential marimbist, marimba composer, and marimba designer in the history of the instrument, we present a "scrapbook" of material from Musser's personal collection of photos and mementos, generously donated to the Percussive Arts Society Museum by Musser's long-time friend Vera Daehlin. We begin with an article that Musser hand-wrote about himself, apparently to promote an upcoming concert in Arizona in the 1950s.*

## Clair Omar Musser

### *Internationally Celebrated Maestro*

This photo, taken in the Salle Rameau, Paris, portrays Musser with his Wagnerian score before rehearsals began for the French Movie which featured the Imperial Marimba Sym-

phony Orchestra under his baton.

His contemplative posture reflected his momentary thoughts...as he had just been asked by the movie director, "What strokes of fate ever appeared to make him a famous Marimba Orchestra Maestro?"

Upon the director's sincerity and true interest, Musser contemplated a moment and then explained that his "life's book" might infer six genie chapters were responsible for this unprecedented status.

Chapter one — Musser was in 5th grade Lincoln School (Pa) with his violin for his Xmas program participation.

A prominent school director, Mr. Ammon Bucher, had just purchased an Edison phonograph and loaned the instrument to the program. His (five) "cylinder recordings" featured Violin selections, Enrico Caruso, Xmas music and his last number was

announced as "The United States Marine Band" featuring Thomas Mills playing "Four Little Black Berries" (solo) on the Xylophone.

This selection caused a virtual uproar. The people whistled, screamed, applauded and yelled and asked for the number to be repeated. Mr. Bucher played it again and the acclaim was more ecstatic than before.

Young Musser was awe-struck.

He bashfully went to Bucher and asked to see the recording that caused so much excitement. When he read that soloist Mills played a Xylophone, he was stunned. What kind of an instrument could possibly be identified with such a word beginning with Xy etc.

He went to the back of the school-room and paged the large Webster dictionary...Xyl etc. To his amazement, there it was — a picture of a Xylophone, mallets and description.

He decided it would be fun to use the mallets and "beat out" tunes... especially after having heard the audience screaming their love for this instrument which was new to him.

He begged his Philadelphia Aunt to get this instrument, and in short order, he was in possession of a three octave Deagan Xylophone and taking lessons from Permin Burger in Lancaster, Pa.

His teacher told him that the greatest xylophonist in the entire world was George Hamilton Green. Young Musser acquired a number of Victor Recordings by Green — and secretly determined to eclipse this celebrated virtuoso some day in the future.

By the time he had learned several Overtures and Semi Classics and performed a number of recitals, Chapter Two loomed up in this young percussionist's life.

Like a Rainbow in the Sky, the famous Big Band under the baton of Earl Fuller arrived in Lancaster to perform a concert at the Brunswick Hotel. This de Luxe Band was heralded as number 1 — (direct from New York) and featured a large Super Deagan Marimba-Xylophone No. 4726, played by Abraham Hildebrand — introduced as the leading marimba soloist of the world. Hildebrand featured 4 mallet arrangements accompanied by this great 18 piece Swing Band...and young Musser was utterly floored.

Upon his acquaintance and conversations with the Marimbist, he inquired where he ever learned to play like that. Hildebrand promptly replied that he had studied in Wash. D.C. with the unquestionably world's greatest teacher — Philip Rosenweig. Rosenweig was from Warsaw and had earlier taught Dulcimer and Cymbalon in Poland and Paris before settling in America and dedicating his life to the large 4 1/2 Octave Marimba-Xylophone which Deagan had just introduced to the Music World.

Chapter Three — young Musser naturally had to go to Washington and Baltimore to study with Rosenweig. Also, his precious Aunt came to his aid and presented him with a de Luxe 4 1/2 Octave #4726

Deagan Marimba.

Chapter Four — Musser, now considered a well-trained recitalist and heralded a virtuoso by many commentators, secured New York City management and toured the U.S., Canada and Europe, first playing the large theatres, a Warner Bros. Vitaphone Film, and eventually guest appearances with Symphony Orchestras performing concerti by the great Masters — Bach, Chopin, Mendelssohn and Paganini.

Chapter Five — Musser was appearing in Chicago as soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Conductor Frederick Stock.

Thru a social affair, he met Vice president Charles Dawes and his brother Rufus who had just been elected president of the Century of Progress Committee.

At a dinner in Winnetka, Illinois, attended by the officers of the forthcoming Century of Progress Exposition, Musser heard the earnest expressions of Dawes and his associates explaining how deeply they would like to present something NEW and musically epochal for this Worlds Fair.

Musser remembered how, as a very young lad, his father had raved about the Marimba Orchestra which was featured in 1915 at the San Francisco World's Fair. He promptly joined in the discussions and proposed that the committee authorize the sponsorship of a 100 piece Marimba Symphony Orchestra for the Century of Progress Exposition. Musser agreed to design a Special Super De Luxe "Century of Progress Model Marimba," train all the orchestra members, write and conduct the music.

The pages of History report the unprecedented success of this Orchestra and the sign posts to Chapter Six.

Chapter Six found Musser designing a King George Marimba for the famous 100 piece Marimba Symphony Orchestra that toured Europe with phenomenal musical success. Gold medals, awards, Citations and wildest musical acclaim was their reward before returning to New York's Carnegie Hall and the American ac-

colades.

Other Marimba ensemble groups and orchestras under the magical baton of this dedicated Marimba Maestro include the spectacular 25 piece "All Girl" Marimba Orchestra Musser produced for Paramount Pictures and their opening performance at the Oriental Theatre Chicago Feb. 1929.

He organized and conducted an exciting 50 piece Marimba Orchestra for concerts in Tulsa, Okla. in April, 1940.

He produced a super Marimba Ensemble of 75 members for several concerts in Chicago in July 1951, sponsored by NAMM, featuring fifty marimbists playing Paganini's "Moto Perpetuo" (solo) in unison.

His 100 piece Imperial Orchestra is of record — Paris, Brussels and Carnegie Hall.

He conducted a 125 piece Marimba Orchestra, sponsored by Philips University Enid, Oklahoma April 1941.

Musser conducted a 150 piece Marimba Orchestra Chicago September 1941.

He conducted a de Luxe 200 piece Marimba Orchestra sponsored by the Chicago Tribune at Soldier's Field to an audience of 111,000 people in Sept 14, 1949.

Musser conducted a 300 piece Marimba Orchestra on the North Stage at the Chicago Fair Sept. 1, 1950, featuring a 100 piece Vocal Choir and an unprecedented battery of Contra Bass Marimbas.

As time passed and greater perfection is attained and realized in musical scoring and instrument development, we naturally improve our presentations.

Musser brings a wealth of background to our \_\_\_\_\_ Arizona concert \_\_\_\_\_ etc-etc-etc.

When he ascends to the podium, his conducting arm will wave his treasured baton which he received as a gift from Arturo Toscanini in New York in 1937.

This was Toscanini's favorite rehearsal baton which he used post 1929 while he conducted the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.



# The Imperial Marimba Symphony Orchestra

The following text is from a brochure publicizing the Imperial Marimba Symphony Orchestra.

The accolade of international acclaim—sensational music triumphs on two continents—the unrestrained praises of the music commentators in both Europe and America—this is the story of the Imperial Marimba Symphony Orchestra.

Conceived and organized as an unprecedented music feature for the “A Century of Progress Exposition” in 1933, this Orchestra became a sensational success overnight. Music commentators Devries, Hackett, Moore and others lauded the Marimba Symphony Orchestra as incomparable and the best music at the Exposition.

Following extremely successful American engagements and coast-to-coast broadcasts, the Orchestra embarked for Europe where even greater rewards were attained. European audiences ecstatically applauded each performance. The immortal music of Bach, Wagner, Franck, Beethoven, Debussy and others is reflected in the colorful programs of the Imperial Marimba Symphony Orchestra.

Exclusively voiced instruments, incorporating the world’s only contrabass Marimbas, constitute the musical armament of this wonderful organization. Perfect coordination of its trained individuals is responsible for the harmonious effects achieved in the rendition of its colorful symphonies and program pieces. Of especial significance is the fact that each

member of the Imperial Marimba Symphony Orchestra is a virtuoso in his own right.

The Orchestra is famous for a quality of tone which can only be described as heavenly and ethereal. There is a certain clairvoyance which tends to interpret the innermost thoughts and moods of the directing mind on the podium.

The incomparable consonance of sound and harmonic effects are due to precision tuning, every instrument of the Orchestra being tuned to .001 of a cycle per second in uniformity.

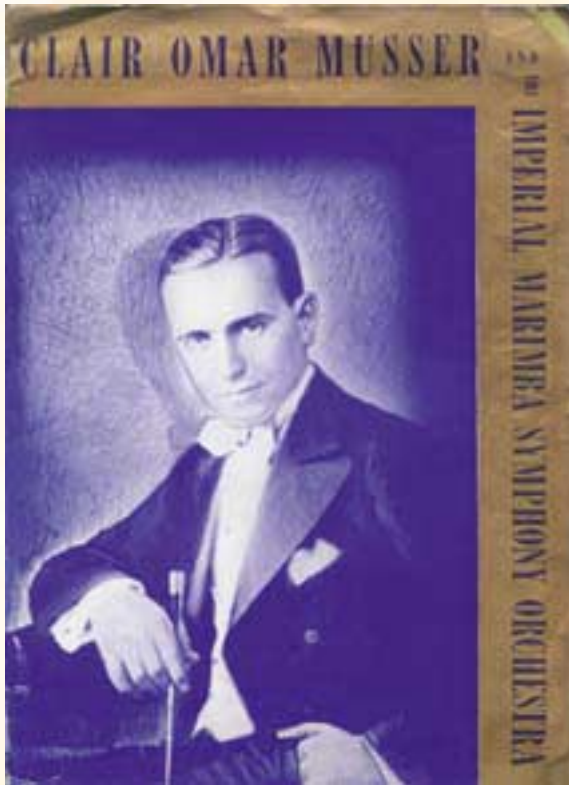
These instruments cannot be played “out of tune” and it is in passages of rapid execution, as

in Mozart, that the perfection of consonance is accentuated and perceived by the listener. The innermost passions of the soul can be portrayed by the delicate touch of the soft wool mallets to the sensitive keyboard, and yet a thunder of triple-forte can instantly be executed by the alternate use of differently voiced mallets (beaters). You of the audience are fascinated by the “West Point” precision of arm alignment during the execution of technical passages where choirs of the Orchestra members move in perfect coordination in a dexterity of arm movement.

The Imperial Marimba Symphony Orchestra has concertised in both Europe and America, travelling by chartered trains, S.S. Paris and S.S. Ile de France. More than ten thousand miles have been traversed to receive the plaudits of European Royalty and American music lovers. Theirs is the apotheosis of musical success—well deserved.



The Marimba Orchestra rehearsing for the Century of Progress exhibition.



The Imperial Marimba Symphony Orchestra in front of their private train at a stop in Cincinnati. Musser is in the center of the group on the platform of the train in the dark coat.



The Imperial Marimba Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in New York, with 100 King George marimbas played by 50 women and 50 men.

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9. Overture de Mignon . . . . . A. THOMAS

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# The Celestaphone Story

By Clair Omar Musser

The "Celestaphone Story" is an unparalleled account of 20th Century Scientific Endeavor and Technological Achievement. It is the culmination of "A Boyhood Dream" and the rewarding fruition of Astronomical research and musical Physics.

The Celestaphone is a "concert grand" percussive musical instrument exclusively fabricated of rare "metal meteorites." Its musical range encompasses the chromatic scale from lowest Violin G to the 1,000-cycle C above the treble clef.

Four decades of "Siderite Collecting" from the four corners of the earth yielded 1,388 pounds of rare "Space Metals." Six hundred seventy eight pounds of this exotic material was appropriated for this unprecedented program. The ultimate "Scientific Analysis Techniques" in contemporary "Meteoritical Research" were practiced with Space Age Technology.

The unique talents of a distinguished Meteoriticist - Metallurgist - Scientist - Acoustician guided the success of this endeavor. More than 100 "Technological Specialists" in Metallurgy, Physics, Holography and Nuclear Physics assisted in this 15 year program.

Following the "Scientific Research" chronology, the Meteorites were classified for "induction melting and casting." Specimens containing the largest amounts of Nickel and harder elements were alloyed for the keyboard "Tone Bars." Cast units were then cut, ground, machined, welded, fabricated, polished, epoxied, oven baked and assembled.

In addition to the Celestaphone's 30 "Meteoritic Tone Bars," 331 instrument and resonator tube parts were meticulously fabricated.

This five billion year metal from the orbits of Jupiter and Mars conducted an unprecedented ethereal musical voice.... Meteoritical Science is barely three half centuries old, but the knowledge of these heavenly objects reaches far into the distant past. Long before man learned to smelt iron from

its ores, he used "Meteoritic Iron" to produce various artifacts. Researching languages, we find that the word iron is related to the words Sky and Star...in Ancient Egypt, the word Iron meant "Metal from Heaven."

Researching five thousand years of history, we learn that Meteorites always commanded "front-page" attention thru-out man's progress. Worshipped as Heavenly Messengers, adornment for the Queens of Egypt, Meteorites were also Anvils, Plow shares, Tools, Knives, Daggers and Swords.

Many of the "Celestaphone's Meteorites" are resplendent in their very own, unique, "earthly heritages." Signally, the ethereal tones of the Celestaphone's highest (F and A) "Tone Bars" are voices of the Sikhote-Aline Meteorite, presented to Musser by the USSR, February 16, 1960.

The Republic of the Philippines "Atomic Energy Commission" contributed a Siderite to the Celestaphone program, February 23, 1962. This rare Luzon Ataxite contained Iron, 17% Nickel, and surprising amounts of Cobalt, Phosphorus and Carbon.

The Celestaphone's "middle C Tone Bar" voices a unique "Chinese Hexahedrite" acquired by Musser in Taipei, November 17, 1961. Another Historic Siderite complements the "treble octave," acquired in 1936 from descendants of Kit Carson, who ceremoniously received the Meteorite from the Indian Chief Yellow Dog.

Other Celestaphone voices which ring from Meteorites,

Greenland, Antarctica, Mexico, Japan, France, Canada, Wales, Guatemala and Chile. "Seventy seven" of these verifiable Space visitors contributed to the creation of this "Celestially Voiced" instrument. More than a hundred pounds of the World Famous "Arizona Siderites" recovered near the giant Winslow Crater radiate in the Celestaphone. These Arizona Meteorites contain Iron, Nickel, Cobalt, Carbon, Silicon, Sulphur, Phosphorous, Platinum, Iridium, Gold, Silver and Diamonds.

To hear the music of this instrument takes you back "Five Billion" years to the Genesis of the Solar System.

The Celestaphone is an "Astro-Meteoritic Voice Composite." Truly, "Music From Out of this World."



# The Marimba-Xylophone

By Clair Omar Musser

*This article originally appeared in the April 1932 issue of The Etude magazine.*

First, let us consider classification. There are countless people who have been erroneously informed as to the relationship between the marimba and its analogue, the xylophone. Today there is absolutely no difference whatsoever between the two instruments. *Xylophone*, derived from the Greek words, *xylo*, meaning "wood," and *phono*, meaning "sound," has been the popular name of this type of instrument on the North American continent, while, in the Central and South Americas, instruments of similar design were called *marimbas*.

Centuries before the coming of the Spaniards this type of musical instrument was the national instrument of the country which is now Guatemala. Their early instruments were such as "Webster" defines as the xylophone; but by no means were these people the pioneers and inventors of this type of instrument.

During the time of the Aryan immigrations through India, 2000 years B.C., the Hindus and the Siamese, as well as the Chinese, were playing a musical instrument resembling the marimba. This instrument was called the "ranat" (to which there are many analogues in China and Japan) and was tuned to the Chinese pentatonic scale, the tones of which may be roughly represented by our F, G, A, B $\flat$ , C and D. It was during the reign of Confucius (d. 478 B.C.) that these instruments were enlarged to over twenty tones. All through the beginning of the Christian era they shared popularity with the ancient stringed instruments.

## Early References

Later we have literary reference by Fortunatus of Poitiers (d. 609) to a characteristic instrument similar to the "ranat" used by the bards in Scandinavia and Northern Germany.

The instrument was redesigned and called the "glockenspiel." Later in the seventeenth century this instrument was made to substitute metal bars for the sound elements; and the name "xylophone" was adopted for all wooden bar instruments.

The exceptional progress of the Central American Indians in developing the marimba was due to their access to the rare woods to be found abundantly in their forests. The female "hormingo" tree, which is a species of the rosewood used in the instruments of our present day manufacture, grew abundantly in the territory which is now Guatemala. Their early instruments were not unlike the structure of those made in Europe, and they soon discovered and applied the laws of resonance. These resonators throughout the last two centuries have been made of fine cedar. The instrument migrated to Mexico, South America and Africa. The African instruments are still in a primitive state and employ gourds or calabashes as resonators. Various and weird effects have been produced by the artisans who have been manufacturing this type of instrument. Over small holes at the bottoms of the resonators a small dried skin, membrane or diaphragm has been stretched. This gives off a queer buzzing sound as the instrument is being played.

## The Drummer Increases His Scope

About fifty years ago American musical instrument manufacturers began making the small xylophone as a trap instrument for the drummer. These first instruments were similar to the European xylophone and were made of various woods—maple, rosewood, cocus, and so on. The scale was our diatonic with B $\flat$  added. While Henry Ford was busy making his first horseless carriage, fine woods were imported and new methods of tuning were devised.

Due to the resistance of the felt upon which the bars were mounted, together with the inertia of the thick



CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTO

key, the instrument gave off a crisp musical tone of short duration. It was at this time that the vaudeville stage was coming into its own. Due to its novelty the instrument gained a wild-fire popularity. The colorful showmanship of the performer on the xylophone and the gymnastic effects of the dexterous player placed the act much in demand. The public applauded, and why? Simply because of the novelty of the instrument and the showmanship of the player. That was a few years ago. Today things have changed; the radio has educated the public to good music, quality, tone and expression. The vaudeville stage has reformed and presents, for the most part, artistic entertainment. The wild xylophone racket has taken the detour with the slapstick and the "bicycle-act."

While all this was going on, the American marimba made its debut. It was classed as an instrument akin to the xylophone but was at first quite distinct from it. Its characteristic resembled the Central American instrument, especially in tone. The chief features were the thin bars of the keyboard mounted on a suspended cord above the resonators, giving the bars more elasticity in vibration. Softer mallet heads were used for playing, and soon the effects obtained began to resemble an organ in tone.

The race was on—marimba versus xylophone. The manufacturers gradually forced a compromise. The finer xylophones embodied the features of the marimba and the large marimbas incorporated the finer points of the xylophone. The final result was the finely-tuned percussion instrument of today bearing the name, "marimba-xy-



lophone," the creation of the leading acousticians and sound theorists of the twentieth century.

### *Quieting Jangling Overtones*

Why do some orchestral conductors and fine musicians tremble at the word "marimba" or "xylophone"? Simply because they have not heard the new instruments and are unaware of their fine tuning and quality of tone. The theorem of the great French mathematician, Fourier, has shown mathematically that the tone of a wooden bar upon being excited into periods of vibration is a common sum of simple tones. The composite mass of musical tones, of which one is the fundamental and the others the partials or parts of a tone, has been mathematically analyzed and purified by modern methods of tuning.

In the old methods of tuning, the bar, upon being struck by the mallet, gave off inharmonic secondary partials that were nearly as prominent as the fundamental tone. These upper partial tones corresponding to the simple vibrations of a compound motion of the air were perceived analytically. Due to their inharmonic characteristics they not only clashed with the fundamental tone of the compound but were dissonant in their relation to the temperament of the scale of the instrument itself. This manifestation caused the layman, as well as the critic, to condemn the instrument as being "out of tune."

All this has been overcome by modern science. These partials are now perfectly tuned to the fundamental tone of the compound. They have been made harmonic intervals in themselves and are not analytically perceived except by direction of attention. The ideal instrument of this type is four and one-half octaves in register, starting with the first C below Middle C on the piano and extending to G in the fourth octave above Middle C. When the proper soft wound mallets are used in the low register the tone coloring is most appealing and greatly favors that of the organ. Specially vulcanized mallets bring out a sonorous as well as a staccato tone in the entire register.

Standard compositions of the masters, both of the old and new schools,

lend themselves to a faithful interpretation. Chopin's works are suited to this instrument. Chopin, in a letter to Franz Liszt, explained that his right hand played the solos of his compositions and his left hand was both conductor and accompaniment. In like manner, the right hand score of this type of composition is easily played on the marimba, while the bass and accompaniment can be played either on the piano or by the orchestra.

### *A New Color for Tone Painters*

Modern composers are becoming alert to the individual tone color of this newly improved instrument. Percy Grainger, noted pianist, composer and arranger, has given us several scores in which the marimba and xylophone have been called upon to play feature passages. Charles Martin Loeffler, one of our greatest composers, has been scoring generous passages for the marimba. In his recent "Evocation," performed by the Cleveland Orchestra, both the marimba and vibra-harp were featured prominently.

Adaptability of this instrument to the orchestra ensemble has long been granted. Several of the leading Universities of the country have been using the marimba in the orchestra with great success. One of the pioneers has been the symphony ensemble of the University of Illinois at Urbana. During the past few years their five-octave marimba-xylophone has occupied a major position in the band and orchestra, being utilized for playing the "harp" and difficult horn passages, such as the cornet phrases in Rimsky-Korsakov's "Scheherazade." The marimba has likewise made its debut on the concert stages of New York and Chicago with great success.

Why then are there so few artists performing on this instrument? The reasons are several, the chief one being the scarcity of teachers, coupled with a lack of musical selections that are readily adaptable by the average player. Piano music is the best score for the large instrument. Even certain master works, including several concertos and polonaises, are readily playable, with perfect results. Numbers like the *Polacca Brillante*, by Weber-Liszt, lend themselves favorably to the marimba-xylophone.

The chief obstacle, however, to full appreciation of the marimba-xylophone is the student's attitude toward its mastery. Here is a superiority complex that is lamentable. The student buys the instrument on Monday and expects to play the *Overture* to "William Tell" by the following Saturday. Is he content to resign himself to a few years' earnest work and study? No indeed! Is he willing to try producing a good tone on the instrument? Absolutely not. Instead, he secures a pair of mallets with the hardest heads he can find and brutally attacks the keyboard much like a carpenter would drive spikes in green oak. Working on a musical selection for tone color and delicate nuances is the farthest from his thoughts. Instead he tries to emulate the antics of some xylophonist he saw with a "circus band," or vaudeville show, by fiendishly playing a few measures of some overture, disregarding all marks of tempo and expression.

### *Where Antics Pass Unnoticed*

Next in line is the radio artist. Here is a situation entirely different. The player is forced to exercise care in playing, both in tempo and deftness of touch. The radio audience is a critical one and cares nothing about the gymnastic antics of the stage player. Even in this enormous field of radio work the number of marimba and xylophone artists are few.

In a late survey of the broadcast stations of the world it was found that there are less than a dozen xylophone and marimba artists who could expect an "A" on their report card. Most of them specialize on the smaller instruments with hard mallets, playing arpeggios and variations (which they call "noodles") as a background to an orchestral ensemble. Scores of players have lost their contract renewals as well as their reputations by continuing to use an instrument that has long been antiquated and has always been out of tune.

However, success is just around that inevitable corner for the individual who will faithfully learn to master the large marimba-xylophone as a solo instrument. The graded studies for piano should be practiced thoroughly for such technical points as are applicable to the marimba. The bass pas-



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sages should be shunned, and the musical education advanced toward the mastery of the art of transcribing. No serious attention should be paid to the person who boasts that he can hold six mallets, as this style of playing is used for stage showmanship and is positively impractical musically as well as physically.

Finally, judgment must be exercised in selecting solo numbers, and the necessity of a good accompaniment music always be kept in mind.

#### SELF-TEST QUESTIONS ON MR. MUSSER'S ARTICLE

1. In what countries did the marimba first appear?
2. By what means is the tuning improved in the modern marimba-xylophone?
3. What composers' works lend themselves readily to marimba transcriptions?
4. What are the obstacles to full acceptance of the marimba-xylophone?
5. What special qualifications should the radio marimba-xylophone player have?

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# The Musser Scrapbook



A sketch of Musser with his Marimba-Celeste.



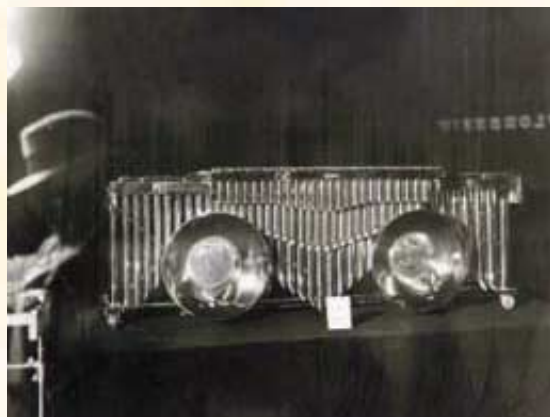
This shot was on the back of Musser's business card for his band The Serenaders. Musser is behind the xylophone.



An early photo of Musser. On the back it is inscribed: To Mother. My Babie. C.O. Musser.



From a Deagan ad of 1931: "This impressive stage setting featuring thirteen Deagan Xylophones is the finale of 'Tune Types.' Critics pronounced it one of the most striking and entertaining finales of the year. Thousands of Chicago theater-goers were thrilled by the spectacular tonal effect of a 13-piece Xylophone band—yet these twelve Abbott girls spent only five and a half hours in practice. Could any proof be more convincing that the Xylophone is the easiest of all musical instruments to play?" Musser is in the center with his Marimba-Celeste.



PONTIAC ENGRAVING AND ELECTROTYPE CO.

The Marimba-Celeste that Musser designed for Deagan combined a five-octave xylophone-marimba with a two-octave vibraphone. To facilitate playing, the vibe bars were strung in a single row with black oxidized sharp/flat bars. The lower register had pickups that were run into an amplification system connected to the two horns in the front.

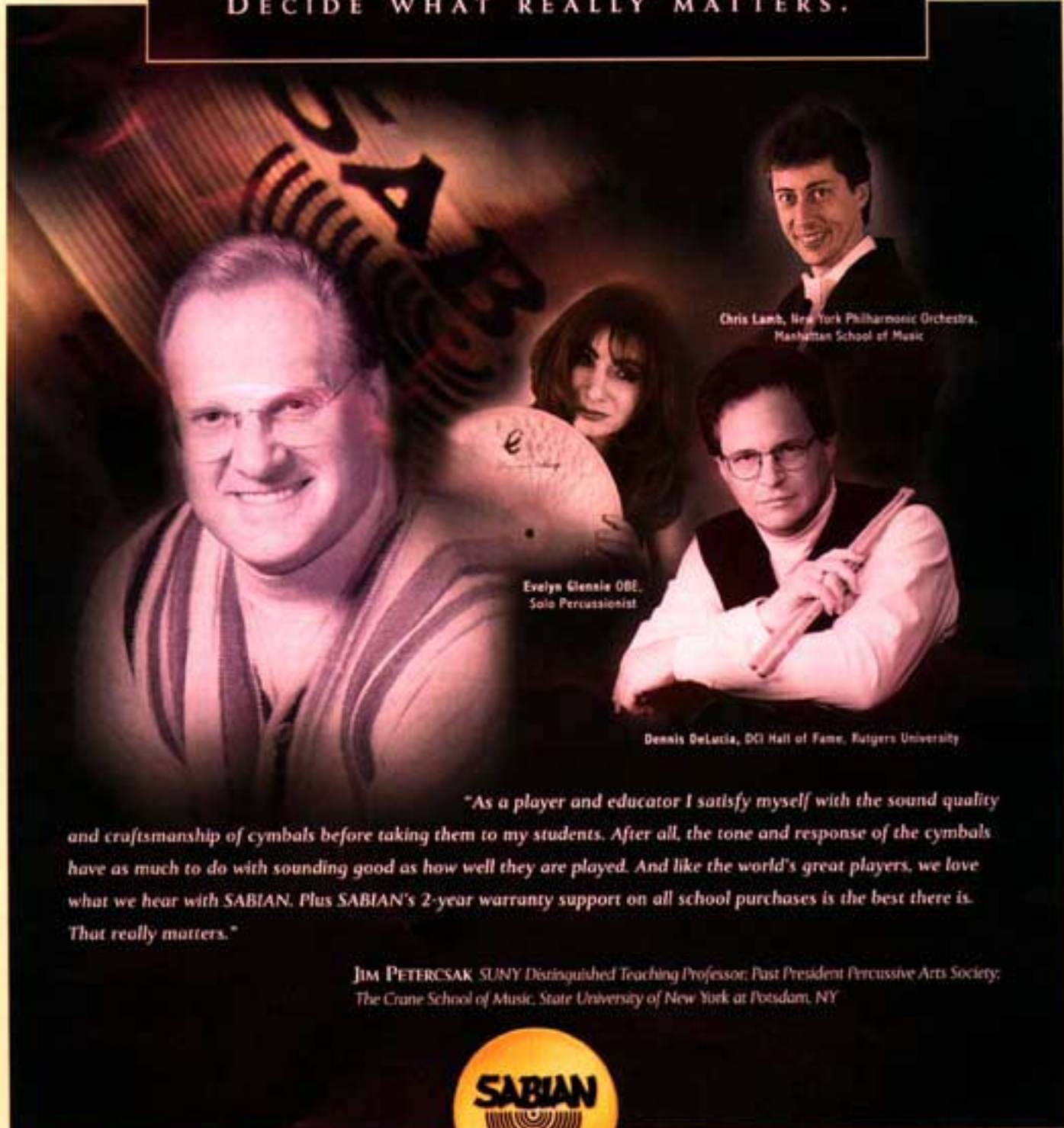


Another shot of The Serenaders, with members identified by instrument.



A player's view of the Marimba-Celeste, showing the various pedals that operated the damper bar of the vibraphone as well as those that worked with the built-in amplification system and could be used to raise and lower the volume, much like the pedals on an organ.

DECIDE WHAT REALLY MATTERS.



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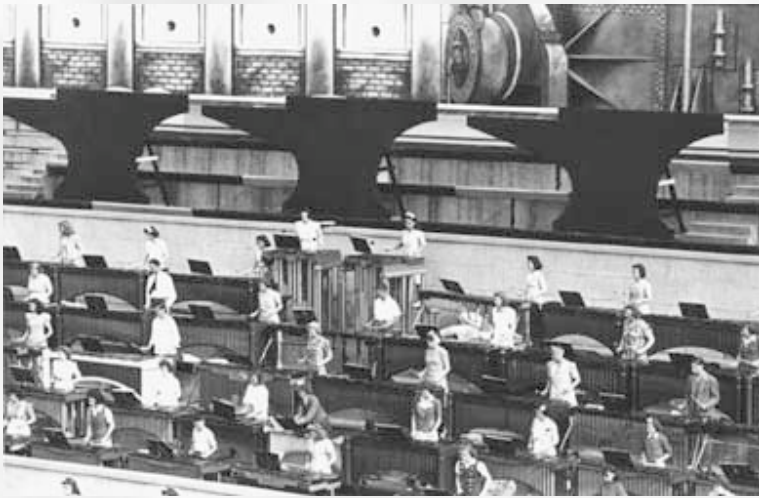


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On August 16, 1941, Musser conducted a marimba orchestra at the 12th Annual Chicagoland Music Festival at Soldier Field. The group performed “The Anvil Chorus” — hence the large anvil props behind the orchestra.



This was a touring group that Musser coached at Northwestern University. A promo ad proclaimed: “Global Glory for four Winsome Co-eds! From the cloistered precincts of Northwestern University to the fabled lands of the Orient. From the quiet of student life to the excitement and fun of a 20,000-mile government-sponsored tour, the thunderous applause of hundreds of thousands of GIs, and the enthusiastic appreciation of top officials everywhere. This was the thrilling experience of the 4 Marimba Co-eds — Dorothy Carroll, Christine Austell, Betty Lou Overmyer and Norma Jean Lutz.”



Musser taught at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois from 1942–52. This group of his students participated in a nationwide contest sponsored by *Look* magazine in 1946 to determine the country’s best non-professional ensembles and instrumentalists. The students are Joyce Kostuck, Jean McWethy, Jean Smith, Betty Atterberry and Margaret Elliston. Their awards included the National Directors Trophy, First Place National Ensemble Trophy (Senior Specialty Award) and First Place Ensemble Trophy (Midwest Divisional Specialty Classification). In addition, vibraphonist Smith won the Lionel Hampton Trophy.



A later group of Marimba Co-eds was led by Musser student Vera McNary Daehlin (front) and included Lyla Frieleigh Stoike, Mary Frieleigh Lagerquish, Nancy Van Antwerp Preusch and Rayma Hotchkiss Griffith. The members are currently preparing for a 50-year reunion.



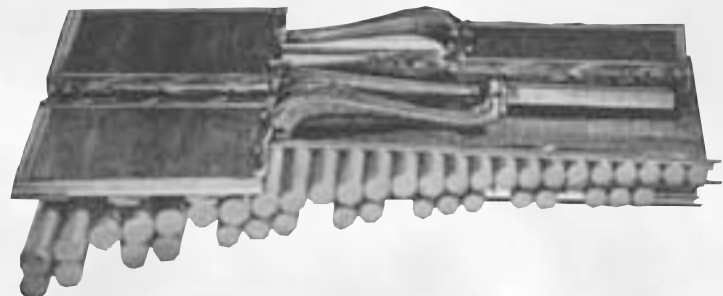
Among Musser's designs for Deagan was the Queen Anne Marimba. From the brochure: "The romanticism of the eighteenth century as revealed in the art of English furniture and cabinetmaking derives directly from the beginning of the century during the reign of Queen Anne (1702-14). Her reign first saw the extensive use of walnut as a furniture medium and has been called the beginning of the Age of Walnut. For that reason Deagan has chosen this beautifully grained wood for the Queen Anne Marimbas. Taking inspiration from the graciousness and refinement of detail which is characteristic of the best furniture of the period, Deagan has created a modern instrument in a traditional spinet shape which will fit harmoniously into the scale of modern living." The brochure went on to advise that the Queen Anne Marimba "is a beautiful and practical library table when covered." The instrument sold for \$250.



Musser with BeBe Shapp, Miss America 1948.



Musser playing one of the first vibraphones made by the company he started in 1948.



The Queen Anne Marimba was even portable!



# A New Approach to the Single-Stroke Roll

BY GORDY KNUDTSON

I'd like to share an exciting, new, and practically effortless method I have discovered of playing a single-stroke roll. I happened to stumble upon this new way of synchronizing the hands several years ago when trying to apply an old technique in a new and different way.

The basic premise of the old technique was to make the drumstick produce more than one note during one down/up cycle of the hand. While I'm not sure if there is an official name for this technique, I have occasionally heard it referred to as the open/close technique because of the open/close motion of the hand.

The basic strokes used in the open/close technique are named for the number of notes the stick produces during one down/up cycle of the hand. This article will focus on the Two-Note stroke.

While this technique is ideal for the matched grip, it can also be applied to the traditional grip. Unfortunately, I haven't pursued this due to a wrist injury that made me a permanent matched-grip player. I do know of two traditional grip examples that exist on videos: *Steve Gadd—Up Close*, during the samba section, and *Buddy Rich: Jazz Legend—Part 2* during the cymbal solo that follows the Armand Zildjian/Lenny DiMuzio segment.

We will start by looking at each part of the Two-Note Stroke individually. Ultimately, the stroke should be played as one smooth, continuous motion.

## OPEN

Figure 1 shows the correct starting position with the wrist bent back and the fingers closed around the stick.

Figure 1

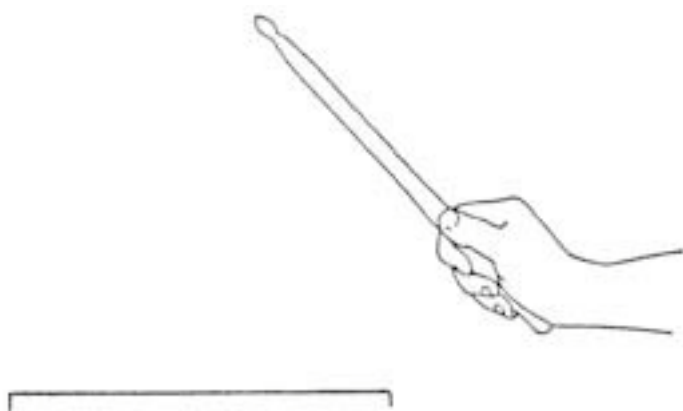


Figure 2 shows the hand traveling downward so that the stick strikes the drumhead.

Figure 2

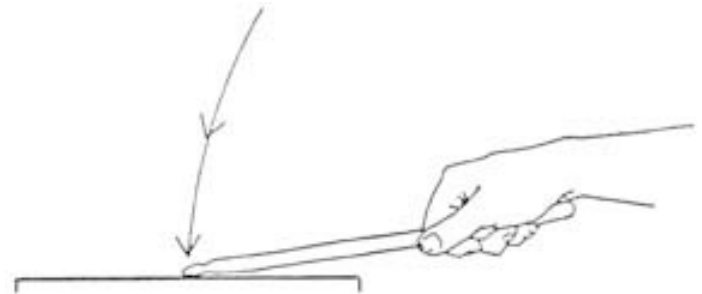
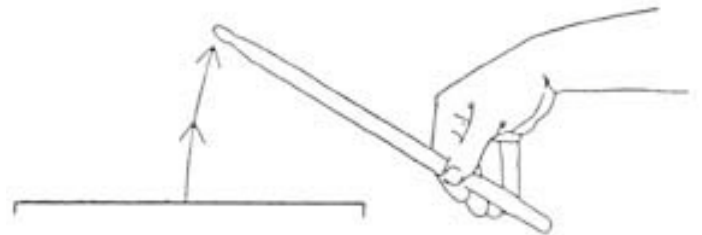


Figure 3 shows the fingers opening up to allow the stick to rebound off the drumhead, while the hand remains down.

Figure 3

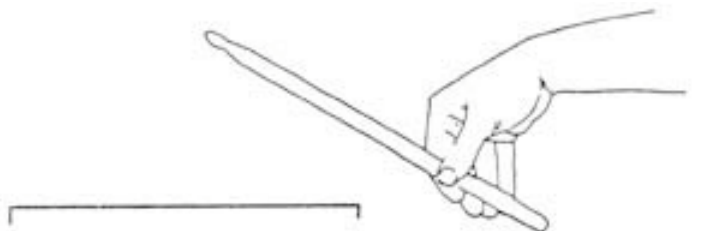


It is important to know that Figures 2 and 3 represent one motion; there is no pause between them. You must hold the stick loosely enough that it can rebound off the drumhead. Although the fingers open up to allow the rebound, you should keep your fingertips on the stick at all times.

## CLOSE

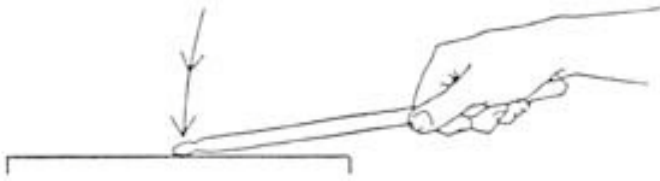
Figure 4 shows the correct starting position. The wrist is down, the fingers are open (but the fingertips are on the stick), and the stick is off the drumhead.

Figure 4



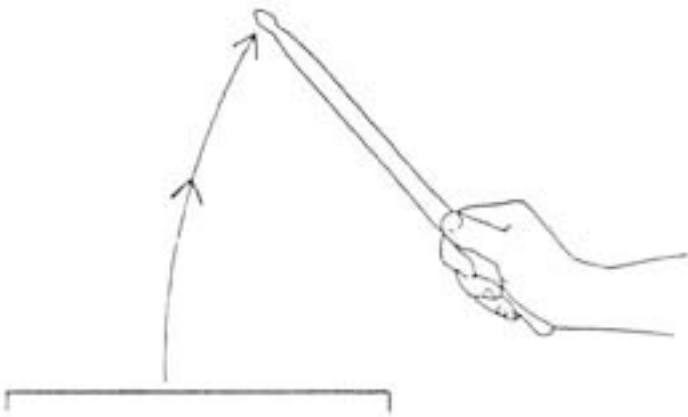
In Figure 5, the fingers close, which snaps the stick back down onto the drumhead.

Figure 5



In Figure 6, the wrist lifts the stick off the drumhead, returning to the start position of the open stroke.

Figure 6

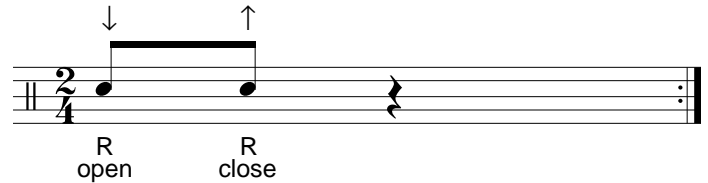


### COMBINING STROKES

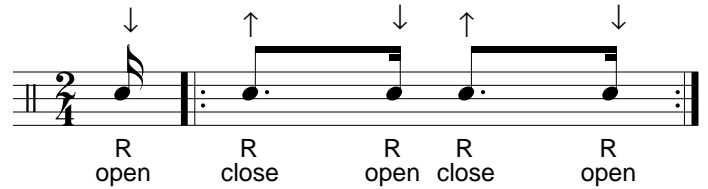
Figures 5 and 6 represent one motion, and there is no pause between them. Once you have control of both the Open and Close strokes, try playing them with one, smooth motion, with no pause between them.

The Close stroke has more power and volume than the Open stroke, so you must learn to adjust how hard you close your fingers so that the volume of the Open and Close stroke are equal.

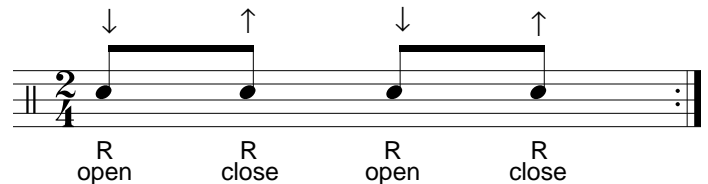
Let's combine the two strokes. The "down" arrow represents the Open stroke, and the "up" arrow represents the Close stroke. Start with the right hand, leaving a space after each Open/Close cycle.



This technique is commonly used to play the shuffle rhythm.



Now try the technique with straight eighth notes, maintaining equal spacing to produce a continuous flow of notes.



Now repeat the exercises with the left hand.

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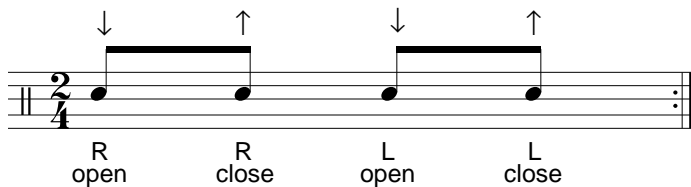
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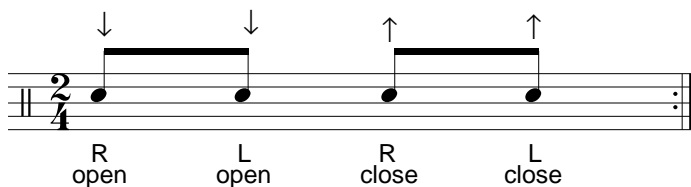
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### SYNCHRONIZING THE HANDS

The next example illustrates a traditional double-stroke roll, using the Open/Close technique.



By "overlapping" the strokes, we arrive at a single-stroke roll.



Even though the concept of this new single-stroke roll is simple, it takes time and patience to master. The difficulty is two-fold. The first problem is learning how to use gravity and the natural rebound energy to its fullest by staying out of the way of the stick's momentum. You'll know when you've succeeded when the sticks start to feel like they are playing themselves. It's truly a "letting go of" or "riding along with" type of

feeling. Here's a tip: use heavy sticks. More mass = more rebound energy!

The second problem is mastering the unique synchronization of the hands. While this synchronization is foreign to most drummers who play with sticks, it's comparable to the heel/toe roll used by conga drum players.

Why should you bother learning this single stroke roll? For me, it has been the single most amazing technical breakthrough I've experienced in my thirty years of playing drums! It's helped me to play things I thought I would never be able to play, and play them in a more relaxed manner than I believed possible! For instance, on a good day, going downhill with a tailwind, I can now play a single-stroke roll as thirty-second notes at a metronome marking of quarter note = 120 in 4/4 time for sixteen bars!

I'll even state that this new single-stroke roll feels so natural that once you GET IT, you'll never stop using it. It's so organic, I believe it could become as much a part of basic drumming fundamentals as the double-stroke roll!

Gordy Knudtson is the Drum Department Head of Music Tech in Minneapolis, the drummer for the Steve Miller Band, and the inventor of *DrumPhones* and *Superphones* hearing-protection stereo headphones for drummers. He will have a book and video based upon the Two-Note Stroke technique released in 1999. Visit his web site at: [www.gk.music.com](http://www.gk.music.com).



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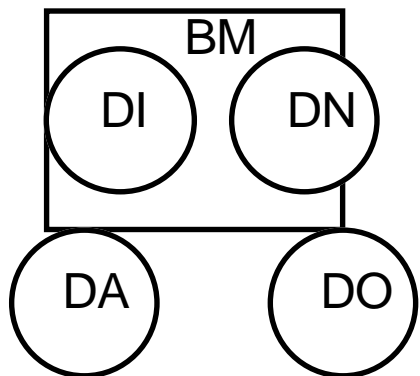
BY ED SHAUGHNESSY

**T**hese syllables codify our standard drumset, and make verbal practice possible in a melodic way. They are inspired by my study of tabla drums with the great Alla Rakha. He used to use the phrase, "Practice in your head," referring to times away from the instrument—on planes, in the car, etc. It really works!

Another advantage is that one drummer can speak to another in an accurate language. If I tell students, "Try DA-DI-DO-BM as a fill," they know that means snare/small tom/floor tom/bass drum.

Here are the boles (syllables):

Snare	DA (like ah)
Left rack tom	DI (like dee)
Right rack tom	DN (like din)
Floor tom	DO
Bass drum	BM



The whole set in descending order

Double strokes: DA DA-DI DI-DN DN-DO DO-BM BM

Single strokes: DA-DI-DN-DO-BM

Cymbals will be:

Closed hi-hat	CH
Crash cymbal	CHA
Ride cymbal	DING

Good luck with practicing in your head!

Ed Shaughnessy is best known for his 25-year tenure as drummer for Doc Severinsen's *Tonight Show* big band. He has recorded more than 500 albums with such jazz legends as Charlie Parker, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Clark Terry. At PASIC '98 in Orlando he received the Outstanding PAS Supporter Award.



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# Running a College Drum Line

## Responsibilities of a Percussion Graduate Teaching Assistant

BY ANDY SMITH

If you are considering graduate study in percussion and are interested in applying for an assistantship in the area of marching percussion, you will need to know the responsibilities involved. This article will provide some insight into the aspects of running a college marching band percussion section. This information will be useful to an instructor or teaching assistant at any college or high school marching percussion program.

The responsibilities of a graduate teaching assistant may consist of the following aspects: equipment maintenance, music arranging, scheduling and conducting rehearsals, and delegating authority and responsibilities. Below, I have listed some issues related to each of these aspects and suggestions for dealing with them.

### EQUIPMENT

There are several issues to deal with regarding equipment. Some concerns include keeping inventory current, storage

and transportation, maintenance and repairs, and acquiring new equipment. Before rehearsals begin, find out what equipment is available for use by the drum line, and what condition it is in. Check the condition of heads and implements, and find out if any repairs are necessary to get instruments in good working order. Learn what resources are available to meet the equipment needs of the drum line.

### Heads

Find out what type of heads are being used, how often they are replaced, and if there are any spare heads in stock. Make a projection of what heads will be needed for the season and find out the procedure for purchasing them. It is reasonable to replace all of the bass drum, snare, and tenor heads at least once every year, but invariably some will need to be replaced more frequently. Some programs operate strictly under the "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" rule, but be wary of this kind of

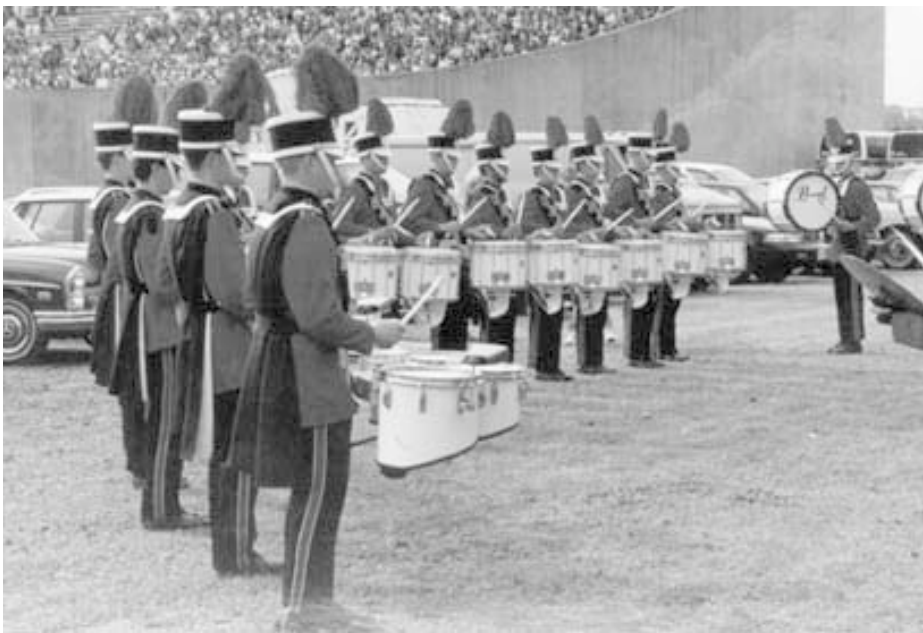
thinking. It is your worst nightmare to have a bass drum head break just before a show if you don't have a head with which to replace it. I recommend stocking a spare set of heads for each set of tenors, at least one spare for each bass drum size, and several tops and bottoms for snare drums.

If this scenario is not affordable relative to your resources, consider some more conservative alternatives. With kevlar snare drum heads, you can get away with marching more than one season on the same head. But after two years of use and abuse, they will most likely lose their ability to produce an acceptable tone. Consider changing all the tenor heads at the same time toward the beginning of the season, and then replace them only when they break. When you travel, carry at least two spare sets of tenor heads, two tops and three bottoms for the snares, and one head for each of the bass drums. Cymbal bags are great for carrying spare heads, and the larger bass drum heads can be kept in their original sturdy cardboard boxes.

### Implements

There are a number of choices of sticks and mallets available for use in marching percussion. Several manufacturers offer implements that are appropriate for outdoor use, including signature sticks that have been designed by prominent figures in marching percussion. Find out what sticks and mallets the drum line is using, and if they are acceptable, do not rock the boat. That's not to say that you cannot make changes, but it is not your job, nor is it in your best interest, to insist upon doing everything the way that you are accustomed to. The important thing is uniformity within each segment regardless of which stick or mallet is being used.

Find out if the band will provide implements for the drum line, or if the mem-



University of Massachusetts



bers are responsible for purchasing their own. Bass drum mallets are of particular concern. Worn or water-logged mallet heads produce a less than desirable tone and could accelerate the wear and tear on heads. Protect the felt heads on new mallets from rain and moisture by putting plastic baggies fastened with rubber bands over them, and avoid touching them with sweaty hands and oily fingers. Consider using older bass drum and keyboard mallets for rehearsal and save the new ones for performances. As with heads, keep spare sticks and mallets on hand.

### **Cymbals**

Select cymbals that complement the show style. A jazz or rock show might call for good ride cymbals, whereas a more classical repertoire might call for good orchestral crash cymbals. Do not leave broken or unmatched cymbals in the cabinet. Unmatched cymbals can be suspended and used in the front ensemble to add color and texture to the music. They can also be used in a practice room on a drumset. Consult with your cymbal manufacturer about a potential recycling program for broken cymbals. Replace cymbal straps every year to prevent unexpected cymbal visuals as a result of broken straps.

### **Maintenance**

A marching percussion section can incorporate a number of percussion instruments. Take time to educate your marching members about the care and maintenance of their equipment. When the group travels, use hard fiber or plastic cases for as many instruments as possible. Pack instruments that do not have cases in boxes or wrap them in blankets. Keyboards can be protected with instrument covers and blankets. Make lists of missing or damaged parts such as tension rods and lug casings. If possible, keep spare parts on hand and store them in plastic storage containers. The daily wear and tear of rehearsal can take a toll on the appearance and operation of percussion instruments. Protect your equipment with covers. Many drum manufacturers are now making standard covers for battery instruments. If financial resources are not available for purchasing covers, you can design and make your own covers for the cost of the materials. A heavyweight material fastened with

velcro will protect the drums from sun, dirt, and wear and tear.

Inclement weather can be a hazard to percussion equipment. Have the members dry the equipment thoroughly after it has been exposed to rain; if you have to play in heavy rain for an extended period, consider covering the drums with plastic garbage bags and playing on top of them. Keep a supply of towels and bags on the bus or truck when you travel. Have large plastic tarps ready to lay on top of keyboard instruments to shield them from showers. If they do get wet, dry the bells and the felt dampeners on the vibraphones first.

Make maintenance part of your routine. Keep the nuts and bolts on keyboard instruments tightly fastened. Clean drums periodically with a general glass and surface cleaner. This is safe and effective on most covered drums, but be more careful with lacquered and custom finishes. Always test any cleaning solvent on a small and inconspicuous part of the material before making a fatal mistake. Use metal cleaner on the hoops. A smart maintenance routine will save time and money in the long run.

### **ARRANGING**

There are several items to consider when arranging music for the drum line. First, you should find out the size and instrumentation of the group. You could write for what you think is a standard instrumentation, and then show up to see people strapped into timpani and tritoms. Second, determine the general ability level of the players. Talk with the director and the percussion instructor; get in touch with members of the group, particularly potential leaders. Many groups have web pages. Check out their site for examples of scores, exercises, and even sound bites. Ask the director to send you a video of the band or drum line.

Third, get a feel for the musical style of the band. The music selection and the wind arrangement should give you an idea of the show style, but the director can provide you with further information. Descriptions like "We pretty much ram notes for fifteen minutes," or "The battery moves front to back on the fifty and the bottom bass drum plays on one a lot," will shed light on your new situation.

### **Arranging Suggestions**

Many corps-style bands learn one or

two shows per season, while others learn a show every week. Inquire as to the amount of time the ensemble will have to prepare music. This factor is critical when writing for a college band. Intricate corps-style parts may not be achievable in a week's time. Percussion parts may also need to be written for music to be played in the stands, for parades, or for other events. If possible, get a schedule of events and deadlines for music to be written and learned. Use your time wisely. The time that you spend writing parts should be proportionate to the amount of time spent rehearsing a given arrangement. Focus your energy on the most important tunes in the show. Learn to write simple, effective parts for the rest of the material.

There are a variety of ways to write low-maintenance parts for the percussion section. Use patterns that are easily recognizable or parts that the drum line already knows. For example, play the school fight song pattern for other similar tunes. Or, for a walking bass line, have the bass drums play their split variation from eight on a hand. When writing sketch parts for marches or pop music, indicate what pattern and how many times to play it in each phrase.

To make things interesting, there is the "slug factor," which is essentially the tendency for able-bodied college drum line members not to learn music. In a pinch, you can teach a chart by rote in a few minutes by applying these ideas for low-maintenance part-writing. An instant chart can be arranged, taught, and learned in ten minutes that makes the drum line and band sound great, and makes you look good.

When putting together your exercise program, keep in mind that most rehearsal time will be spent on music. Play simple warm-ups like eight on a hand, double beat, and sixteenth-note roll patterns. Choose one more complex exercise that you would like to work on throughout the season.

### **REHEARSAL**

Find out if you are responsible for rehearsing the drum line. If you are, determine your role in the ensemble rehearsal, and to what extent you can rehearse the percussion section away from the band proper. In my experience, most of the direction in ensemble rehearsal will come from the band director. In college band,

there is usually a lot to be done in little time, so the focus of the rehearsal is on the big picture more often than not. You can evaluate the performance and effectiveness of the drum line from the sideline or from an elevated perspective. If it is appropriate, you can get in front of the battery or front ensemble and provide instruction. Realize that if the drum line has traditionally been student-run, the section members may not respond well to field instruction. You may be more of a distraction than a help.

Sectional rehearsals may be necessary to prepare the percussionists for rehearsal with the band. Before scheduling rehearsals, check on the availability of facilities. If you call extra rehearsals, be consistent, give sufficient notice, and don't spend more time than is needed. Keep your situation in perspective. Recognize that school should come first and that in most college bands, the members just want to have fun. Every group has a different work ethic. Find a balance that suits your desire to be successful and the needs of the program.

Some groups have each segment of the percussion section (i.e., snares, tenors, etc.) meet once a week. Other groups can be effective by meeting whenever it is needed or by practicing in pairs. You can choose whether you want to commit your time to these sectionals or not. They may need some time without you to learn parts and to address issues that they feel are important.

#### DELEGATING RESPONSIBILITIES

You can save time and energy by delegating responsibilities. Section leaders should be capable of running rehearsals, taking inventory, and tuning drums. Select competent students to take attendance, place clothing orders, and plan drum line activities. The storage or rehearsal area should be cleaned on a regular basis; assign a different section each week to pick up trash and sweep the area. Sharing the arranging responsibilities can also greatly decrease your work load, particularly if you are writing for both the battery and pit. Experienced members who are interested and qualified deserve the opportunity to write for the group.

Find out if there are past members of the group who are interested in helping out with the drum line. These people could potentially assist with auditions,

band camp, and teaching various sections of the drum line. Their experience with the group and their rapport with the members can prove invaluable.

Traveling will present many extra tasks for the drum line. To be efficient, there should be a plan for loading and unloading the truck. Assign one person to oversee this process. Members who have marched drum corps will have extensive experience in this area.

#### SPRING TRAINING

Consider running a class during the spring semester to further develop the technique of your group. This class will serve to maintain member interest, recruit new members, improve individual ability, and establish uniformity of terminology and playing style in the drum line. Members will appreciate the chance to receive credit for playing in the drum line without the extensive time commitment of the fall marching season. Meeting in the spring can provide an opportunity to address technical issues that you don't have time to address during the marching season. Depending on the group and where they are in their development, you may choose to look for performance outlets. Play an exhibition at a WGI festival or offer to perform at a high school.

#### ADVICE

Most importantly, keep an open mind. Don't be afraid to experiment with new ways of doing things. Every situation is different depending on any number of variables including the size of the band and drum line, instructional staff, whether it is a well established or developing program, if the school is in a major football conference, and especially the background and the perspective of the marching members. Take special care in developing relationships with the band director, percussion instructor, secretaries, and other band staff. You will be in constant communication with these people; learn the proper channels to go through to get things done. Be prepared to accept different philosophies of people in charge. Your rapport with the members is particularly important. Although you are in a position of authority, you are also a student. You will need to earn their respect.

Running a college drum line can be a rewarding and challenging experience.

Whether you are currently instructing a drum line or are applying for a position as an instructor or teaching assistant, I hope this information will be helpful to you in assessing and managing your responsibilities.

Andy Smith received his Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education from the University of Massachusetts. He is currently working on his Master's degree in Percussion Performance at Middle Tennessee State University. Smith has been a member of the Star of Indiana Drum and Bugle Corps and was a member of the percussion staff for the 1997 Crossmen Drum and Bugle Corps. PN



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# Snare Drum Basics

BY LALO DAVILA

As with many beginning band students around the country, young percussionists usually start on snare drum as their first instrument. Fortunate students will be exposed to keyboard percussion simultaneously with snare drum. When teaching snare drum, instructors are often confronted with the task of teaching rudiments. This article is based on two approaches to teaching rudiments. During PASIC '98 in Orlando, Florida, Jim Campbell, Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at the University of Kentucky, and I presented a "Fundamentals" clinic on learning and performing rudiments. The following material contains examples from our presentation.

One of the popular ways of teaching rudiments is that of the rudiment breakdown. This technique is often referred to as "single-hand isolation." Examples 1 and 2 incorporate this "hand separate" approach. Here are four helpful hints to assist in the advancement of rudiment performance, as presented by Jim Campbell:

1. Concentrate on executing two primary stick heights: low, for grace notes; high, for accents.
2. Isolate individual stick motions by playing with one hand at a time.
3. Observe independent hand motions of flam rudiments by playing one hand on the drum and one hand on the rim.

4. Use a metronome.

You can apply these guidelines to all of the rudiments.

Another approach to mastering rudiments is by working from the ground up. In other words, start by playing/teaching the rudiment at a very slow tempo and gradually progress to faster tempos. Many of us were taught to perform rudiments with the open-close-open (slow-fast-slow) form of execution. Those were the "good ol' days." The method you see in the following examples demonstrates this approach through the use of rhythmic modulation. In Example 3, the five-stroke roll has been broken down to eight different tempos. Though the time signatures may be different and the tempos may vary, it is still the five-stroke roll. When practicing this method, be particular about maintaining consistent stick height. Strive to keep all unaccented notes low and all accented notes the same height. I strongly encourage the use of a metronome at all times to check your progress.

When you get to level C, you may begin to bounce the doubles (i.e., RR LL). In fact, a good exercise for letter C would be to stroke the doubles for four bars then bounce the doubles for four bars. This procedure will assist you when gradually transitioning from a slow tempo that requires each note to be stroked, to a faster tempo that requires the doubles to be bounced.

## Example 1

### Single Flam

## Example 2

### Flam Paradiddle

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Example 3

**A**  $\text{♩} = 210$

R R L L R L L R R L

**B**  $\text{♩} = 184$

R R L L R L L R R L

**C**  $\text{♩} = 136$

R R L L R L L R R L

**D**  $\text{♩} = 118$

R R L L R L L R R L L R R L

**E**  $\text{♩} = 146$

R L R L R L R L R L R L

**F**  $\text{♩} = 146$

R L R L R L R L L - L R -

**G**  $\text{♩} = 146$

R L R L R L R - R L - L

**H**  $\text{♩} = 160$

R L R L R L R L R L R L



Example 4 is a musical example that incorporates the five-stroke roll.

Example 4

### Gimme Five

Lalo Davila

$\text{♩} = 120$

*f* R R L R L R - R L R L

R L R L R L R L R L etc.

*mf*

*p-mf*

R L R L R L R L R - R

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In Example 5, the same approach has been applied to the paradiddle. Follow the same guidelines as the five-stroke roll: Keep unaccented notes low, keep all accents the same height, and use a metronome to check your progress.

Example 5

<p>♩ = 150</p> <p><b>A</b></p> <p>R L R R L R L L</p>	<p>♩ = 100</p> <p><b>B</b></p> <p>R L R R L R L L</p>
<p>♩ = 130</p> <p><b>C</b></p> <p>R L R R L R L L</p>	<p>♩ = 110</p> <p><b>D</b></p> <p>R L R R L R L L</p>
<p>♩ = 124</p> <p><b>E</b></p> <p>R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L</p>	<p>♩ = 134</p> <p><b>F</b></p> <p>R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L</p>

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Example 6 incorporates the single paradiddle.

For a copy of the 40 P.A.S. International Drum Rudiments, contact the Percussive Arts Society at: [percarts@pas.org](mailto:percarts@pas.org). For additional examples of rudiments and sound bites see [www.jeffnet.org/bandworld](http://www.jeffnet.org/bandworld).

Lalo Davila is Associate Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at Middle Tennessee State University. He has

performed with and instructed the University of North Texas PAS Championship Drum Line and has served as an instructor for the Phantom Regiment and the Star of Indiana Drum and Bugle Corps. Davila is the author of *Contemporary Rudimental Studies and Solos* and is staff writer for Row-Loff Productions. He performs with several Latin groups including Orkesta EME PE, and has served as president of the Tennessee Chapter of PAS.

PN

Example 6

## Para Todos

Lalo Davila

$\text{♩} = 120$

**f**                      R L R R L                      R L R R L R L L R L R

**mf**                      R L R R L R L L R L                      R L R R L R L R R L R

**f**                      R L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L                      R L R R L R L L

R L R                      R L R R L R L L R L                      R L R R L R L L L R L                      R L R R L R L L L R L L

R L R R L R L L L R L                      R L R R L R L L L R L R L                      R L R R L R L L

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# The Irish Bodhrán

BY TERRY O'MAHONEY

With the recent worldwide success of the show *Riverdance*, the world has once again taken notice of Irish music and dance, and at the heart of it all is the traditional Irish drum, the *bodhrán*. Its thundering, primal sound creates the rhythmic foundation upon which the show is built. The *bodhrán* has long been an integral part of Irish music, but now musicians from around the world are starting to take notice of its awesome power and beauty.

The *bodhrán* (pronounced "bow-rawn") is a frame drum, like the American Native drum, African *tar*, and similar drums found in every culture around the world. *Bodhrán* is an Irish word meaning "deaf," "haunting," or "deep within" (meaning it is felt at "gut level"). It is a single-headed circular drum, usually eighteen inches in diameter, with a goatskin head that is glued and tacked to the frame like a tambourine. The rim may vary in depth from two to six inches and is usually constructed of ash, beech, or birch. The inside of the drum may be reinforced by up to two crossbraces, although many professionals prefer a completely open interior. It may be played with either the hands or a stick, although the use of a stick is probably the most common technique today. It produces a low, rumbling sound similar to a tom-tom. The drum functions as the rhythmic underpinning of a tune as well as a rhythmic reinforcement of the melody. What sets it apart from other frame drums, however, is the technique developed by the Irish to play their native drum.

## ORIGINS OF THE BODHRÁN

Like many aspects of history, the specific origins of the *bodhrán* are not absolutely certain. It was thought that the drum may have been brought to Ireland by invaders from the Roman Empire or by Arabic traders. It may have begun as a farm implement, a device used for separating wheat or for gathering turf (the peat fuel used to heat homes).

Origins aside, it was used for many years by the native Irish during celebrations, usually St. Stephen's Day (December 26), May Day (May 1), and St. Brigid's Day (February 1). During these celebrations, people would parade in costumes accompanied by the *bodhrán*. These early *bodhráns* usually contained two cross-braces, which strengthen the frame and provide a place to hold the drum while marching. The skins may have been of various origins, although goatskin has emerged as the most prevalent. When used in this setting, the drum was played without muffling and was quite loud.

The immediate predecessor to the *bodhrán*, at least in Irish popular music, was the tambourine. It was used for years as accompaniment for songs, but has been slowly replaced by the *bodhrán*. The tambourine's demise appears to coincide with the work of Sean O'Riada in the 1960s.

Sean O'Riada and his group *Ceoltoiri Cualann* set the stage for a resurgence in Irish music, perhaps coinciding with the "folk" movement occurring across the Atlantic in America, and the *bodhrán* was an integral part of it. His recorded work for

television and radio was fundamental in rekindling the interest of the Irish people in their own music. (*Ceoltoiri Cualann* no longer exists, but its members became the world-renowned Chieftains.) O'Riada began to prominently feature the *bodhrán* in his recorded work and helped popularize its use. Peadar Mercier was the first *bodhrán* player in *Ceoltoiri Cualann* and the Chieftains. In 1976, Mercier was succeeded by Kevin Conneff. The Chieftains' worldwide reputation has helped to elevate the profile of the *bodhrán* in recent years.

It is important to understand some basic terms in Irish music in order to correctly understand where the *bodhrán* fits into the Irish musical spectrum. When Irish musicians speak of "traditional music," they are generally referring to instrumental music often played for dancing. Their repertoire consists of jigs, reels, hornpipes, slip jigs, polkas, waltzes, and mazurkas. This music would probably be unfamiliar to most people outside of Ireland, with the possible exception of Irish music aficionados. Ensemble instrumentation varies but may include any of the following: violins (fiddle), tin whistle (or flute), banjo, accordion, guitar, or uilleann pipes (Irish bagpipe). This is a far cry from "folk music," which is what many people have come to identify as "Irish music." Folk music generally refers to pop songs sung to accompaniment of piano, bass, drumset, and guitars. Groups that typify folk music would include the Irish Rovers and the Clancy Brothers. The *bodhrán* is not generally used in folk music.

The *bodhrán* may be played as a solo instrument, as accompaniment to another solo instrument (often the tin whistle or flute), or as part of a larger ensemble. It is usually not played during ballads or when someone is singing. It gives a definite "lift" to the music when it enters, usually after the singer finishes a verse and an instrumental solo begins.

## PLAYING STYLES

The *bodhrán* was traditionally played while standing, dancing, or marching, but players today are normally seated. There are several reasons for the change to a seated playing position, including the use of microphones and the greater variety of nu-



Photo 1

TERRY O'MAHONEY

ance possible through the use of the left hand. The drum is tucked into the “crook” of the left arm, rested on the left knee (supported by the left hand) and struck with the right hand (Photo 1). There are many different methods of playing the bodhrán and styles vary from region to region in Ireland.

The most common is referred to as the Kerry style, named for the county in southwestern Ireland. In this style, the stick, or tipper, is held in the right hand (like a pen) and “brushes” the drum in an oblique manner (Photo 2). Players normally play, or “lead”, with the bottom of the tipper (point A). The opposite end of the tipper (point B) is used when a series of fast notes are required (e.g., triplets, rolls, and quick grace notes). Imagining the head of the bodhrán as a clockface, glancing blows are made from 9 o’clock to 6 o’clock (for downstrokes) and from 6 o’clock back toward 9 o’clock for upstrokes. Downstrokes or upstrokes (designated by a D or U) may or may not be accented.

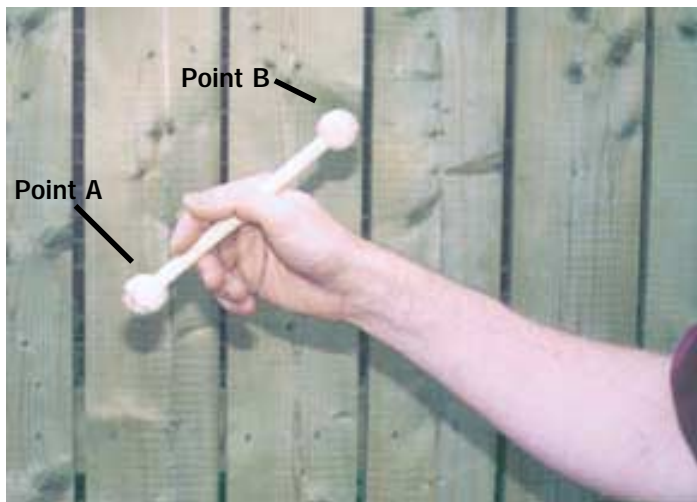


Photo 2

The right-hand motion requires a loose wrist movement and is similar to shaking water off one’s hands. The left hand is positioned inside the drum for support and may be pressed against the head in various ways to control the timbre, resonance, and pitch of the drum (Photos 3 and 4).

The bodhrán may also be played with just the hands. Some older styles use just one finger while others employ all four fingers of the right hand to strike the drum. This approach is also



Photo 3



Photo 4

excellent for softer playing. In the (County) Clare style, the knuckle of the right index finger is used to strike the head. Players from County Roscommon may use all of the knuckles as one unit to strike the drum with glancing blows. A West Cork style uses the thumb and little finger acting as the two ends of the beater. In this style, the thumb “leads” and plays most downstrokes while the little finger of the right hand is tightly curled to form a solid mass to strike the drum for upbeats.

Other sounds available to the bodhrán player include the rimshot, flam and glissando. The rimshot is simply a stroke on the edge of the drum where the skin meets the rim (Photo 5). Rimshots may be played on various parts of the head, at the discretion of the player (basically, the closest available area in line with the stroke pattern). Flams are played by quickly flipping the tipper so that the top of the tipper strikes the head just before the bottom. A glissando effect may be achieved by applying pressure with the left hand on the inside of the head, then slowly releasing the pressure as the hand slides down the



Photo 5



# HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS

Nominations are now being accepted for 1999 inductees into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame. This award is presented at the annual PASIC, this year to be held in Columbus, Ohio October 27-30, 1999.

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inside of the drum while the right hand plays a constant rhythm.

Playing the bodhrán requires mastery of the basic patterns, knowledge of the melodies and musical forms of the repertoire, as well as possible embellishments. Generally speaking, traditional players tend to play strong beats (1,2,3,4) as downstrokes and weak beats (the "ands" of the beat) as upstrokes. Players must walk a fine line between playing the basic patterns and accentuating the melody. One must "lay down the groove" and accent the melody, yet not be too obtrusive.

Bodhrán patterns fall into two basic categories: triple-meter patterns and duple-meter patterns. Examples 1-4 illustrate the triple-meter patterns, which includes the jig and mazurka (in 6/8 meter), the slip jig (in 9/8), slide (in 12/8), and the waltz (3/4).

Legend

D	U	Top of Tipper	
Downstroke	Upstroke	Rim	

Example 1: Basic Jig/Mazurka

D U D U D U    D    D U D U

Example 2A: Basic Slip Jig

D    U D U D U D U

Example 2B: Two-Bar Phrase Slip Jig

D U D U D U D U    U D U D U D U

Example 3: Slide

D U D U D U D U    U D U D U D U D U D U

Example 4: Waltz

D                    U                    D

Marches, reels and hornpipes are in 4/4 time, while the polka and some marches are in 2/4 (see Examples 5 and 6). Some hornpipes may be played with a little "swing" feeling (more like triplets) in addition to the duple feel as in Example 5C. Two styles of music may share the basic same pattern (e.g., the jig and mazurka) but are differentiated by tempo or form.

Example 5 A and B: Marches, Reels, Hornpipe

D    U    D    U                    D    U    D    U

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Example 5C: Hornpipe with "swing" feel

C.

D U D U D U

Example 5 D and E: Marches or Polkas

D. E.

D U D D U

Bodhrán players have even developed their own jargon. Their "roll" is not a roll in the traditional snare drum sense, but a four-stroke rhythmic figure, as shown in Example 6. Rolls are achieved by means of a quick wrist "snap," which produces a bouncing and pivoting action that pushes the top of the tipper toward the skin. It is the combination of the primary and the second downstrokes (using both the bottom and top of the tipper) and the following notes (an upstroke and downstroke) that constitute the roll. First acquiring this ability is similar to developing an open roll—it takes a great deal of time to relax enough to allow the stick to do the work.

Example 6

A. —Roll—

D D U D D D U D D U D D U

B. —Roll—

D U D U D U D D U D U D U

The triplet is played with the same motion as a roll but is rhythmically altered. Note that both the bottom *and* top of the tipper are used in the triplets and rolls.

Example 7

D D U D D D U D U D D U

After the basic patterns are mastered, the bodhrán player is free to improvise his or her part according to the music. Like most other music in the world, the accomplished players embellish the basic patterns. The first rule of bodhrán playing, however, is to *enhance* the music—not take over with a show of fancy techniques. Brian Buckle of the group Kilt aptly describes bodhrán playing as "doubling the melody rhythmically and approximating it pitchwise." This is often achieved by slightly altering the basic pattern by omitting or adding notes, making use of a slightly different timbre during a chorus or refrain (by applying more or less pressure with the left hand), adding a rimshot to the pattern when the music changes, or adding a fill at the end of a phrase to herald a transition. Examples 8 and 9 illustrate how one might perform one phrase of a reel or jig using the aforementioned techniques.

Example 8: Reel

D D U D D U D D U D D U D D U D

D D U D D U D D D U D

Example 9: Jig

D D U D U D D U D U D U

D U D U D U D U D U

In the spirit of innovation, some modern players are beginning to use non-traditional approaches to the instrument. Methods used by traditional frame drummers (e.g., playing with the fingers on the edge of the drum) are being used by some players. Other players are beginning to use the left hand to create counter-rhythms on the inside of the head, incorporating the use of a second tipper (for syncopated counter rhythms), using other types of tippers (like a double-ended wire brush) or holding shakers in the left hand (to create their own accompaniment) in the quest for new and different sounds.

Learning to play the bodhrán, like any other instrument, requires dedication and attention to detail. The best way to begin is by just *listening* to the music. Knowledge of the repertoire will go a long way to understanding what to do when you have

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Instruction books for the bodhrán are available from many sources. *The Bodhrán Book* by Steafan Hannigan and *Secrets of the Bodhrán* by Malachy Kearns are two good books on the subject. Hannigan's book is quite thorough and includes an appendix with numerous traditional melodies, which would allow the player to be joined by other instrumentalists, as well as learn the repertoire. The notation used in these publications is of the graphic variety—suitable for amateurs who do not read music—but musicians would still benefit from each book. Each book describes basic patterns, a brief history (a demonstration tape is also available with Hannigan's book), and other pertinent information.

Due to the unusual nature of playing the bodhrán, some players might find that books do not completely convey how to play the bodhrán and would prefer a more visual approach to learning. The best way to learn the proper technique is by watching someone else play. Seek out a local player or teacher to observe how he or she strikes the drum. If there are no bodhrán players in your area, there are several good videos on the market (see videography). *Bodhrán & Bones* by Mel Mercier is an excellent video for the beginner. It clearly shows the basic patterns, use of the left hand, the roll, and musical phrase structures, and it is accompanied by a short booklet. *Bodhrán, Bones, & Spoons* by Tommy Hayes is also an excellent video. Hayes demonstrates a number of different regional styles, his own unique approach, numerous alternative sounds (like rimshots and two-handed playing), and it progresses quickly. This video would be excellent for a player wanting to explore some advanced techniques. *Guide to Playing the Bodhrán* by Conor Long is also an excellent video for the beginner.

#### DESIGN AND MAINTENANCE

Bodhráns are made today according to ancient practices but with some modern improvements, according to Malachy Kearns of Roundstone Music in Connemara, County Galway (Ireland). He has been making bodhráns since 1975 and is a master bodhrán maker and player. The traditional bodhrán is a popu-

lar souvenir for tourists (and beginners) and may be found in a variety of sizes, from eight to twenty inches in diameter. The head is goatskin that has been specially treated (the exact details of which are a trade secret among bodhrán makers), then glued and tacked to the rim. He and his wife manufacture both traditional bodhráns as well as a tuneable bodhrán. The choice of most professionals, according to Kearns, is the eighteen-inch tuneable bodhrán.

The tuneable bodhrán was developed by Kearns (in conjunction with Donal Lunny and Johnny McDonagh) approximately fifteen years ago and works like the counterhoop of a timpani, only in reverse. The bodhrán head is tacked onto the shell of the drum and does not move. An inner tension ring is mounted inside the drum and pushes the head up and out in order to raise or lower the pitch (Photo 6). This ring is controlled by a series of small finger screws. The advantage of the tuneable bodhrán (which is evident to anyone who has played calf timpani heads) is the ability to control the pitch of the instrument when climatic changes occur. This system helps to maintain the characteristically low, deep, haunting sound of the bodhrán.

Kearns manufactures the bodhráns used by the percussionists in the *Riverdance* show as well as the drums carried on stage by the dancers. "I had worked with (composer) Bill



Photo 6

TERESA O'MAHONEY



Whelan over the years and he called me up and said he was writing a show that was to be 'driven by some powerful percussion.' He wanted drums that could be carried on stage—'some ethnic Irish drums.' So I took two bodhráns and connected them together with a unique soundbox and created the drums you see on stage," says Kearns. The drums create a lower sound than a traditional bodhrán but serve essentially the same purpose—to give a rhythmic drive to the music (Photo 7).

Tippers, or *cipin* (pronounced "kip-PEEN," Gaelic for "little stick"), come in a variety of sizes and shapes. Tippers were originally small legbones of sheep. Now made of various types of wood, the average tipper (if there is one) is approximately seven to nine-and-a-half inches in length with each end carved into a ball. Some tippers have small straps for stabilizing the beater in the player's hand. Exact lengths, weights, and designs may vary, based upon the player's skill level, dynamic considerations, and desired effect. The only criteria for a good tipper is its ease of use by the individual. Novices often find that a longer tipper is easier to manipulate. Beginners should select a tipper after examining a variety of different lengths. As previously mentioned, some players are experimenting with different tippers, even going so far as to construct tippers that are double-ended brushes for use in more jazz-like settings.

Bodhráns are extremely easy to maintain. The goatskin head needs conditioning occasionally with a good leather conditioner or dubbin (a conditioner used on footballs). This should be applied to the *outside* of the head. If properly maintained, a

head should last approximately ten years before needing replacement (if at all). Due to its organic nature, bodhráns should not be subjected to extreme changes in temperature or humidity (e.g., being left in the backseat of a car on a hot day) or the skin will split.

The head should generally produce a low, resonant sound (unlike their Arabic counterparts). If the head is a bit too tight, a little water may be applied to the inside of the head (although some people have been known to incorrectly recommend Guinness beer for this job). A sturdy carrying case and extra tippers are also necessities for every bodhrán player.

### THE BODHRÁN TODAY

"There are great bodhrán players in just about any town in Ireland; it's just that a lot of them do not play professionally," says Kearns. Some noted Irish bodhrán players include Tommy Hayes (Stockton's Wing, original member of *Riverdance* percussion section, *Rob Roy* soundtrack, freelance), Johnny "Ringo" McDonagh (DeDannan, Arcady, European/Australian tour of *Riverdance*), Colm Murphy (DeDannan, solo artist), Christy Moore (solo artist, Planxty), Jimmy Harris (U.S. tour of *Riverdance*), Robby Harris, Junior Davey, and Sean Halpenny. These are some of the players that set the standard in bodhrán playing today, are in demand as freelance players, and may be heard on numerous recordings and soundtracks (see Discography).

The tradition of bodhrán playing is perpetuated in Ireland by yearly competitions, known as the All Ireland Fleadh (pronounced *flah*, meaning "gathering of musicians"). It is held every year on the last weekend in August, often attracting as many as 130,000 people. An organization known as Comhaltas Ceolteoiri Eireann (CCE) is dedicated to the promotion of Irish music worldwide (32 Belgrave Square, Monkstown, Co. Dublin, (1) 2800-295, FAX (1) 2803-759). CCE organizes workshops and sponsors events in many countries around the world; check for local chapters).

There has been a renewed interest in the bodhrán in recent years outside of Irish musical circles, perhaps coinciding with the increase of interest in "world music." It is becoming an important addition to the percussionist's arsenal of instruments, according to Kearns. Glen Velez, for example, may be heard using it on his latest release, *Rhythms of the Chakras* CD (True Sounds M006D).

Bodhrán playing is not limited, however, to music by Irish musicians. It is also making a "comeback" in the music of a new generation of musicians. This genre has been labeled "Celtic rock" or "Celtic pop," a movement that is developing both in Ireland and abroad.

Celtic rock groups include Canada's Barra MacNeils (Lucy MacNeil), MacKeel (Randy MacDonald), Kilt (Brian Buckle), and Ireland's The Corrs (Caroline Corr). All of these groups use or have used the bodhrán in their music. While the music they perform is not completely traditional Irish music, they certainly draw influence from Irish music and use the bodhrán to help create that sound. Often, these groups' repertoires include traditional tunes such as jigs and reels performed in a more rock-oriented style with a backbeat or altered harmonies, but with traditional Irish instruments such as violin, tin whistle, and bodhrán.

Brian Buckle, of the Celtic pop group Kilt, jokingly refers to



Photo 7

MALACHY KEARNS

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ing” for his sound and blends the pop and Celtic tradition well.

Buckle began playing the bodhrán with friends, then “going down the long road of trying to learn a lot of tunes,” and trying to “find the sound” that fit the music. He combines traditional Irish rhythmic patterns, the grace-note articulation approaches of traditional melodies, as well as elements from other musical traditions in his music. “It’s a ‘sound box,’ so when I’m just laying down a groove, I can play Brazilian-inspired rhythms, create the sound of the surdo, or whatever,” says Buckle.

Interest in the bodhrán outside of Ireland is growing as well—even in cyberspace. Josh Mittleman, a bodhrán enthusiast, maintains a Website devoted to the bodhrán ([www.ceolas.org/instruments/bodhrán/](http://www.ceolas.org/instruments/bodhrán/)). It contains a great deal of information and visitors are encouraged to share ideas, reviews, and other information.

Due to its flexibility, resemblance to frame drums from other cultures, and universal sound, the bodhrán can easily meld with music of other cultures. Perhaps this is the dawning of a new age for the ancient Irish bodhrán. Pick one up (or pull it off the wall) and try it!

*The author wishes to thank Malachy Kearns of Roundstone Music, Josh Mittleman, and Brian Buckle for their tremendous assistance in the completion of this article. Excerpts from Kearns' books Wallup! and Secrets of the Bodhrán were paraphrased for this article.*

the bodhrán as “the drummer’s revenge—it’s light (in weight), you can take it to the beach, and you don’t have to cart a drumkit around.” Humor aside, he uses the bodhrán effectively as an integral part of a multi-percussion/drumset setup. He often plays the bodhrán with his hands while playing hi-hat and bass drum with his feet. He feels that this creates a “ground-

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### Discography

#### Bodhránist

Tommy Hayes

#### Artist

Kieran Hanrahan

#### CD title

*Kieran Hanrahan*

#### Record Company

Banner Discs

Tommy Hayes

*An Ras*

Mulligan

Colm Murphy

Colm Murphy

*An Bodhrán*

Gael-linn

Johnny McDonagh

Arcady

*After The Ball*

Dara

Kevin Conneff

Chieftains

numerous titles

Claddagh or Shanachie

Brian Buckle

Kilt

*Kilt*

Oh Ha

### Books

Hannigan, Steafan: *The Bodhrán Book*, Ossian Publications, P.O. Box 84, Cork, Ireland (available with tape).  
Kearns, Malachy: *Secrets of the Bodhrán*, Roundstone Music, Connemarra, Co., Galway, Ireland; Ph. [353] (95) 35808;  
Fax [353] (95) 35980; [www.bodhrán.com](http://www.bodhrán.com); e-mail: [bodhrán@iol.ie](mailto:bodhrán@iol.ie)  
Kearns, Malachy: *Wallup!*, Roundstone Music

### Videos

Hayes, Tommy: *Bodhrán, Bones, and Spoons*, C.W. Productions, Waltons Musical Galleries, 2-5 North Frederick Street, Dublin 2, Ireland

Long, Conor: *Guide To Playing the Bodhrán*, C.W. Productions

Mercier, Mel: *Bodhrán & Bones*, Interworld Music, RD #3, Box 395A, Brattleboro, VT 05301

### Websites

Malachy Kearns: Roundstone Music (Bodhrán maker), <http://www.bodhrán.com>; e-mail: [bodhrán@iol.ie](mailto:bodhrán@iol.ie)

Josh Mittleman: Bodhrán Homepage, [www.ceolas.org/instruments/bodhrán/](http://www.ceolas.org/instruments/bodhrán/)

Brian Buckle: Kilt Homepage, [www.kilt.ca](http://www.kilt.ca)

# Percussion Skills Class

## Preparing for the Future

BY JAMES K. ACKMAN

It's easy to imagine this scene: high school band directors looking over the score to a recently composed grade V work. The promotional CD of the piece sounds great, like something they would like their bands to play at the upcoming festival. But there's a real problem. The percussion parts are important and somewhat complicated, and the directors are wind instrument players whose experience with percussion is largely limited to the one-semester methods course they took in college.

Most of what they remember about that course was spending a great deal of time learning (and being tested on) rolls and rudiments. Perhaps they recall a discussion about mallet percussion, but they have no recollection of their feet ever touching timpani pedals. Simply put, a lot of what they need to know now for the new grade V work simply wasn't covered.

There is no easy, immediate solution to this problem for the band and orchestra directors now in the field. However, it is a situation that should not be perpetuated in today's music-teacher education programs. The percussion skills class needs to "bring more to the table," to use a current phrase. It is extremely important that this course offer future instrumental music teachers a solid introduction to the world of percussion as it exists today.

Essentially, the goal of the percussion skills class is to prepare undergraduate music majors to teach percussion in the public schools. In order to do so, these future instrumental music teachers need to acquire practical knowledge in four main areas of percussion performance: snare drum, timpani, mallet/keyboard, and accessory percussion. However, even this is limited, as it doesn't address the issue of whether to include other areas of study in the curriculum, such as drumset and ethnic percussion. So just what should a percussion skills course contain?

### CONTENT OF PERCUSSION SKILLS CLASS

Let's assume a sixteen-week semester, with the final week reserved for review

and preparation for the final examination. The semester course would consist of five three-week units:

1. Snare Drum, Bass Drum, and Accessory Percussion
2. Timpani
3. Mallet/Keyboard Percussion
4. Marching Percussion
5. Drumset and Ethnic Percussion

### SNARE DRUM, BASS DRUM, AND ACCESSORY PERCUSSION

This unit sets the tone for the course and thus should focus upon the musical aspects of snare drum, bass drum, and accessory percussion performance. Rudiments and rolls are the foundation of this portion of the course, but should not be emphasized at the expense of such aspects as dynamic shadings and musical interpretation. Students should become familiar with rudimental and matched grips, as both are used in public school band programs.

A basic understanding of how to produce a proper tone on bass drum as well as the appropriate method for rolls should be covered. Producing an appropriate tone also applies to accessory percussion commonly used in modern band literature: crash cymbals, suspended cymbal, tambourine, triangle, and claves, to name but a few.

Students would be required to demonstrate acceptable proficiency on snare drum by performing a brief etude selected by the instructor. This etude should reflect the areas of snare drum performance covered in this unit and include rudiments, sticking problems, and musical considerations such as dynamic contrasts and tempo changes.

### TIMPANI

Following the conclusion of the snare drum/accessory unit, students can be introduced to the technical and musical demands of timpani. In addition to a discussion and demonstration of the three basic timpani grips (German, French, and American) it is suggested

that students should also receive instruction in tuning, with a section devoted exclusively to interval and ear training. Students would be required to play a simple piece representing the concepts covered in this unit.

### MALLET PERCUSSION

The mallet percussion unit should cover main instructional considerations for beginners: scales, etudes, and sight-reading. Students would be required to prepare and perform an etude that reflects common problems confronting beginning mallet students. These include interval skips, cross-sticking considerations, and placement of music so that peripheral vision can be employed.

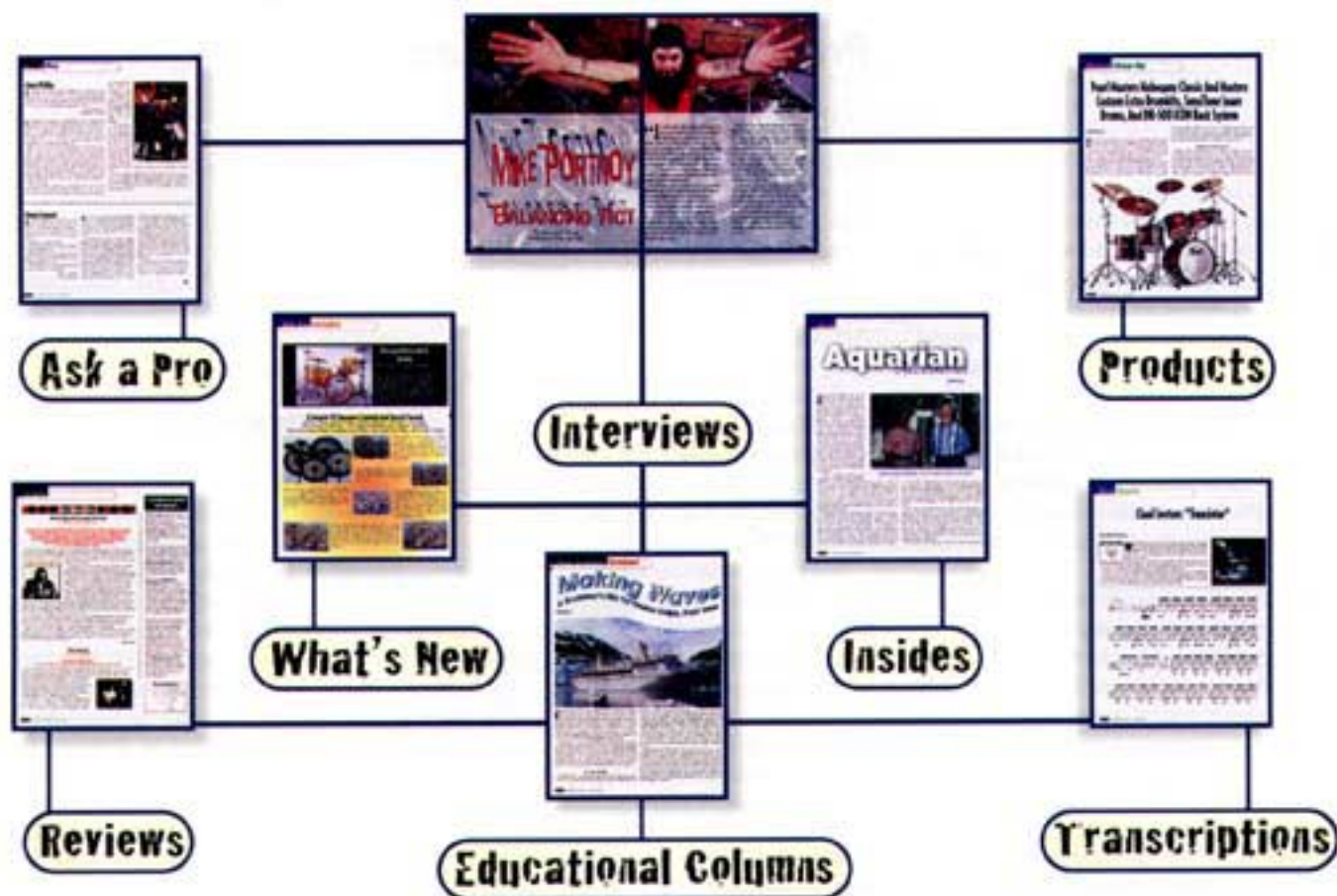
Keyboard percussion instruments commonly used in elementary, middle school, and high school instrumental music programs should be covered in this unit. These include xylophone, orchestra bells, marimba, chimes, and vibraphone. Students should also be introduced to various styles of four-mallet technique (standard cross-grip, Musser, Stevens, and Burton) because of its frequent occurrence in contemporary band, orchestra, and percussion ensemble literature.

It is assumed that students enrolled in undergraduate percussion skills classes are proficient in reading music. Consequently, there should be no need for rudimentary instruction of scales, clefs, or rhythms; thus instructors and students can focus on the musical and physical aspects of mallet percussion performance.

It is crucial to demonstrate the importance of teaching beginners snare drum and mallet percussion simultaneously. The reason for this is to avoid the most common pitfall in public school percussion instruction: students learning only one instrument, and then remaining on that instrument. The end result of this situation is often a lack of overall musical expressiveness on the part of student musicians.<sup>1</sup> Specialization is a crucial issue for percussion education because of the complexity of contemporary band mu-



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sic, with its enormous musical demands on the percussionist. Thus, if beginning percussionists learn to perform on only one instrument, there is a risk, at some point in their musical experience, that they will be unable to play the part assigned to them if it is not their specialty.<sup>2</sup>

### MARCHING PERCUSSION

The fourth part of the undergraduate percussion methods class is marching percussion. The reason for an entire unit being devoted to this area is that contemporary arrangements for marching band drum lines are quite often technically demanding and musically complex. Public school band directors can easily become overwhelmed without such knowledge.

The marching percussion unit should cover the basics of rudimental (double stroke) snare drum performance, tonal ("pitched") bass drums, tenor drum (four, five or six drums) combinations, special cymbal techniques, and mallet percussion, and the assembly of instruments (e.g., timpani, chimes, drumset) referred to as the "front ensemble" or "pit." Field placement of the drum line in relation to the band proper may also be discussed in this unit.

There could also be a class-participation segment in which the students utilize some of the tonal bass warm-up exercises by dividing up the class and clapping each part. This gives potential

music educators a taste of one of the most challenging aspects of playing marching bass drums: rhythmic independence of parts. It's easy to present and fun for the students.

### DRUMSET AND ETHNIC PERCUSSION

The final unit addresses the areas of drumset and ethnic percussion, specialized topics that frequently cause difficulties for band directors who have not had sufficient training in these areas. Students will be briefly instructed in the various styles of drumset playing: jazz, swing, rock, fusion, and ethnic styles such as Afro-Cuban. Also examined will be various performance situations involving the drumset: jazz band, pep band, pit band, and percussion ensemble. This will provide future band directors with basic and fundamental knowledge of jazz-style "swung" eighth notes, and the polyrhythms of Afro-Cuban music. This allows the directors to become familiar and more comfortable in teaching situations involving the drumset.

Ethnic percussion is a vast field. It contains such an enormous amount of different instruments, performance nuances, and style considerations that it can be taught adequately only as a separate course. However, undergraduate music majors often do not have the luxury in their degree programs of including an extra percussion class.

Nevertheless, it is essential that these future band directors become familiar with some of the major style influences in contemporary ethnic percussion: Afro-Cuban, Latin American, Brazilian, African percussion, and Eastern percussion. They should also become acquainted with some of the myriad and unique instruments (e.g., tablas, timbales, congas, steel drums) of this magnificently diverse field.

### CONCLUSION

The success or failure of music educators to transfer the theoretical knowledge of the college classroom into band rooms and music classes will greatly influence the future of percussion education in public schools. Percussion skills should provide a core of practical and usable concepts and musical skills upon which future music educators can draw when teaching percussion in public schools. This philosophy has been stated quite clearly in the PAS College Pedagogy Committee's suggestions for college percussion methods classes.<sup>3</sup> The quality of public school percussion education ultimately rests in the hands of its teachers. It is the challenge of percussion skills classes to give these hands the skills with which to succeed.

### ENDNOTES

1. Richard J. Colwell and Thomas Goolsby, *The teaching of Instrumental Music* (Second Edition), Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1992.
2. Kenneth A. Mueller, *Teaching Total Percussion*, Parker Publishing Company, Inc., West Nyack, NJ, 1992, pages 19-20.
3. Percussive Arts Society College Pedagogy Committee, "Standards for the College Percussion Methods Class," *Percussive Notes*, vol. 35 no. 3, 1997, pp 43-4.

James Ackman holds a Bachelors Degree in Music from Southern Illinois University, a Master of Music in Instrumental Conducting from Eastern Illinois University, and a Ph.D. in Music Education from the University of Florida. He has experience as a band director in Illinois and Massachusetts public schools, directed the Marching Band at Boston University, and is currently Drumline Instructor and Assistant Director of Athletic Bands at the University of Rhode Island.

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# Guidelines for Selecting Percussion Literature

BY MERI KRUEGER

One of the most important responsibilities facing musicians is the task of selecting worthwhile music literature for themselves and their students. Unfortunately, percussionists often find the search for quality literature to be frustrating. Why? There are three principal reasons. First, percussionists don't have a centuries-old, long-established body of literature from which to choose. Second, obtaining reliable information regarding the quality of percussion literature can be difficult because most music stores don't stock extensive supplies of percussion music for the few people who need it. Finally, professional recordings of music for percussion are still largely unavailable.

Musicians are obliged to choose the best music available to them. They must, therefore, arrive at some means of selectivity in order to determine whether or not a composition is well-crafted and musically valuable. This article contains guidelines that percussionists might use as they evaluate music literature.

## DETERMINING ARTISTIC MERIT

Music teachers and performers are called upon daily to make decisions about the quality of music literature. For me, using specific criteria for evaluating music has been very helpful. Below I have listed criteria for determining the artistic merit of a piece of music, which I formulated in conjunction with a doctoral dissertation I completed at The University of Texas at Austin. These criteria are based on guidelines used in a University of Iowa dissertation concerning music for wind band by Acton Ostling Jr., as well as the writings of Leonard B. Meyer, Ernst Toch, Alfred Einstein, Roger Sessions, and Leonard Bernstein. The criteria address craftsmanship, sensitivity and originality in the treatment of the materials of music.

1. The composition has form and reflects balance between unifying and contrasting events.

This statement requires two decisions: (A) Is the piece unified in perceptible, definable ways? (B) Are unifying and contrasting materials balanced with one another? In other words, does the unity or economy of material become monotonous? Does variety become chaotic?

Regarding unifying and contrasting events, Grove's Dictionary states "as long as musical sound consists solely of repetition, the monotone, it remains formless. On the other hand, when music goes to the other extreme and refuses to revert to any point, either rhythmic, melodic or harmonic, which recollection can identify, it is equally formless."

2. The composition activates tendencies toward particular goals, and presents temporary resistances toward, and inhibitions of those tendencies.

This statement addresses cumulative drama in music. Cumulative drama refers to an overarching sense of progress toward particular goals that supersedes temporary resistances toward those goals. Does the composition in question reflect a sense of accumulating drama as it moves toward points of rest and climax?

A number of artists and aesthetic scholars support the idea that artistic value is related to the inhibition of goal-related tendencies. Musical events occur within a context of stylistic probability, and therefore, proceed toward goals that are somewhat predictable. However, when music evolves from packaged formulas and proceeds immediately and directly to a goal, the value of the music is limited.

3. The composition reflects originality, without aiming at eccentricity or originality as its end result.

In his book *Greatness in Music*, Alfred Einstein examines factors of greatness in individual composers. Einstein states that not just originality, but an ability to incarnate a different kind of music than existed before is a factor in determining greatness. In his series of Norton Lec-

tures, Roger Sessions speaks about originality in music, stating that the "willing ear" hopes to find novelty in the sense of a composition with a face of its own. However, the novelty or inventiveness must be accompanied by substance that will remain after the novelty has worn away. Sessions speaks of music of substance as music that is somehow inexhaustible, as music that reflects a certain inevitability, where the composer's choices seem inevitable rather than contrived.

4. The composition reflects craftsmanship in orchestration, demonstrating balance between transparent and tutti scoring.

This statement concerns the composer's presentation of solo versus group textures and colors.

5. The composition reflects a musical validity that transcends factors of historical importance, or factors of pedagogical usefulness.

When considering the artistic value of a piece of music, a composition is to be considered only in terms of its significance as a musical work of serious artistic merit.

The core of my dissertation consisted of analyses of works for solo multiple percussion paired with another solo instrument. Using the guidelines delineated above, an evaluator committee of eight percussion teachers and performers selected pieces to represent works of high artistic merit in this specific genre. Compositions chosen for my project by the evaluator committee were "Sources III" by David Burge, "Variations for Four Drums and Viola" by Michael Colgrass, "Encounters III" by William Kraft, and "Duetto Concertante" by Ingolf Dahl.

Although space does not permit the inclusion of formal analyses here, those familiar with "Sources III," "Variations for Four Drums and Viola," "Encounters III," and "Duetto Concertante" can see that the guidelines suggested in this article apply to these pieces in a number of

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ways. For example, all four pieces exhibit form and balance between unity and variety. In music for solo multiple percussion and another solo instrument, the phrase “unifying and contrasting events” could include both the repetition and variation of musical material, and the juxtaposition of instrument similarities and differences, which involves the purposeful lessening of contrasts between percussion instruments and duet instruments on the part of the composer. Such lessening of contrasts creates segments that emphasize similar function and sound-quality capabilities between instrumentalists. Segments that emphasize similarities may then be juxtaposed against segments that accentuate inherent differences between the instruments, thereby creating areas of unity and variety. Each of the compositions listed above contains numerous segments in which contrasts between percussion instruments and duet instruments are purposefully lessened.

The four compositions also reflect balanced presentation of group and solo textures and colors. Quality music for this combination of players requires the execution of melodic material and supporting material, as well as lyrical playing, percussive playing, and the shaping of line in roughly equivalent proportion from both the percussionist and the duet instrument. In a situation where a solo wind instrument or a solo string instrument is paired with percussion, one might expect primary material to be placed with the wind or string instrument while percussion serves as accompaniment. However, in each of the pieces analyzed in my study, percussion instruments are frequently charged with the task of executing melodic material while duet instruments supply accompaniment. The pieces represent fairly equal distribution of primary material between instrumentalists, and each piece contains numerous solo passages.

Finally, each of the four pieces reflects a sense of cumulative drama. All four exhibit a progression of instances where structural and emotional peaks are presented simultaneously, creating an overall intensification of activity, density, and/or volume.

## SUMMARY

These guidelines represent criteria for evaluating musical works—criteria that

might be used to guide percussionists in their search for quality music literature. The author acknowledges that the criteria presented here were influenced by the particular literature chosen as points of reference. Conclusions regarding the work of another group of musicians and researchers could differ from conclusions presented in the guidelines listed above.

Because all musicians are obliged to arrive at some means of selectivity where literature is concerned, it seems that articles and studies that delineate concrete guidelines for determining the artistic merit of music literature are warranted and useful. It is hoped that the guidelines presented here will prove useful in the search for quality music for percussion.

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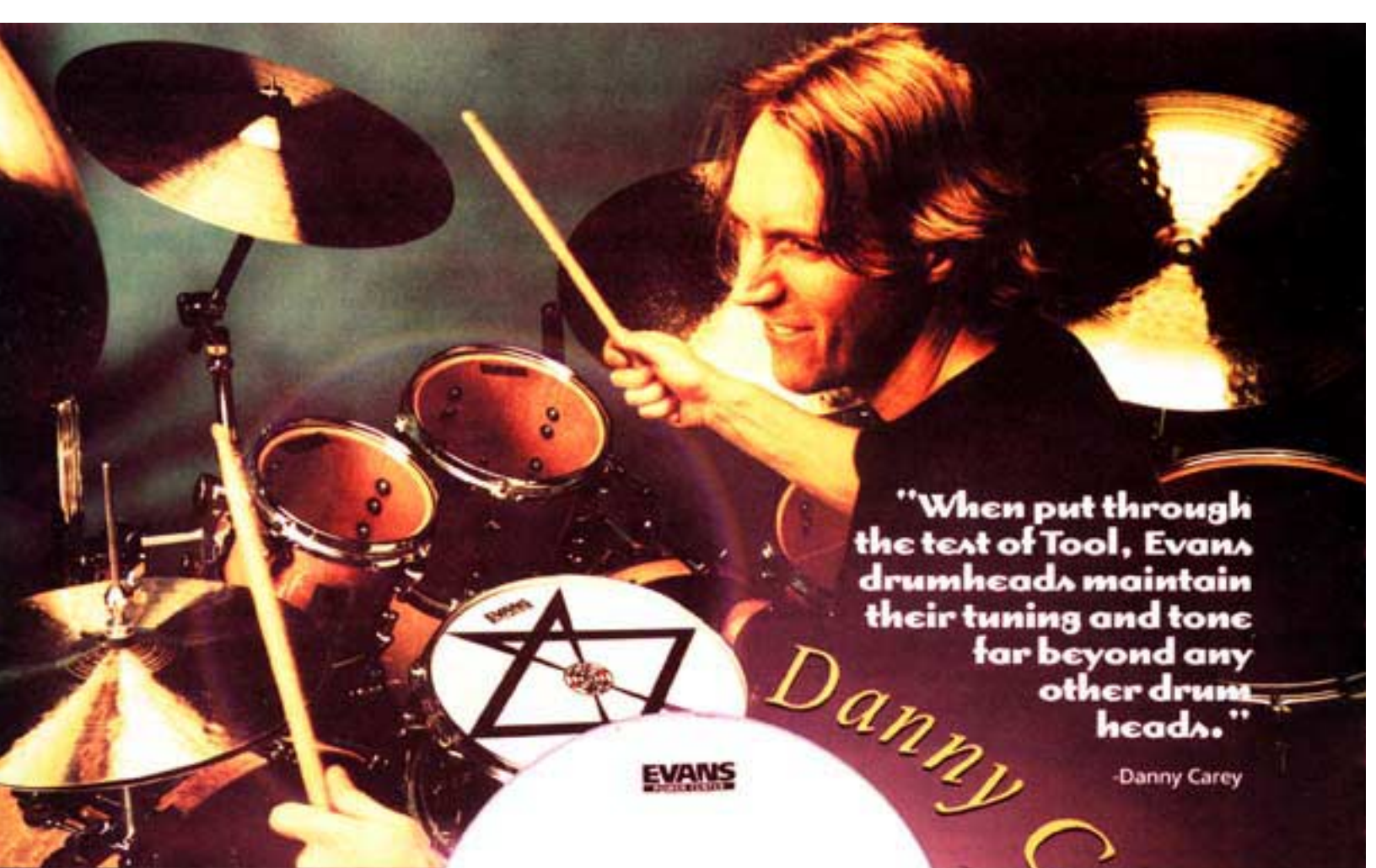
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Meri Krueger is a recent DMA graduate in the Applied Percussion program at The University of Texas at Austin. She teaches and performs in Austin and San Antonio, Texas, and also serves as a member of The Pulse Contemporary Music Project and its subgroup, The Pulse Percussion Project.



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# Discography of Unaccompanied Jazz Vibraphone

BY TERRY GUNDERSON

As Lionel Hampton observed, the vibraphone is “probably the most misunderstood instrument in music.”<sup>1</sup> Melodically it is not as expressive as a horn, harmonically it doesn’t have the range of a piano. Vibists’ identities so often seem to be defined by those around them. A combo instructor at a summer jazz improvisation seminar once told me “Don’t comp. Vibes can’t comp.” So, I became a horn. But, for the afternoon masterclasses, I was assigned to a piano sectional.

This fuzzy nature of the vibes’ identity can work for us if other members of the ensemble don’t have a strong opinion like the one expressed above. We can define our roles in musical situations to best suit us individually. The drawback to this approach is getting ourselves into those musical situations to start with. Band leaders rarely think of mallet instruments when considering either a rhythm section or lead role. We simply have to prepare ourselves as best we can for whatever opportunity we may find. One of the most important ways to prepare to play jazz is to listen to great jazz players.

Also, rather than wait for an opportunity to play with a group, play solo. As vibists, we know that unaccompanied vibes has been an exciting (if challenging) option since the 1960s when Gary Burton developed a four-mallet performance style reflective of the manner in which jazz pianists played. The history of unaccompanied jazz vibes can be traced as far back as October 16, 1930 with Lionel Hampton playing a three-mallet eight-measure introduction for a Louis Armstrong recording. As Hampton dryly observes, “That one cut, ‘Memories of You,’ wasn’t enough to get the whole music world behind the vibraharp as a standard instrument.”<sup>2</sup> Even three decades of exemplary playing by Burton and others has not elevated solo vibraphone to the status of commonplace.

Examples of solo vibes may not seem abundant, but there is a surprisingly

large number of recordings available to hear, study, and enjoy. The following discography started as an appendix to a dissertation on solo jazz vibes completed in 1992.<sup>3</sup> Additional entries have been made since then. It includes only examples of strictly unaccompanied performance (i.e. no rhythm section, etc.) that are, or have at some time been, available to the general public. Although it is a list of unaccompanied jazz vibes, I weighted the “unaccompanied” as slightly more important than the “vibes” part of the description (“jazz” pretty well takes care of itself). Therefore, some rare examples of solo jazz marimba are included. The focus is really on harmonically self-accompanied jazz mallet performance, but that makes for a particularly bleak title. Besides, after years of playing such a “misunderstood instrument” as vibes, I didn’t want to be the one excluding an even less common voice.

Included in the discography are short sections of solo playing which happened within the context of a group performance, such as intros, endings, etc. If it was just an introductory riff that acted as a background later, I may not have incorporated it. If I was uncertain about its suitability for the list, I tried to err on the side of embracing too much, rather than be exclusionary. If it could be a resource for solo jazz vibists, it should be made known.

Please keep in mind that this is a list of solo jazz vibe recordings, not a list of solo jazz vibe players. Outstanding solo performers may be missing or sparsely represented because their recorded output does not happen to include many unaccompanied tunes.

If you have any additions that can be made to this list, please contact the author at the postal or e-mail addresses below. This discography is available on the World Wide Web at [http://wind.cc.whecn.edu/~gundet/Solo\\_Vibes/Discography.html](http://wind.cc.whecn.edu/~gundet/Solo_Vibes/Discography.html) and will be updated as new entries are recorded or discovered.

My thanks to Russell Alexander, I. L. Barnes, Mark Andreas Geisecke, Russ Girsberger, Arthur Lipner, Eric Nemeyer, Robert Pelletier, and Dave Samuels for their contributions.

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Challenge your knowledge of jazz vibraphone players of the 1960s and 1970s: Access to a crossword puzzle devoted to the topic can be found at <http://wind.cc.whecn.edu/~gundet/crosswords/index.html>.

Terry Gunderson is author of the method book *Guide to Solo Vibraphone*, published by Mallets Aforethought Press.

He received his Doctor of Arts in Percussion Pedagogy/Performance from the University of Northern Colorado in 1992, his M.M. from the University of Miami in 1978, and B.M. from Colorado State University in 1976. He has been at Casper College since 1978 where he teaches Percussion, Theory, Music Technology, and Jazz History. PN



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# Donald Erb's "Concerto for Solo Percussionist and Orchestra": A Performance Guide

BY REGINALD KLOPFENSTEIN

The compositional output of Donald Erb consists of more than ninety works and includes orchestral, band, choral, mixed-media, and instrumental chamber works.<sup>1</sup> While the early part of his career reflects an emphasis on chamber music, in subsequent years Erb has composed many orchestral works. Among these is the "Concerto for Solo Percussionist and Orchestra."<sup>2</sup>

Erb's compositional method resists simple characterization; rather, his approach is very intuitive. Erb states, "I work by ear and by hunch. When I'm writing a piece, I use what seems right, I'm interested in communicating with an audience on many levels."<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere he adds, "I write music by ear. I write trying to give the music form and shape, by tempering it with drama and time. [I] deal with music the way I hear it on an instinctual level for climax, coloration, melody, ways of creating contrast, and so on and so forth."<sup>4</sup>

The concerto was commissioned by the Detroit Symphony and premiered on December 29, 1966 with Sixten Ehrling conducting and Robert Pangborn, Principal Percussionist, performing as soloist. The work has been recorded by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Donald Johanos conductor and Marvin Dahlgren soloist, on *Turnabout* (34433). The solo instrumentation, by movement is as follows:

I: snare drum, marimba, five temple blocks, four woodblocks, piano (played inside, on the strings)

II: vibraphone, xylophone, glockenspiel, chimes

III: snare drum, two bongos, two timbales, large and small tom-tom, bass drum with pedal, four suspended cymbals, castanets, whip, maraca.

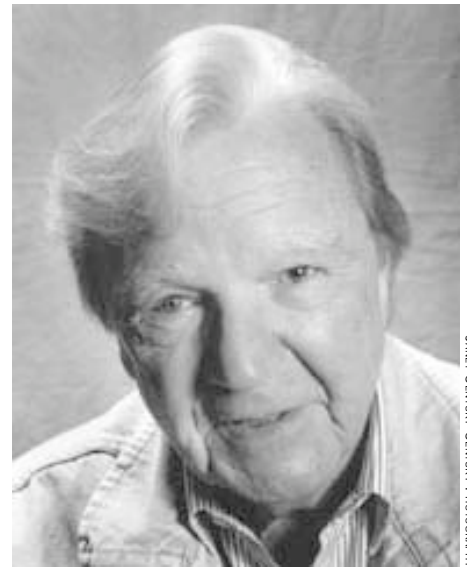
Performance problems encountered in the Erb may be clearly seen via the following topics: notation, setup, instrumentation and mallet selection, technique

and balance consideration. This article presents my own observations as well as those of several other percussionists and the composer. While these comments are directed toward percussionists studying the concerto, much of the information given will also be of interest to those involved with multiple percussion performance in general.

## NOTATION

Notational methods vary greatly in multiple-percussion literature. Donald Erb utilizes staff notation throughout his percussion concerto. No symbols are used; rather, instruments are indicated in English, at times using abbreviations. Erb employs up to three staves at a time, but most frequently uses two. The notation of the "inside piano" passages utilizes two staves, grouped by rectangles. Approximate pitch ranges for these passages are indicated simply as high, medium and low.

In the third movement an ambiguity occurs in the solo part, where Erb requests two tom-toms, one large and one small. It is not always clear which tom-tom is being indicated. In mm. 41 and 53 Erb requests a tom-tom without specifying its size. The composer has verbally indicated that in both measures it is only the smaller tom-tom that is to be played.<sup>5</sup>



Donald Erb

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Erb gives a considerable amount of freedom to the soloist in movement three and, to a lesser degree, movement two. The two cadenzas of the second movement feature several long, melismatic passages for xylophone. These are notated as a long series of eighth notes, whose stems extend past the beam (see Example 1). In the preface to the score Erb explains that this notation, used elsewhere in the concerto, indicates notes that are to be played as fast as possible.

Example 1: Donald Erb, "Concerto for Solo Percussion and Orchestra," beginning of m. 14 of movement two. Copyright © 1972 Merion Music, Inc. Used by Permission.



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Occasionally the composer reiterates the notation with English instructions to the same effect. In other places in the cadenzas of movement two Erb notates conventional eighth notes; hence the performer must be careful to distinguish between the two notations (see Examples 2 and 3). Two different approaches to the realization of these passages will be discussed later. Movement three contains several short improvisatory passages for which the performer is given only general prose directions. In mm. 67–68, for example, Erb instructs the percussionist to “improvise fast on everything.” Such an indication obviously allows the performer great freedom.

## SETUP

No setup plan is given by Erb for any

of the movements of his percussion concerto. However, at the beginning of each movement of the solo part, he indicates the instruments used in that movement. Thus, after becoming familiar with the notation and instrumentation of the solo part, the percussionist must develop a

suitable setup plan.

Robert Pangborn, soloist for the premiere, states that he and Donald Erb did not discuss specific setup plans. Erb asked Pangborn what instruments he would like to use and how much space there would be on the stage. Together

Example 2: Donald Erb, “Concerto for Solo Percussion and Orchestra,” end of m. 14, m. 15 of movement two. Copyright © 1972 Merion Music, Inc. Used by Permission.

Example 3: Donald Erb, “Concerto for Solo Percussion and Orchestra,” m. 34 of movement two. Copyright © 1972 Merion Music, Inc. Used by Permission.





Robert Pangborn

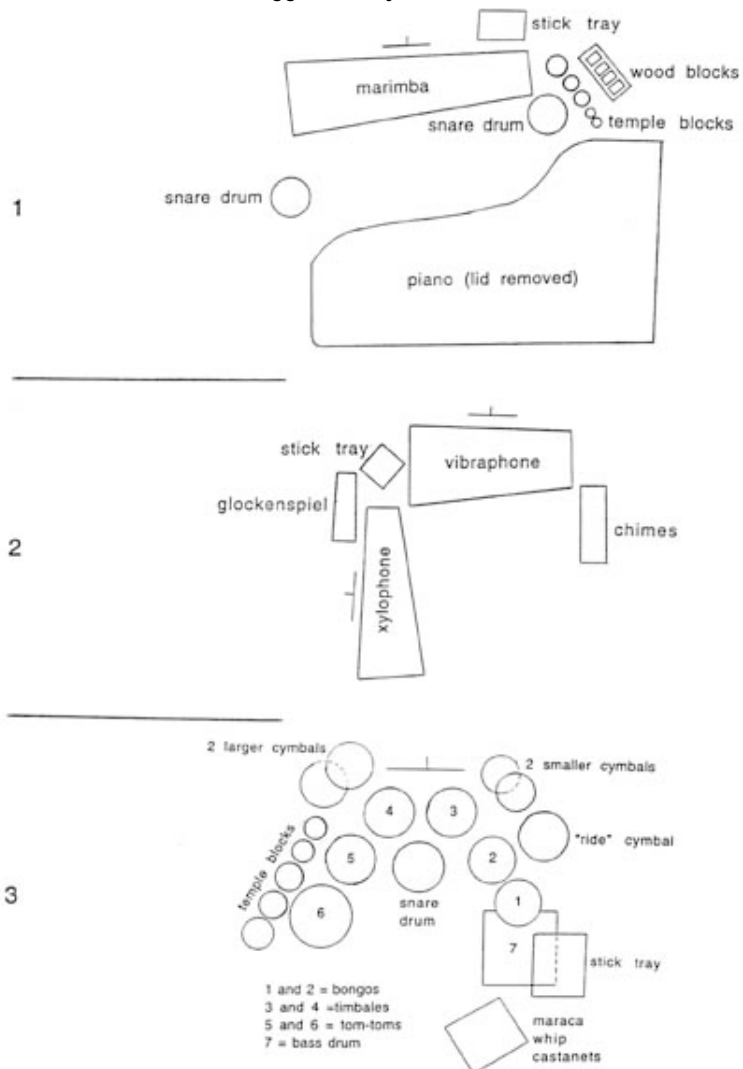
they decided to utilize a separate group of instruments for each movement. Details of how those instruments would be arranged was left to Pangborn.<sup>6</sup>

Figure 1 shows the setups I suggest for each of the movements. The setup for movement one is partially dictated by the piano and the marimba, which must be near one another due to the frequent and quick changes between them. The lid of the piano must be removed, as indicated in the preface, to allow easy and rapid access to its strings.

Richard Weiner, Principal Percussionist of the Cleveland Orchestra, used two snare drums for the first movement in his performance of the work with that orchestra. He suggests using one drum for the roll in mm. 1-9, which starts at an extremely soft dynamic level. The second drum would be used for the remaining snare drum passages of the movement, all of which are at a dynamic level of *forte* or louder.<sup>7</sup> Specific suggestions for these drums will be given later in this article.

Placing the louder snare drum, woodblocks and temple blocks to the right of the upper notes of the marimba allows the soloist to usually face forward or to the right (See Figure 1, no. 1). If these instruments are placed to the left of the performer, body movements become more extreme and cover more physical space within the setup. If music is used for the performances, pages two to four of the solo part still must be

Figure 1: Donald Erb, "Concerto for Solo Percussion and Orchestra," setup plans for each movement, suggested by author.



Richard Weiner behind setup for third movement

memorized. There is simply not enough time to look at the music in this section, which involves a great deal of inside-the-piano work.

The setup for movement two of the Erb concerto is fairly straightforward (see Figure 1, no. 2). The glockenspiel and chimes are used very little; therefore, they are placed in the most accessible position within the setup. The glockenspiel should be raised higher than the xylophone and tilted slightly toward the player to make it easier to reach. I would not overlap the glockenspiel directly above the xylophone because doing so would impede access to the latter instrument's upper register, which is used extensively.

The chimes are located next to the vibraphone so the player can control the foot dampening pedal of each instrument simultaneously, necessary in m. 49–50. A stage weight, or similar object, can be used to hold down the vibraphone pedal in mm. 12–18, to be removed in m. 19. In mm. 12–18 the xylophone must be played while previously struck bars of the vibraphone continue to sound. Richard Weiner designed an easily released device that held down the vibraphone pedal, thus making a stage weight unnecessary.<sup>8</sup>

Movement three can be set up several different ways. Figure 1, no. 3 illustrates a possible arrangement. The first consideration is whether the player will stand or sit. The style and instrumentation, including a pedal-operated bass drum, imply a drumset arrangement (with the player seated). However, some percussionists may prefer to stand, which allows for greater freedom of movement in the upper body. The most important factor is that the player feel comfortable with the setup.

The timbales can be placed directly behind the snare drum, with the bongos to the right of the timbales. These five drums are often used in quick succession. The tom-toms and temple blocks are used less frequently and are placed in a slightly less convenient position.

I suggest that the cymbals be separated into two pairs. In each case the cymbal on the player's right is raised above the one on the left and overlaps it slightly, thus creating a more compact setup. I also suggest adding a fifth cymbal, though only four are called for, placing it behind and above the bongos. This should be a rather thick cymbal, similar

to that used by jazz drummers as a "ride" cymbal, and could be used for the repeated triplets that Erb scores (e.g., mm. 85–99). Using an extra cymbal also allows the percussionist to position the cymbal used in these measures in a more convenient position, permitting the left hand to more easily reach the bongos and timbales.

Another factor affecting the setup of movement three is the improvised *cadenza* in which the performer is given almost complete freedom. Particular ideas, gestures, etc. used by the soloist might dictate a particular setup, especially if certain instruments are to be emphasized. Thus the setup of movement three will be as personal as the musical expression of the player.

#### INSTRUMENT AND Mallet SELECTION

Like several other composers of percussion concertos, Erb isolates the keyboard percussion instruments, using them only in the second movement, and excludes timpani from the solo instrumentation. Several details in regard to specific instrument choices need to be addressed. The first aspect concerns the snare drum used in movement one. The drum used in mm. 1–9 must be responsive in the very soft dynamic range. A drum with snares made of wire, or a combination of wire and cable or wire and gut, will facilitate a sensitive snare response in the soft dynamic range. The

snares can be tightened later in the movement for louder passages. If two snare drums are used for the first movement, as suggested by Richard Weiner, the player can choose a drum that is ideal for the opening, without regard to its sound in other passages.

The designation of large and small, for the tom-toms used in movement three, should be interpreted relative to each other. Any tom-tom that would really be considered small would be smaller than the timbales. Such an instrument would be higher in pitch than the timbales and thus would destroy the high-to-low pitch graduation implied in the music. Tom-toms of approximately fourteen inches and sixteen inches in diameter would be an appropriate combination in context with the timbales and bongos.

In mm. 70–72 of movement three, Erb calls for a sustained maraca sound. The material inside the maraca should be rather fine, helping to create a smooth, seamless "roll" sound. (This sound, which must be played with one hand, is best produced with a circular motion.)

Mallet indications are helpful but rather general. At times, no mallet indications at all are given to the percussionist, thus allowing the player considerable freedom in mallet selection. Rather than list every mallet specified by Erb, I will simply give suggestions for a few of the more notable instances.

The medium mallets specified for mm.

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10-16 of the first movement are initially used on marimba (mm. 10-13) but must be hard enough to also sound well on the woodblocks (mm. 14-15). Later in the same movement (mm. 19-51) Erb requests hard mallets. This section requires the percussionist to perform often on the strings of the piano. Thus the player should experiment with various mallets to find a pair that will sound good throughout the register of the piano. After trying many different mallets, I selected a pair of glockenspiel mallets with soft plastic heads. These mallets projected plenty of brightness and worked well on the high as well as low strings. A mallet head that is not particularly large will help the player to avoid hitting too many strings simultaneously. One must remember that the strings of the piano are closer together than the bars of standard keyboard percussion instruments.

In movement two no mallet indications are given until m. 41, where the composer specifies yarn mallets. Most of the playing is on vibraphone and xylophone, at times switching rather quickly between the two instruments. Percussionist

David Davenport's solution was to use "some very hard yarn mallets that worked well on both xylo and vibes...plus I used a softer pair for some of the vibes passages."<sup>9</sup> Conversely, Weiner suggests that two mallets be held in each hand for



David Davenport

some of movement two: vibraphone mallets in the outside position and xylophone mallets in the inside position.<sup>10</sup> The soloist certainly has the opportunity to be very imaginative in the choice of mallets and how they will affect the timbre of various passages in this "night music" movement.

Erb's most unusual mallet request occurs in movement three where he specifies "knitting needles" for use on the suspended cymbals (see mm. 20-26). I experimented with several sizes and eventually selected a pair of knitting needles fourteen inches long and three and one-half millimeters in diameter. I used the reverse ends, rather than the tips, because the metal cap attached to these ends created a beautiful, shimmering timbre that contrasted nicely with the wood snare drum sticks used for most of the movement.

### TECHNIQUE AND BALANCE CONSIDERATION

Ironically, the most technically demanding passage of the Erb concerto is one that seems quite simple, at least to non-percussionists. The long and very soft snare drum roll (solo) that opens the concerto requires expert technique and controlled nerves. Percussionists practice for years perfecting the roll and most would agree that a soft, solo snare drum roll is one of the most difficult techniques to master. Control, balance between the hands, and endurance must be gained in the practice room. Once these have been attained, the percussionist can focus on keeping a relaxed and confident attitude in performance.

Several aspects relating to playing the piano strings must be mentioned. The upper strings are, of course, shorter and tighter than the lower strings and do not respond as easily. The player, therefore, has to work a bit harder in the upper register in order to balance the lower strings.<sup>11</sup> Because of the metal frame inside the piano, which in effect divides the strings into several sections, some stick doublings (consecutive strokes by the same hand) will be necessary. Pangborn found it helpful to mark certain strings as an identification aid, even though exact pitches are not indicated.<sup>12</sup> Even if not marked, the player must decide where the various ranges (high, medium and low) will be played. Finally, it should be mentioned that the duration of the pi-



ano notes is controlled by the orchestra pianist, not the soloist. (See m. 27 of movement one in the full score.)

The previously referred to “fast as possible” passages in movement two can be interpreted in various ways. Weiner believes they should be played very fast, approximating the speed at which one would roll on the xylophone.<sup>13</sup> Davenport generally plays these passages fast but with a bit of freedom. He states, “I found smaller patterns contained in the long lines, groups of two, three, four, five, or six notes...and so I phrased these seemingly long and shapeless patterns in this way.”<sup>14</sup>

In mm. 36-40 of movement two the soloist must play the xylophone with the rattan ends of the mallets. This is an interesting sound but the percussionist should overplay the dynamics somewhat or the sound will not project well. The *diminuendo* in these measures should not be too sudden, for the same reason.

A balance consideration in the third movement concerns the relative projection of the snare drum, bongos, timbales and tom-toms. The timbales and tom-toms will need to be played slightly stronger than the bongos and snare drum if they are to be balanced, due to the bright sound of the snare drum and the high pitch and penetrating timbre of the bongos. I suggest that the temple blocks be played with the shoulder of snare drum sticks, rather than the tip. Doing so will give the temple blocks a rounder, more idiomatic sound. Very often, temple blocks are played with rubber mallets, but they cannot be played this way in movement three because there is insufficient time to switch mallets (see mm. 31-36 and 41).

Independence between the hands is also a consideration in movement three. In mm. 85-99 the soloist plays steady triplets on a suspended cymbal with one hand while the other hand plays the snare drum, bongos and timbales. The resultant rhythmic counterpoint often requires the percussionist to play two-against-one patterns, in a manner similar to that used by jazz drummers. If the player is not proficient in hand-to-hand independence this passage will require extensive practice.

Interpretation and performance of the cadenza of movement three warrant some discussion. Erb dictates (in prose) only the broad shape of the cadenza,

leaving the soloist to improvise the materials. He also dictates the duration, approximately one minute, but most performers have played it longer than that, which has actually become the composer's preference.<sup>15</sup>

As one might expect, several different approaches have been taken by various percussionists to this cadenza. Pangborn improvised it at the premiere perfor-

mance, “firing from the hip.”<sup>16</sup> Weiner worked out his cadenza ahead of time and favors an abstract approach that incorporates material from the concerto, but he allows for contemporaneous freedom of thought during the execution of the cadenza. He believes that the cadenza should not sound like a drumset solo or incorporate typical drumset beats.<sup>17</sup> Weiner and Pangborn both sug-

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gest that the soloist work out a subtle but recognizable cue to aid the orchestra's entrance at m. 103.

Davenport's approach is similar to that of Weiner in that he prepared the cadenza ahead of time. However, he did not strictly adhere to his prepared cadenza in the actual performance, allowing himself some freedom and spontaneity.<sup>18</sup> Marvin Dahlgren's approach is rather free in terms of its relationship to the materials

of the concerto as a whole. At times it reflects a drumset approach in the types of gestures utilized. The "soft sporadic" section is more abstract and also includes effective use of brushes.<sup>19</sup>

My own preference is for a basically abstract cadenza that incorporates specific motives from the work, but also allows the soloist some freedom. Important motives from any of the three movements can be effectively utilized. Other prominent sounds from the concerto, such as snare drum rolls and rimshots, could also be creatively incorporated.

Donald Erb's percussion concerto is an important and appealing composition. It poses substantial technical and interpretive challenges worthy of any percussionist.

Editor's Note: In the second movement, the original scoring for the vibraphone included a high G-natural, notated one note above the range of the instrument, in measure 45, near the end of the movement. For my first performance of the concerto, in December of 1972, I persuaded the Deagan company to manufacture this note for me. Since there is no high E-flat in the work, I placed the new G-natural in the E-flat position. Having this note allowed me to keep the line intact. I have found that composers often make this type of mistake when they compose at a keyboard. Intellectually they are cognizant of the range of the specific instrument, but they just get carried away while composing. Dr. Erb realized his mistake early on, but so far as I can ascertain, not many early performers of the work went as far as I did. The note has been placed one octave lower in later versions of the score and part.—Richard Weiner

## ENDNOTES

1. Catalog of published works of Donald Erb. (Bryn Mawr, PA: Merion Music, Incorporated c/o Theodore Presser Company).
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5. Donald Erb, telephone conversation with author, August 4, 1998.
6. Robert Pangborn, telephone conversation with author, July 13, 1995.
7. Richard Weiner, telephone conversation with author, July 15, 1995.
8. *Ibid.*
9. David Davenport, letter to author, March 1995.
10. Weiner, telephone conversation.
11. Weiner, telephone conversation.
12. Pangborn, telephone conversation.
13. Weiner, telephone conversation.
14. Davenport, letter to author.
15. Donald Erb, telephone conversation with author April 13, 1995.
16. Pangborn, telephone conversation.
17. Weiner, telephone conversation.
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# Rossini Revisited

BY MICHAEL ROSEN

Q. *I heard a performance of Rossini's "Overture to The Barber of Seville" last night. I was under the impression that bass drum parts of the late 18th and early 20th centuries often were written with the tacit understanding that cymbals would double the bass drum "ad libitum." I am writing to clear up any misinformed presumptions I may have. What is the standard performance practice of Rossini bass drum parts that do not contain separate cymbal parts?*

—Gregory White

A. There are several editions of each of the Rossini overtures. Some have cymbal parts written with the bass drum parts and some don't. It was the practice at the time to add the cymbal part to the bass drum part. However, in many of the small Italian cities where Rossini's operas were performed there either wasn't an extra percussionist to play the cymbal part or, as Rossini made allusions to in a letter, the percussionist was drunk and couldn't play the part! Often the bass drummer played the cymbal part with a bass drum/cymbal attachment. The result was that some music was copied with the cymbal part written in and others weren't; but it is generally believed that Rossini wanted the cymbals played with the bass drum.

Through the years different parts have circulated and been published, which has led to the confusion about the bass drum/cymbal problem. The solution has often been left to the conductor's discretion unless the cymbal part appears in the music. Some of the overtures seem to sound better with the cymbals and others without because of the nature of the music. Obviously you should play the part that is on the music stand unless you discuss it with the conductor before the first rehearsal.

I suggest you listen to the recording of Rossini Overtures by the Chamber Orchestra of Europe conducted by Claudio Abbado (DGG431653-2). I particularly like the choice of cymbals with the bass drum in these performances, although I don't agree with the type of cymbals the percussionist used.

Renato Meucci, Professor of History of Musical Instruments at the University of Parma and a specialist in the music of Rossini, responded in the following manner: "The matter of the presence (or not) of bass drum/cymbal parts among today's orchestral scores in the music of Rossini is not based on the original instrumentation; it is usually the result of modern performance practices. It is, in fact, necessary to distinguish between a "historically informed" performance, in which "authenticity" is researched (at least as much as possible) and one in which it is not. In the latter case it seems enough to rely on the conductor's ear and musicality, as well as modern orchestral performance practices in order that the bass drum and cymbals will balance well in the orchestra. In such a performance there is no need for a discussion of this topic.

"However, a completely different situation arises in the former case when a conductor is trying to recreate original performance practices. In this case a historical knowledge would be

a matter of necessity and I highly recommend consulting Rossini's critical edition. The standard reference scores (published by Fondazione Rossini, Pesaro) contain a great deal of information on many topics, including percussion. Relying in this edition, for example, Claudio Abbado decided to include the jingling johnnie (cappel cinese) in his Phillips recording *Barbiere di Siviglia*. [The cappel cinese consists of a dowel as much as six feet long to which are attached various bells, crowned with a Turkish crescent with horsetail ornaments hanging from it. To play, the percussionist strikes it on the floor and all the bells jingle in rhythm.—M.R.] The part for this instrument was never written down by the composer! In addition, one should take into consideration that performances would change significantly according to local availability and requirements. A small orchestra might not have all the instruments designated in the original score and would, therefore, perform with less than what was requested. On the other hand, a large orchestra may have had one outstanding instrumentalist who played a part that was never written down but was added on the spot!

"In any case, it seems that the use of percussion in Rossini's music was rather loose. In general, in larger opera halls such as La Scala in Milan and San Carlo in Rome, musicians were hired to play the gran cassa (bass drum), piatti (cymbals), cappel cinese (jingling johnnie), triangolo, and tamburo (drum) in addition to timpani. In minor theaters the situation was different. Only one player was hired to play bass drum with a cymbal attachment, but nowadays we have no need for such a reduction. What is more relevant, in my opinion, is the fact that cymbals were much smaller and softer in Rossini's time and that the use of the cappel cinese has disappeared in modern times. Luigi Picchianti wrote in 1830 that '*I Piatti Turchi ed il Padiglione o Cappelli Cinese sono strumenti ritmici che vanno sempre uniti alla Gran Cassa, affine di rendere in qualche maniera armoniosi I fiochi colpi di quel Gran Tamburo. Essi non si scrivono separatamente.*' [The Turkish cymbals and the jingling johnnie are rhythmic instruments that are always played in conjunction with the bass drum in such a way as to create a harmonious and excellent blend. They are not written separately.—translation by Mike Rosen]."

While I was at it, I asked Signore Meucci about the sistro in "The Barber of Seville" by the same composer. Faithful readers of this column might remember that I dealt with this term in the Vol. 34., No. 4, August, 1996 issue of *Percussive Notes*. Dave Searcy, timpanist in La Scala in Milan told us that it is played with orchestra bells in his orchestra. However, Signore Meucci clears up some confusion with the following response: "As regards the 'sistro,' it is no doubt the name of triangle, and the use of the plural, sistri, in 'Barbiere' ['Barber of Seville'] (nontuned instruments) may have had a more general sense, such as for example, triangle and jingling johnnie (cappel cinese). The tradition of a glockenspiel being used for a sistro dates back only to the end of the 19th century!" So this is the expla-

nation of why it is tradition to use glockenspiel in this opera. However, it doesn't explain why there are different pitches indicated in the music. Stay tuned for further developments!

Please send questions about Terms Used in Percussion to Mike Rosen at michael.rosen@oberlin.edu or Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH 44074.

Michael Rosen is Professor of Percussion at Oberlin Conservatory of Music where he teaches, conducts the Oberlin Percussion Group and is director of the Oberlin Percussion Institute. He served as Principal Percussionist with the Milwaukee Symphony from 1966 to 1972 and has performed with the Cleveland Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, the Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Grand Teton Music Festival. Rosen has served on the PAS Board of Directors and is an associate editor of *Percussive Notes*.



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# Drums, Not Drugs

BY EDWARD E. MIKENAS

**S**hamans in Mongolia, griots in Africa, medicine men of the Native American nations, and healers of other non-technological societies that preceded us have used drums to assist in maintaining the wellness of their cultures. As a substance abuse counselor and musician working with adolescents, I've had many occasions to witness how drums can help people who are recovering from alcohol and drug abuse.

Addiction is a disease of the feelings. People can sit in A.A. meetings for months before they are able to start talking about how they feel. The reason for this, in my view, is that unexpressed feelings create energy blockages. Helping people remove these blockages is an important part of substance abuse treatment.

One day it occurred to me that if sound is energy in motion, feelings (expressed) are also energy in motion. If people in recovery have difficulty expressing their feelings through the medium of language, perhaps they could express themselves in another rhythmic sound medium, such as participation in a drumming group. This article describes what I have experienced in exploring the use of drums and other percussion instruments to assist people in the regenerative process of recovery.

At twenty weeks of gestation the human ear is completely developed. During the twenty-first week, it begins sending messages to the brain (Nelson, 175). Thus, while there may be a continuum of developing awareness as the fetus grows, it is conceivable that the first *event* of conscious awareness is the hearing of sound. We don't see, taste, smell, or experience touch until months later because there is nothing to compare these sensations to. The second thing we do consciously is move to the sounds that we hear. As soon as we are born, we experience hot and cold, light and dark, hard and soft, wet and dry, empty and full. Thus, the third thing we do as conscious humans is *feel*.

Our very being, then, is shaped from the beginning by responding to sound. Berendt points out that the word "per-

son" in its root, *personare*, means "to sound through something" (171). Our early survival depends, in part, on the sounds we make and how those sounds are responded to. If the sounds we make are responded to appropriately, we have our needs met. If we are not responded to appropriately, or at all, we *make sounds* until our needs are met. In doing this, we practice our first manipulation of adults. If we must regularly manipulate adults in order to have our needs met, we may develop a chronic sense of dis-ease. This awareness of dis-ease is *pre-verbal* and *sound/energy based*.

Thus, our sense of self (the result of self-generated sounds that have been responded to in various ways) may be deficient as we mature. When we reach puberty, we develop new bodies, new sounds as our voices change, and new emotional needs. Now we increasingly have the need to self-express as our adulthood forms itself. We learn to communicate with those most likely to hear us: our peers, or our perpetrators. Thus, in the second most important developmental stage of our lives, we are recognized—or not—by the sound we make.

Tragically, our society tends to punish adolescents for their need to self-express. They regularly hear things like: "Don't say that." "I don't want to hear it." "I can't hear you when you talk like that." "Kill that noise!" An adolescent's need to self-express can be easily stifled and his or her ability to have needs met can atrophy, along with any sense of confidence and self-esteem. If things get bad enough, adolescents may look for radical ways to change how they feel as a way to managing the experience.

Part of the problem is that adolescents are dealing with adults who literally *don't know how to listen*. As children we've been told to listen, to "mind," to raise our hands before speaking, stand in line with no talking. Yet with few exceptions, we aren't taught the art of really listening. So we grow up with limited auditory skills. If we were lucky enough to participate in a rhythm band in elementary school, we had opportunities to

make "noise," have fun expressing ourselves nonverbally, and receive positive strokes from our teachers and parents. Unfortunately, the lack of continuity in education (as well as the way our society undervalues the non-verbal and non-rational) tends to put music classes—the primary experience in learning how to listen for many of us—at a low priority.

Here's the good news: Joseph Scartelli suggests that regular, low-frequency auditory driving (drumming) affects the reticular activating system in a way that stimulates *all* other parts of the brain even where there is significant damage or impairment. Quite simply, drumming can affect our neurological development and accelerate the recovery process. Drumming groups can provide both the setting for a positive emotional experience and the physical mechanism of neurological and psychological growth. "The more connections that can be made within the brain, the more integrated the experience is within memory" (Campbell, 14). If the experience we want to integrate is the *emotional felt-thought continuum* from our infancy (which, remember is *pre-verbal*), then it is possible to integrate these experiences through drumming groups and drum therapy.

The advantage of participating in a drumming group is that you develop an auditory feedback loop within yourself and among group members—a channel for self-expression and positive feedback—that is pre-verbal, emotion-based, and sound-mediated. Perhaps the most important aspect of this experience is the phenomenon of entrainment. In 1665, a Dutch physicist named Christian Huygens discovered entrainment when he observed two mechanical clocks ticking in unison a day after they had been wound up and set ticking out of unison (Goldman, 219). Entrainment occurs because it is more efficient, hence "easier," for nature to be in sync with itself. Musicians playing in a group experience this phenomenon naturally, and drumming is especially conducive to entrainment because it is *pure rhythm*. If we put people



together who are out of sync with themselves (i.e., diseased, addicted) and help them experience the phenomenon of entrainment, it is possible for them to feel with and through others what it is like to be synchronous in a state of pre-verbal connectedness.

This can be very powerful stuff, as the following example illustrates: The drumming group I work with did a presentation at a local elementary school where the audience included a second grade boy who had been through a serious trauma only a few weeks before. His father had died and his mother, in a fit of grief, had committed suicide. Several days went by before the boy was discovered in the house with his mother. He had completely withdrawn inside himself emotionally, and after that had never been observed to express any emotion other than his inwardness. When our performance was over, the rest of the class went to the library and he stayed with his teacher and cried, convulsively, for the first time since his losses had occurred. After this same performance, the assistant principal remarked that he was seeing children whose "worlds made sense to them for the first time," that he was amazed and pleased at the absence of negative, acting-out behavior, and that in subsequent rhythm sessions, the students shared the instruments we had handed out without being given any instruction.

Here's another example of how the drumming experience can connect people across cultures. The local mental health agency asked me to do some drumming workshops with a group of their male clients after I had presented several workshops for their staff. I planned the event to be outdoors at the park in the center of the city and arrived early to get ready. There were already two people under the pavilion who apparently didn't realize the space was reserved. As I proceeded to set up, one of them, a saxophone player, began to practice. I started to lay down a groove, he caught it, and that's the way it went for the next half hour. Soon I realized the other person present was a "de-institutionalized" adult who apparently had nowhere else to go. He was smiling and moving with the groove. Eventually the mental health group showed up and we began to play. At first the group was tentative, but pretty soon they were jamming with the saxophonist and myself.

Two women who happened to be passing by were drawn to the music and began moving to the groove as well. When we finished, one of the women asked if we were a "band" and where we were going to be playing next. You can imagine the dose of self-esteem the group members experienced when they realized that other people perceived them as competent and appreciated their performance.

Finally, in addition to providing an authentic experience of healthy connectedness and physiological synchronicity, drumming can help people learn to manage their emotions in a recreational and therapeutic way without the use of alcohol or other drugs. Two examples follow:

In the residential care facility I managed, I introduced the concept of drumming/entrainment by showing my young female clients a picture of some prehistoric rock art found in Rhodesia determined to be around 25,000 years old. Without any effort, we spent the rest of the morning (over three hours) talking about the picture's relevance to women's issues and its significance as a work of art depicting music, theater, dance, and visual representation. Then I introduced some percussion instruments and talked about how they were connected to stages of cultural evolution, how humans have always made music with whatever they had at hand, whatever the earth and their particular way of relating to it provided. Soon the girls were jamming. By the end of the week, they had made a video of themselves, had asked their mothers to join them on their next jam session, and were requesting more opportunities to play. I was frequently asked to bring the instruments back and noticed that after a few good sessions, the emotional atmosphere of the faculty stayed relaxed for several weeks.

In a prevention workshop I did for the Partnership of the Prevention of Substance Abuse, the students said the music "made them happy," "brought them up," "mellowed them," "made them relax," and "was music they could understand." These students were all talking about the same music having different effects, without the help of alcohol or other drugs, all positive effects working on an individual, perceptual basis—using drums, not drugs.

Drumming as a generative form of experiential learning has the potential to move people from the fear of self-expres-

sion to a more creative state where they can serve as true human resources for themselves and their communities. By providing a medium for both individual self-realization and creative group dynamics, drumming can also help heal the isolation, frustration, and low self-esteem that fuel drug abuse. We can play out our feelings of fear, anger, loss, and abuse without saying a word, without having to be called on to expose our "issues." This is an excellent supplement to traditional talk therapy processes used in recovery.

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Edward Mikenas directs Lynchburg Day Services and the Drums; not Drugs program. He has a masters degree in music and is certified as a substance abuse counselor. He is a member of Club Conga, a percussive arts ensemble, and is active as a studio musician and producer. He teaches at several colleges and provides training and workshops that combine drumming, wellness and leadership. PN



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Deadline for applications is April 20, 1999

# An interview with Conundrum: David Macbride, composer/pianist; Benjamin Toth, percussionist

BY LARRY SNIDER

**C**onundrum, Inc. is a non-profit arts organization formed by David Macbride and Benjamin Toth for the purpose of producing and presenting concerts, residencies and commercial recordings of a broad and stylistically diverse spectrum of music. Conundrum's initial endeavors have included a concert tour of the Northeast and Midwest, an appearance at the Spanish Institute in New York City, and a recording, *Conundrum: The Percussion Music of David Macbride featuring Benjamin Toth*, to be released on the Innova label in early 1999.

David Macbride has written numerous works, ranging from solo, chamber and orchestral music to music for film, TV, dance and theater. His works have been performed extensively in the United States and abroad: recent performances include the Royal Spanish Chamber Orchestra, the Arditti String Quartet, and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Tim Page of *Newsday* writes: "In David Macbride's music, one finds technical skills of a high order, a direct lyricism that informs the most complex passages and a personal aesthetic that combines Western chromaticism with a fascination for the music of China." Awards include the Georges Enesco International Composition Prize, two Leo Snyder Memorial Composition Prizes sponsored by League ISCM Boston, and the Composers, Inc. Prize. Macbride's compositions are available from American Composers Edition (ACE), AM Percussion Publications, Plymouth Music and Smith Publications and are recorded on Concora, Hartt/Next Exit, Opus One, Owl, and True Media Recordings. A solo CD of his works has been released by Composers Recordings, Inc. (CRI). Alex Ross of the *New York Times* writes "Macbride achieves a remarkable balance of technical rigor and free spirited invention...Composers Recordings has done justice to a distinctive voice in American music." Macbride is on the faculty of The Hartt School of the University

of Hartford.

Benjamin Toth, director of the percussion program at The Hartt School of the University of Hartford, has presented concerts and masterclasses in Austria, Germany, Hong Kong, Poland, Yugoslavia, and throughout the United States. Toth's performance credits include The Percussion Group/Cincinnati, the Jovan Percussion Projekt, the Sinfonia da Camera of Illinois, the Illinois Contemporary Chamber Players, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Akron Symphony Orchestra, the Brass Band of Battle Creek, the Hong Kong City Contemporary Dance Company, Myriad, Conundrum, the Ohio Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, the Milwaukee New Music Ensemble, Pan Caribe, Hartford Stage, the Goodspeed Opera House, StageWest, the Kenley Players, and the Jimmy Dorsey Band. His performance activities include live television and radio broadcasts, new music festivals and concert series, recordings, university masterclass presentations, children's concerts, concerto appearances, big band/show band

drumming, and Percussive Arts Society International Conventions. Toth has recorded for the Albany, Arabesque, Centaur, and Innova labels. He has served on the faculty of the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music. His musical training includes performance and jazz studies at the University of Akron and graduate study at the University of Illinois.

**Larry Snider:** *David, can you provide some background relating to your experience with solo and chamber music for percussion?*

**David Macbride:** Percussion music has always been a strong interest of mine. One of the first pieces I ever wrote was "Envelop," which was written for Stuart Saunders Smith. I was a sophomore at The Hartt School, encountering Cage and his ideas on silence for the first time. Stuart seemed to like combining percussion with speech—a focus which continues to this day—in a uniquely theatrical way, so the performer occasionally intones the syllables "Doo-wah-







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dit" [from Manfred Mann's hit song, "Doo-wah-ditty"] while playing a rather quiet piece in which silence envelops sound. Other solo pieces have followed including "Triptych," which was written for Ben in 1993. This technically and musically virtuosic three-movement sonata is a kind of fusion of Ben's and my musical personalities.

My chamber music for percussion includes works for percussion and other instruments (e.g., "Murder" (1978) for flute and percussion, "Gageego" (1980) for flute, percussion and piano, "Shape Notes" (1993) for flute and two percussionists) and works for percussion ensemble (e.g., "Timing," "Split," "Quiet" and "AMANAPLANACANAL-PANAMA"). Most of these pieces were either written for specific performers or inspired by specific musical experiences. For example, "Timing" was inspired by the sound of my son Jimmy's heartbeat inside his mother's womb. Other pieces involve choreographed movement, such as "Quiet," which was composed after I saw and heard a performance by a Japanese drumming troupe. All of these pieces form a clear thread through my music and are strongly representative of my compositional thinking at any given time.

**Snider:** *What is it about percussion and*

*percussionists that interests you as a composer?*

**Macbride:** Percussion is universal; it transcends all categories and cultures.

Percussion music is continuously reinventing itself; each new generation rediscovers its rich traditions and leaves its own legacy. Composers and percussionists know these things to be true and are excited to be a part of it. It is natural, and right, that percussionists and composers would want to work together; they have a lot in common. Ideally, both are fearless, willing to try most anything to make it work. My collaborations with percussionists—principally Stuart, Tom Goldstein as part of Gageego, and now Ben and Conundrum—have been some of the most musically rewarding experiences I've had. Percussionists generally are not only interested in your music and ideas, they are not afraid to contribute, to be critical, to honestly take part in the creation of new stuff. Percussion and percussionists will always be a vital influence on my music.

**Snider:** *What attracted you to the idea of collaborating with Ben?*

**Macbride:** I am not so much attracted to the idea, but to the reality. Ben is one of the most, if not *the* most, dedicated musician I know. He really sets very high

standards for himself and others, particularly his students. That alone would make him an ideal colleague. The fact that he is such an experienced and gifted performer of new music and so committed to building a living repertoire has made working with him very special to me. I also think it is unusual for a performer to focus his first solo CD on the music of one composer. As you know, many percussionists select or arrange repertoire that will primarily showcase them. Ben's no-nonsense approach to programming and performance is what I think it's all about. Ben is also extremely versatile, comfortable with a wide diversity of instruments and styles. All of these things have made our collaboration very rewarding.

**Snider:** *How is your collaboration different than other historic composer/percussionist collaborations, such as Charles Wuorinen and Max Neuhaus, Morton Feldman and Jan Williams, etc.?*

**Macbride:** Our collaboration is not historic...yet! The collaborations you mention have produced really important pieces. I like to think that our work is still in its early stages and that the best is yet to come.

**Benjamin Toth:** I think one distinction is the relatively large amount of repertoire that has been generated by our



David Kool

partnership, and the fact that we have had constant access to each other, allowing for a gradual, collaborative process for each piece. We can hear David's ideas evolve from the first musical nugget to the final product by reading through various drafts of each piece. I've always appreciated that David's final products are reflective of this process.

**Snider:** *Ben, can you provide some background relating to your experience working with different composers?*

**Toth:** I first experienced performer/composer collaborations as a graduate student at the University of Illinois, having worked with David Liptak, Sal Martirano, Scott Wyatt, Paul Zonn, and Herbert Brun, all of whom were faculty members at that time, and Sydney Hodkinson, who visited the U of I. Each of these musicians, in his own way, was an inspiration. I was hooked on composers from that point on!

Later, as a member of The Percussion Group/Cincinnati, I again had the opportunity to work with many composers. In particular, The Percussion Group has maintained a long-standing collaborative relationship with Herbert Brun—one that has resulted in a significant body of repertoire. Brun's percussion music is significant in that it has provided a means for percussionists to elevate their level of solo and chamber music artistry. I've come to believe

that in a very real sense we, as percussionists, owe a great debt to Herbert Brun. It seems that the musical relationship between Brun and The Percussion Group/Cincinnati has become somewhat of a model for me. Since that time I have continued to work with various composers, but find myself drawn to David's music in particular.

**Snider:** *What do you look for when you are perusing new solo or chamber percussion repertoire?*

**Toth:** More than anything, I'm interested in something that is conceptually and musically interesting, fresh, and original. What I'm not so interested in is a piece that's a musical re-tread, or a blatant technical showpiece.

**Snider:** *What do you admire about David's music? Discuss the particular challenges of playing David's pieces.*

**Toth:** As you might have guessed, first and foremost I find David's music to be original. He is very creative, yet is also mindful of all those tiny performance-related details. Conceptually, his work is amazing—sometimes funny, sometimes ominous, sometimes theatrical, sometimes subtle, sometimes complex, sometimes simplistic, sometimes “groovy,” sometimes lyrical, etc., etc. I'm sure that the eclectic nature of his work is the result of his varied musical inspirations. David seems to possess an unerring sense of compositional

intuitiveness, in terms of musical development and overall dimensions.

In regard to the particular challenges of playing David's music, I would say that the technical challenges may involve the logistics of a given notational system, a difficult contrapuntal passage, or a “sticking” dilemma. The interpretive challenges may involve “breaking the code” or assimilating the musical vocabulary for any given piece. I find myself learning David's pieces one “layer” at a time.

**Snider:** *Can you discuss your approach to programming for percussion concerts?*

**Toth:** I prefer to assign a theme to each program—a common thread that connects all of the pieces on any given concert. I have presented concerts featuring “minimalist” concepts, a John Cage musicircus, concerti for soloists with percussion ensemble, music inspired by Native American folklore, music involving theatrics, various world music themes (African, Mexican, Afro-Cuban, Caribbean, Middle Eastern), music for like instruments (all drums, all metal, etc.), music with historical significance, pieces that are “cultural hybrids,” and music featuring a specific guest composer or performer. Since “percussion music,” by definition, can involve a myriad of instruments and musical ideas, I think it's helpful to provide the audience with a common ground on which to view all the pieces on any given program.

**Snider:** *What can listeners expect to hear at a Conundrum concert?*

**Toth:** Of course, the “common thread” running through a Conundrum concert is that much of the music is composed by David, or at least reflects our collective musical interests. Within that framework we program pieces that are contrasting in terms of melodic versus rhythmic emphasis, and in terms of the percussion instruments used. Each piece may reflect a unique musical or artistic aesthetic. We also tend to program solo repertoire for percussion or piano as well as duos, and occasionally larger ensembles by inviting guests to perform with us.

**Snider:** *What can listeners expect to hear on the first Conundrum CD?*

**Macbride:** The CD contains pieces that,

while varied in mood, instrumentation and length, hopefully convey a singular voice and sensitivity to the medium. The recording opens and closes with two longer works involving the marimba: "Triptych" and "For Four." In between we have three shorter pieces; "Timing" and "Shape Notes" use non-pitched sounds (drums, found objects, non-Western instruments, etc.), and one scored for a mixed setup ("Envelop"). "Shape Notes" features John Wion on flute, and was inspired by Lou Harrison's "First Concerto." Since the pieces span a twenty-two year period, there is plenty of stylistic diversity as well. Last but not least, Ben plays everything from a vibraphone to a spring guiro.

**Snider:** *Describe the collaborative process that took place in the production of this CD.*

**Macbride:** The first piece we recorded was "Triptych" (for solo marimba). After I gave Ben the music, he worked on it for about a year, suggesting certain modifications, stickings, mallets, etc. These suggestions were then incorporated into the score and recording. The other piece that was really born out of this project was "For Four." The quartet (Ben, Murray Mast, David Merrill, and Chris Vandall) worked tirelessly on the piece's formidable technical and musical demands, which include choreographed movement between the four marimbas. I have fond memories of those rehearsals—players bumping into one another, flying sticks. All of the pieces on the CD involved extensive rehearsal, multiple public performances, lengthy recording and editing sessions, discussion, etc. Ben and I were actively involved in all aspects of production.

**Snider:** *How is this CD a manifestation of your artistic credo at the present time?*

**Macbride:** My credo is probably shared by most artists: to produce work and to have it utilized and appreciated enough so that one is, or feels like, a functioning member/contributor of the community. This CD will hopefully bring pleasure and meaning to its listeners, thus completing the circle between composer, performer and audience. On a personal level, it is the realization of a long-standing dream.

**Snider:** *What new works for percussion might we next expect from you?*

**Macbride:** I'm working on a series of pieces for Conundrum entitled "Conundrum." These pieces will explore areas of congruence between the piano and percussion, in terms of color, noise, pitch, etc. Ben and I are also talking about a concerto with orchestra. That should keep me busy a while.

## COMPOSITIONS FOR PERCUSSION BY DAVID MACBRIDE

The two lists that follow include the title, date of composition, timing, difficulty level, publisher, instrumentation, and annotations regarding compositions for percussion by David Macbride.

### I. Works for multiple percussion/percussion ensemble/percussion theater

Inside The Ring (1977), 13:00, IV, ACA/ACE; orchestra bells, xylophone, vibraphone, marimba & piano

Quiet (1981–85), 4:30, V, Smith; seven percussionists playing seven drums/theater

Americanisms (1982), 10:00, VI, ms; two percussionists playing multiple gongs with two narrators/choreographed

Quadrumane (1984), 13:00, VI, ACA/ACE; four percussionists playing four double basses (with bass quartet)

Xywayz (1985), 10:00, VI, ACA/ACE; xylophone, percussion & piano

Face (1986), 12:00, V, ACA/ACE+; two drummers/theater

IOIO (1987), 14:00, VI, ACA/ACE; two percussionists/conductors with chamber orchestra (32 players)

For Four (1988), 14:00, VI, ACA/ACE+; marimba quartet/theater (to be released on Innova Records)

Ssh.... (1988), 5:00, IV, ACA/ACE; percussion quartet and audience, commissioned by the Lincoln Center Institute/theater

AMANAPLANACANALPANAMA (1988), 8:30, IV, Smith; eleven percussionists

Nothing in Tow (1989), 10:00, III, ACA/ACE+; two percussionists playing two automobiles/theater

Timing (1990), 8:00, IV, AM Percussion; two percussionists (to be released on Innova Records)

One on Five (1991), 7:00, II, ms+; five percussionists with five basketballs/theater

Shape Notes (1993), 8:00, IV, ACA/ACE; two percussionists; flute (to be released on Innova Records)

Split (1995), 10:00, V, ACA/ACE+; three percussionists/theater (to be released on Hartt Records; music available from Media Press in Spring 1999)

Untitled (1997), 4:00, III, ms; steel band

Friends (1998), 5:00, IV, ms; frame drums—soloist and ensemble

### II. Works for solo percussion/chamber music with one percussionist

Envelop (1971), 6:00, V, Smith; solo multi-percussion: orchestra bells, vibes, tom-toms, cymbals, Aztec blocks (to be released on Innova Records)

Chamber Field (1972), 10:00, II, ACA/ACE; multi-percussion (and three melody instruments)

Ever Inward (1974), 9:00, IV, ACA/ACE; solo vibraphone

As Before (1978), 8:00, V, ACA/ACE; solo marimba

Murder (1978), 12:00, VI, ACA/ACE; multi-percussion: vibes, suspended cymbal, log drum, tom-toms (and flute)

Gagego (1981), 11:00, VI, ACA/ACE; multi-percussion (and flute, piano); Recording: Opus One #90

Trinity (1983), 25:00, VI, ACA/ACE; multi-percussion (and two pianos)

Litany for Gabrielle (1983), 5:00, IV, ACA/ACE; piano interior (and flute, piano)

To\_\_\_\_\_ (1984), 9:00, VI, ACA/ACE; piano interior (and soprano)

Three Poems of Ai Qing (1984), 10:00, IV, ACA/ACE; congas, piano interior (and soprano, violin-violin, double bass and piano)

Full Circle (1987), 5:00, IV, Smith+; solo snare drum (with masks); commissioned by Smith Publications

Not Cooking (1987), 5:00, III, ACA/ACE+; solo percussionist/actor: amplified kitchenware and vegetables; co-written with Lisa Macbride

Angle of Repose (1990), 15:00, IV, ACA/ACE; multi-percussion (and flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano)

Triptych (1993), 23:00, VI, ms; solo marimba (to be released on Innova Records)

Music for Pot Lids (1994), 5:00, II, ms+; solo percussionist/leader (and pot lid ensemble); commissioned by Robert Adney

Find Meat on Bones (1995), 7:00, V, ms; 5-octave marimba (and female vocalist); text by Dylan Thomas





# PERCUSSIONS

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Conundrum (1996), 8:00, V, ms; 5-  
octave marimba/xylophone (and piano);  
written for Conundrum

Studies (1997), 2-3:00, III, ms; solo ma-  
rimba

Tango for Louis (1997), 10:00, IV, ms;  
drumset (incl. tambourim and pandeiro)  
(with bass clarinet and bassoon)

In Common (1998), 8:00, III, ms; temple  
bowls (and violin)

From Without (Conundrum 2) (1998),  
9:00, IV, ms; timbrack (with prepared  
piano); written for Conundrum

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS AND PUBLISHER ADDRESSES

ACA/ACE: American Composers Edi-  
tion, American Composers Alliance; 170  
W. 74th St., New York NY 10023; (212)  
362-8900. NOTE: All ACA/ACE scores  
became ms, available from David  
Macbride, effective 1/1/99.

Smith: Smith Publications, Sonic Arts  
Edition; 2617 Gwynndale, Baltimore MD  
21207; (410) 298-6509.

AM Percussion: A M Percussion Publi-  
cations; 12055 Broadway, Alden NY  
14004; (716) 937-3705

Media Press, Inc., P.O. Box 3937,  
Champaign IL 61826; (217) 333-9601.

ms: manuscript available from David  
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Dr. Larry Snider is Di-  
rector of Percussion  
studies at The Uni-  
versity of Akron and  
is also the Principal  
Percussionist with  
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## New Percussion Literature and Recordings

*Publishers and composers are invited to submit materials to Percussive Notes to be considered for review. Selection of reviewers is the sole responsibility of the Review Editor of Percussive Notes.*

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### Difficulty Rating Scale

I-II	Elementary
III-IV	Intermediate
V-VI	Advanced
VI+	Difficult

### REFERENCE TEXTS

#### The Art of Bass Drum and Cymbal Playing

Anthony J. Cirone/Garwood Whaley  
**\$9.95**

#### Meredith Music Publications

This is an invaluable resource book for all percussionists—teachers, students, and professional performers. Everything in this book is valuable, and one of the highlights is a Selected Literature section that includes a listing of excerpts from band and orchestral literature that require excellent technical facility on bass drum, crash cymbals, and/or suspended cymbal.

The book is broken down into each instrumental area (i.e., bass drum, crash cymbals, suspended cymbal). Within each section, the following is included: short historical perspective, instrument selection, playing techniques, and short etudes. Additionally, there is a section focusing on the playing techniques of bass drum with attached cymbal.

Although there may be differences of opinion among percussionists on proper playing techniques for cymbals and bass drum, *The Art of Bass Drum and Cymbal Playing* is an excellent resource.

—Lisa Rogers

#### A Practical Guide to Percussion Terminology

Russ Girsberger

**\$14.95**

#### Meredith Music Publications

The key word in the title of this masterful 107-page guide to percussion terminology is "practical." Anyone who has met or visited with Russ Girsberger knows of his practicality. He states in his introduction that his guide "should be considered as an aid to the working percussionist, conductor, composer, educator, and student searching to identify unfamiliar terms and instruments." In other words, anyone who desires to know more about percussion terms or selected phrases from several significant composers should purchase this excellent reference tool. The book includes instrument names, instructional phrases describing performing techniques or musical instructions, and descriptive terms in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, and several other languages.

Of particular interest is the collaboration with Girsberger of San José State University percussion professor Anthony J. Cirone in his capacity as editor and artistic interpreter—particularly in Cirone's italicized comments on the practical interpretation of many terms. Girsberger's guide should find its well-earned position in every music library reference stack, as well as in any percussionist's personal library.

—Jim Lambert

### KEYBOARD PERCUSSION

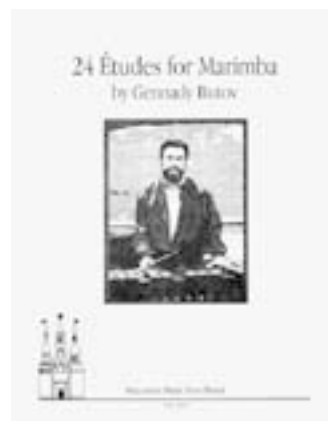
**24 Etudes for Marimba** III–V  
Gennady Butov

**\$13.00**

#### Studio 4 Music/

Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

Gennady Butov's collection of twenty-four etudes will help the intermediate to advanced marimbist enhance and build his or her two-mallet technical skills. Butov states



in the Preface that the purpose of the etudes "is to equalize the hands, both in strength and flexibility. Only if both hands are equal does it become possible to master difficult musical material, thus opening the doors to the amazingly beautiful, magical world of music."

The etudes progress in difficulty with the easiest etudes at the beginning and more advanced etudes at the end. Butov indicates stickings in each etude as well as performance instructions and rationale. Therefore, the student must read the paragraph at the beginning of each etude carefully and adhere to stickings. Butov begins most etudes with the left hand to accommodate the majority of right-handed students who need extra left-hand work. As a "lefty" myself, I wish the etudes were idiomatically written to develop either hand. Although the etudes were written with marimba in mind, the substitution of a xylophone is possible if a marimba is unavailable.

I applaud Butov's efforts in providing a concise and sequential collection of two-mallet etudes for technical development. *24 Etudes for Marimba* is a "handy" book for two-mallet performers.

—Lisa Rogers

#### Music and Rhythm Permutations

Emil Richards

**\$45.00**

#### Emil Richards Music

This 111-page "workbook" for mal-

let players is intended to improve your ears, eyes (sight reading skills), and manual dexterity. Although written primarily for mallet players, the exercises can be played on any instrument.

Webster describes permutation as "alteration—change in order," and Richards follows this definition to the letter. The exercises move up or down in steps of major or minor seconds, thirds, or cycles of fourths. The scale and rhythmic patterns and permutations are written to increase awareness of tritones, double tritones, thirteenth chords, and cycles of fourths, as well as melodic and rhythmic permutations. All of the 67 exercises are written clearly and consist mainly of eighth notes, sixteenth notes, and triplets. All the exercises are for two mallets.

*Music and Rhythmic Permutations* is an excellent book that will, if practiced, do exactly what it says: improve your ears, eyes and manual dexterity.

—John Beck

#### Orchestral Repertoire for Xylophone Volume I and II

Raynor Carroll

**\$16.95 per volume**

#### Batterie Music/Carl Fisher

*Orchestral Repertoire for Xylophone* is just what the title implies—repertoire books for xylophone, which include standard orchestral repertoire that appears most frequently on audition lists.

Volume I includes 15 compositions in their entirety (except for extended periods of rests that are abbreviated with "tacet" indications): Barber, "Media's Meditation and Dance of Vengeance"; Britten, "The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra"; Copland, "Hoe-Down" from "Rodeo"; Hindemith, "Hammermusik No. 1"; Holst, "The Planets"; Kabalevsky, "The Comedians Suite"; Messiaen, "Oiseaux Exotiques"; Prokofiev, "Scythian Suite"; Saint-Saëns, "Danse Macabre"; Schuman, "Symphony No. 3"; Shostakovich, "Symphony No. 5"; Stravinsky, "The Firebird, Ballet" (1910), "The Firebird, Ballet, Suite"

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(1919), "Pétrouchka" (1911), and "Pétrouchka" (1947).

Volume II includes 14 compositions in their entirety (except for extended periods of rests that are abbreviated with "tacet" indications): Bartók, "Music For Strings, Percussion and Celesta"; Copland, "Appalachian Spring"; Hayman, "Pops' Hoe-Down"; Kabolevsky, "Colas Breugnon Overture"; Kodály, "Háry János, Suite"; Prokofiev, "Alexander Nevsky, Cantata"; Ravel, "Mother Goose, Ballet"; Revueltas, "Sensemayá"; Saint-Saëns, "The Carnival of the Animals"; Shostakovich, "Concerto No. 2 for Alto, Opus 126," "Concerto No. 1 for Violin, Opus 99," "The Golden Age, Ballet Suite"; Strauss, "Salome's Dance" from the Opera "Salome"; and Stravinsky, "Les Noces."

The books feature excellent reproduction of the parts, with the size and clarity of the notes making the excerpts "user friendly." The Preface clearly outlines the intent of the book and gives excellent hints on practicing. The addition of metronome indications from the score, added cues, corrections of mistakes, and the glossary add further value to the book.

—John Beck

### African Fantasy on Joy to the World

III+

Arranged by Jesse Ayers  
\$4.50

Per-Mus Publications, Inc.

Give Jesse Ayers an A+ for imagination in this delightful arrangement for solo marimba of the traditional Christmas carol "Joy to the World." This arrangement sets off the traditional melody with a swiny, cross-accented accompaniment inspired by African rhythms. It is set in a contrapuntal format that is scored for two mallets throughout, with accented sixteenth-note patterns played both evenly and "swung." This clever work, ideal for a high school or less-advanced college marimbist, is a testimonial to the creative possibilities that can result when musical influences from non-Western traditions are utilized in an imaginative way.

—John R. Raush

### Challenge I

III–V

Earl Hatch

\$10.00

Studio 4 Music/

Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

This collection of five unaccompanied marimba solos by the late Earl Hatch is a significant contribution to the intermediate key-

board pedagogic repertoire. In her preface to this collection, Karen Ervin Pershing states that: "No one could have been more helpful to and supportive of those who shared his dedication....in teaching, I'm merely a conduit, passing along to the next generation the things I learned from Earl." With that heartfelt dedication as a backdrop, Studio 4 now publishes in clear, modern notation, five Hatch favorites including the ever-popular "Furioso and Valse in d minor" for two mallets, "Etude 1955" for two mallets, "Dance of the Hippololli-pops" for three mallets, "Capriccio Marimbata" for four mallets, and Hatch's arrangement of Bizet's "Habanera" for four mallets. This sixteen-page collection is value-priced, and this 1998 release will revitalize these timeless, unaccompanied marimba masterpieces for the next generation of intermediate marimbists. Pass the torch of knowledge!

—Jim Lambert

### Carol of the Bells

IV

Mykola Leontovich

Arranged by Ginger Zyskowski

\$3.50

Studio 4 Music/

Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

In this arrangement, Zyskowski

freely adapts the popular "Carol of the Bells" as a four-mallet marimba solo playable on a 4-octave instrument. The popular melody is cast in a variety of settings: with the melodic line in octaves, thirds and sixths; with four-mallet chordal rolls; with block four-note chords; with an offbeat 6/8 melody played against a 3/4 left-hand accompaniment in open fifths; and finally, in a contrapuntal texture. Throughout all these various settings, the piece remains playable by students developing their skills in four-mallet performance. For example, parallel chordal motion that maintains fixed intervals between mallets held with the same hand is the norm.

Although it may be a bit early to be thinking about Christmas music, when the time comes, keep this arrangement in mind. Along with its pedagogical value for the development of four-mallet technique, it also offers the rewards of a satisfying solo experience.

—John R. Raush

### Dia y Suenos

V

Matthew Richmond

\$7.00

Studio 4 Music/

Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

"Dia y Suenos" (Day and Dreams) is a four-mallet solo for the advanced



marimbist. The work employs a 4 1/2-octave instrument; however, Richmond indicates substitutions allowing for the use of a 4 1/3-octave instrument. Technically the four-mallet marimbist must be proficient with double vertical strokes, single independent strokes, single alternating (double lateral) strokes, and one-handed rolls at various intervallic distances, especially octaves. Richmond also indicates in preface material that "Dia y Suenos" is available in an ensemble setting for marimba and strings.

Richmond says that his work "represents the interplay between the life one is forced to lead (Day) and the idealized life of Dreams. The recurring chordal motif which opens the piece represents the in-between, either the twilight state of semi-wakefulness or the moment when the two worlds coincide and one is at peace. The fast section represents the hectic pace of day-to-day life, starting freely, but becoming more and more strict in its demands. The soloist momentarily breaks free and the piece gradually settles into the Dream section, eventually returning to the in-between, with its peaceful chords."

—Lisa Rogers

**Streamline** IV  
Christopher Swist  
\$7.00

**Studio 4 Music/  
Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.**  
The composer describes this piece for solo marimba as music that "likes to 'flow,' weaving through various modulations, including modal harmonies and chord progressions reminiscent of American song-writing." "Streamline" could also be described as an example of a *perpetuum mobile* set in continuous sixteenthths at tempi of 120 and 144 for the quarter note. The composer informs us that the piece "was composed improvisationally, at the marimba, and is therefore quite idiomatic." Idiomatic it is, with sticking patterns that exploit a hand-to-hand technique as a fully integrated four-mallet approach. In fact, these patterns, which include a variety of sticking sequences, are beneficial exercises for the advanced high school or college marimbist concerned with the development of mallet independence. However, students can derive musical benefits as well if accents and

dynamic indications are carefully observed.

—John R. Raush

## KEYBOARD PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

**American Folk Song Suite** I  
Arranged by Barbara Artino  
\$10.00

**Per-Mus Publications, Inc.**  
This collection of six short ensemble pieces is "intended for performance by both young percussion ensembles and general music classes." It is written for a minimum of five students, although larger groups can easily be accommodated. Parts I and II are playable on any melody instruments, including those available to general music classes, such as resonator bells. Chord symbols are provided for possible performance with autoharp or guitar, or by percussionists with multiple mallet skills. The melodies are familiar tunes: "Li'l Liza Jane," "Buffalo Gals," "Jacob's Ladder," "Press Along," "Rock Island Line," and "Shoo, Fly!" Simple accompaniment parts are scored for tambourine, snare drum and bass drum, suspended cymbal, triangle, temple blocks or woodblocks, a train whistle, and slapstick.

In addition to featuring material that is sure to be attractive to elementary-level students, this collection will, by virtue of its versatility, be valuable to teachers of very young student groups, as it accommodates a varied instrumentation and students with a wide range of abilities.

—John R. Raush

**Minuet and Dance** II-III  
J.S. Bach/L. Mozart  
Arranged by James L. Moore  
\$3.00

**Per-Mus Publications, Inc.**  
These two well-known pieces are arranged as a duet that can be performed on one keyboard percussion instrument with the appropriate range (second-space C in bass clef) or on two keyboard instruments. The first part is written entirely in the treble clef, and the second part is all bass clef. Both parts require the use of rolls, and dynamics are well-indicated.

Each piece is quite short. To-

gether they would make an attractive pair of contrasting movements suitable for young students to perform in a solo music festival or studio recital. Many basic concepts of musicianship, including roll technique, dynamic control, balance, and phrasing, could be taught using this duet.

—Tom Morgan

**Fugue in A Major** III  
J. S. Bach  
Arranged by Murray Houllif  
\$12.00  
**Per-Mus Publications, Inc.**

Murray Houllif's arrangement of Bach's "Fugue in A Major" is a trio for keyboard instruments. The instrumentation is left up to the performers; therefore, marimbas, xylophones, vibraphones, etc. can be used. Also, Houllif indicates that other instrumental combinations such as violins, cello, etc., can be used. He has indicated rolls for keyboard instruments through the instruction that quarter notes and larger values need to be rolled. If performed on keyboard instruments, the players will employ two-mallet technique and will utilize two 3 2/3-octave instruments and one 4 1/3-octave instrument. The parts contain large print, making them easy to read. This welcome addition to keyboard-ensemble literature allows intermediate two-mallet performers to explore the art of fugue at its finest!

—Lisa Rogers

**Trilogy of the Sea** III  
Michael J. Rhodes  
\$4.00  
**Studio 4 Music/  
Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.**

This publication provides new literature in a rather unusual musical format—a duet for orchestra bells and vibraphone. Its three short movements ("Maiden Voyage," "Sailor's Calling," "Jig") feature melodic material that has the authentic ring of the "sea chantey." Rhodes suggests that the vibe damper bar or pedal be adjusted so that all notes ring only slightly, thus eliminating the difficulties of mallet dampening and pedaling, making the piece more suited for less-advanced students.

One wonders why all three movements are written in the same key (E major), and in the same meter (12/8). If this trilogy is

played in its entirety, more musical contrast would certainly be desirable. Nonetheless, its appealing melodic material should provide an enjoyable performance experience for two young mallet players.

—John R. Raush

**Enchanted Circus** IV  
Scott Tigner  
\$12.00

**Per-Mus Publications, Inc.**  
This marimba quartet received its premiere performance at the National MENC Conference in Kansas City, Missouri in 1996. Although the composer gives no indication that he had any particular programmatic idea in mind when writing this piece, the music does convey something of a circus atmosphere, thanks to its gallop-like dactylic rhythm patterns and a tempo of quarter note = 132+ or as "fast as possible."

It is a short, single-movement tonal work set in B-flat minor throughout, and the piece displays the composer's skillful manipulation of four voices within a contrapuntal fabric. With its fast-moving patterns, it is particularly suitable to the staccato nature of the marimba. If necessary, the quartet can be played on only two marimbas. It is ideal literature for four college marimbists looking for a concert selection and, like a good circus act, can dazzle an audience with its frenetic pace and its big finish.

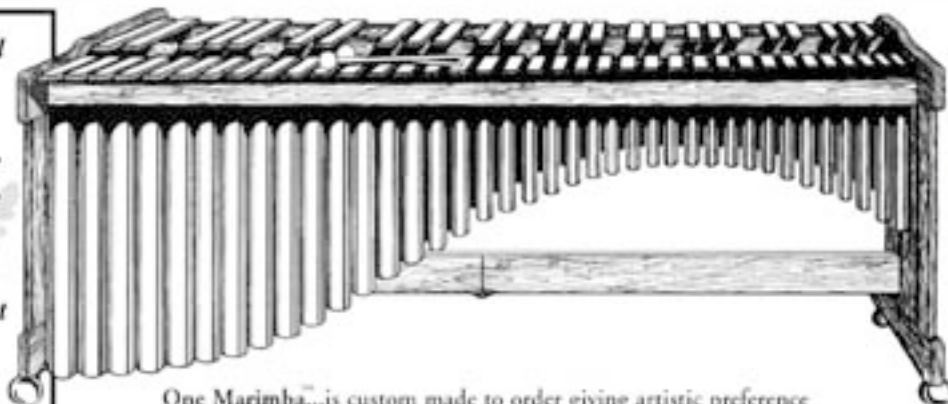
—John R. Raush

**Irish Tune from County Derry** IV-V  
Percy Grainger  
Arranged by Chalon L. Ragsdale  
\$17.50

**Southern Music Company**  
Percy Grainger is recognized as one of the more gifted composers for his excellent compositions for the wind band. One of his more famous works is the beautiful setting of "Irish Tune," also recognized by its popular name, "Danny Boy." Chalon Ragsdale has created a wonderful setting of this song by scoring it for bells, vibes, five marimbas, chimes, and suspended cymbal. For those schools who have limited inventory, don't let the five marimbas deter you from programming this selection. Players 2 and 3 can share a marimba, as can players 4 and 5. The fifth marimba is scored for a low E, but Ragsdale has scored it so that it can be performed on a low-A

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Daniel Druckman,  
New York Philharmonic  
The Juilliard School



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instrument by leaving out certain phrases. In addition to providing excellent legato playing experience, this arrangement provides opportunity for musical expression.

—George Frock

## SNARE DRUM

**Mr. Finck's March** IV  
Guy G. Gauthreaux II  
\$3.00

### Pioneer Percussion

This rudimental-style snare drum solo includes many of the standard and newer snare drum techniques. The three-minute solo opens in common time and immediately presents several rudiments including paradiddles, drags, rolls, and flams in the first four measures. The opening section concludes with a bridge to the second section, which is in 6/8. The composer does not specify whether the pulse is to remain even or if the eighth note is to remain constant. (This reviewer suggests that the pulse remain steady.) The solo then moves to a concluding section in common time. After an eight-measure repeated

section, the solo climaxes with a frenzy of sixteenth notes at a presto tempo. There are numerous dynamic changes, syncopated accents, and rhythmic variety. This is an excellent presentation of rudimental styles, and is worthy of concert and contest formats.

—George Frock

**Variants** IV  
Guy G. Gauthreaux II  
\$3.00  
**Pioneer Percussion**  
"Variants" is a three-minute snare drum solo workout that demands good technique and musical sensitivity. It begins like a slow, sparse funeral cadence, then quickly moves into a challenging rudimental snare drum section before working its way into a slow section (M.M. = 56) with a double-time feel. The piece continues in a medium tempo with a left-hand ostinato pattern set against a right-hand solo. It concludes with a fast recap section that is inspired by traditional rudimental snare repertoire. The tempo of the opening section (M.M. = 104-112), musical ornamentation (flams, double strokes), and accent patterns demand a great

deal of the performer but are well worth the effort. An advanced high school performer could certainly use this as contest or solo material.

—Terry O'Mahoney

## TIMPANI

**Capriccio for Solo Timpani** IV-V  
Guy Gauthreaux II  
\$6.00

### Pioneer Percussion

"Capriccio" is a three-movement solo that takes approximately ten minutes to perform. Written for four pedal timpani, this solo explores a variety of techniques and styles. The first movement is rather flamboyant and is full of rhythmic syncopations as well as meter changes. The initial tunings are given, but the changes of intervals are normally approached via glissandi. There are a few chromatic passages, but rather than being approached by glissandi, they are written with standard notation. The second movement is a cantabile melody that is lyrical and expressive. The middle section is a contrapuntal duo between the hands, and

the movement concludes with a pointed melody over a sustained roll. The solo concludes with a dance-feel movement that is quick and rhythmic. There is an optional cadenza that provides the time to make a page turn. The entire solo is challenging rhythmically, and with the tuning changes will require study and preparation. It is interesting melodically and is worth programming for a recital or contest program.

—George Frock

**The New French Timpani Second Book Sound Gesture Vol. 1** IV-VI  
Jean Batigne  
\$23.75

**Editions Musicales Alphonse Leduc**  
Jean Batigne has created a timpani course titled "Alsace-Percussion," which is divided into three volumes. Vol. 1 is devoted to sound production. The text opens with a paragraph describing his philosophy and interest in improving the melodic capabilities of timpani. His goals are to develop the ear by singing and playing melodic exercises rather than just intervals. In the text, no technical indication is given as to which drums to play,

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leaving it to the ear and experience of the player to decide which drums will best produce the desired tone quality. Batigne approaches pitch changes by first playing glissandos, next by separating pitch changes by short rests, than by rapid foot movement timed to avoid glissando sounds. The more advanced studies include articulation and slurs as well as staccato notes. This is an outstanding text and should be a source for improving tuning and pedal technique.

—George Frock

**The New French Timpani Second Book Sound Gesture Vol 2** IV–VI  
Jean Batigne  
\$27.25

**Editions Musicales Alphonse Leduc**  
This is the second book in a series of three texts for timpani. This volume is devoted to Aural Work/Gestures, and approaches tuning via the use of arpeggios. The author states that the aural work should be a combination of experienced footwork, knowledge of the tessitura of each drum, and aural training. This text presents four-note piano arpeggios that are to be mirrored by the timpani. Batigne's approach would best be accomplished with both a pianist and timpanist, but by setting up

near a keyboard instrument or just singing, a student will receive much value from this text.

The author expresses the necessity for proper gestures, stance, attitude, and strokes. Gesture becomes a stage action as it relates to attack and performance. This volume includes studies for each hand separately and in combination. The book concludes with a series of etudes that feature melodies with articulations and tuning. This is a book with a wealth of materials and innovative approaches. It is unfortunate that the complete text is in three volumes, with a price that approaches \$100 for the three, because this should be part of every serious student's library.

—George Frock

### MULTIPLE PERCUSSION

**Contemporary Audition Solos for Percussion** III–IV

Gregory Fundis  
\$14.00

**Studio 4 Music/  
Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.**

This collection of solos is excellent for intermediate performers to showcase their talent at auditions

or recital programs. In the preface, Fundis says: "This book is comprised of fifteen musical works written for mallet instruments, snare drum, timpani, and multiple percussion which are useful in several ways. Besides providing the performing percussionist with an abundance of recital material, these works serve as audition material and studies to further technical skills of the advanced high school percussionist."

All solos move sequentially from easy to difficult and are grouped in like areas. The book contains four mallet solos, four snare drum solos, four timpani solos, and three multiple percussion solos. Fundis includes performance notes for each solo, which need to be read carefully. Additionally, the mallet area has solos utilizing two, three, and four mallets. All mallet solos, with the exception of "Baroque," require a 4-octave instrument, presumably a marimba; however, a xylophone could easily be used for the performance of "Baroque."

I applaud Gregory Fundis for providing a collection of contemporary percussion solos for the intermediate student. I believe this book will become a valuable teaching source for the percussion peda-

gogue, and I hope that Fundis will provide a second collection including drumset solos.

—Lisa Rogers

**Baroque Suite for Solo Percussion IV**  
Paul Navara

\$15.00

**C.L. Barnhouse Co.**

This six-movement work for multiple percussion is based, as the title implies, on the Baroque dance suite, and more specifically on the music of J.S. Bach and G.F. Handel. Each movement uses different instruments, all non-pitched except the timpani used in movement two. There are extensive background notes on each movement, which draw the performer to the Baroque examples that served as an inspiration for the music. Each movement is fairly short and can be performed as a separate piece if desired.

The suite begins with an Allemande, scored for field drum, low snare, and high snare. The second movement is a Courante for four timpani. A Sarabande follows, written for small, medium, and large cymbals, hi-hat, and gong. A Gavotte and Bourree are next, written for field drum and concert snare drum, respectfully. The sixth movement, Gigue, uses the largest setup,



including high and low bongos, high and low toms, high and low snare drums, field drum, and bass drum.

All of the movements are well-conceived and creative. They are clearly notated and suggested stickings are provided when necessary. Those familiar with the percussion pieces of William Kraft will appreciate this work, which could be used as a precursor for any student wishing to study Kraft's music. "Baroque Suite" will surely find its way into many high school solo festivals and recitals.

—Tom Morgan

## PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

**Cha-Cha Rufus** III+  
Terry O'Mahoney  
\$15.00

**Per-Mus Publications, Inc.**

"Cha-Cha Rufus" is a percussion ensemble work for eight players. The ensemble employs the following instrumentation: bells, two guiros, shaker, xylophone, 4-octave marimba, vibraphone, timbales, cowbell, suspended cymbal, congas, electric bass, and drumset. In the performance notes, O'Mahoney suggests that steel drums may be substituted for any of the mallet instruments, as well as piano for xylophone. Additionally, I would suggest that a 4 1/2-octave marimba could be substituted for electric bass, if necessary.

In his performance notes, O'Mahoney says that the work "is a medium tempo Latin tune written in a popular Cuban dance style. The xylophone plays a repetitive montuno (vamp) pattern upon which the tune is based. The piece is written in two parts: a cha-cha pattern from the beginning until Letter K, and then a songo style from Letter K until Letter O. The rhythm instruments (congas, timbales, drumset) should feel free to enhance their patterns where technically possible, but adhere somewhat to the printed page." The vibraphone player should be proficient in three- and four-mallet technique, with special emphasis on double vertical and single independent strokes. O'Mahoney provides wonderful opportunities for some of the performers to improvise. The marimba player has several solo sections and the timbale, conga,

and drumset performers have short solo sections as well.

As an educator, I have been waiting for O'Mahoney to add another percussion ensemble to the literature for the intermediate percussion performers. His ability to compose fun, but educational works is amazing. I have performed one of his other works, "Latin March," with several different ensembles in public school, summer camp, and college settings. In each, the response was the same: "Wow, percussion ensemble is such fun and improvising is not scary anymore."

—Lisa Rogers

**Gladstone Quartet** III  
Sam A. Willenhaupt  
\$10.50  
**Studio 4 Music/  
Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.**

This quartet is written for two concert snare drums and two field drums. Each part also calls for the use of the "black Gladstone model pads that come with most student snare drums." The composer also makes a distinction between the "outer pad," the thin part of the pad nearest the rim, and the "inner pad," the half-inch thicker part in the center. Each part of the pad is given a different space on the staff. Although it is not specified, an older, more traditional marching drum would work better than a modern corps style drum.

The piece begins with a series of sixteenth-note triplet patterns performed on the different parts of the pads. The pads are removed after the first eighteen measures and are not used again. The rest of the piece is fairly typical of four-drum pieces. There is good dynamic contrast and much use of hocket patterns. There are some changing meters, and buzz rolls are employed throughout.

This would make a good piece for intermediate snare drummers. Good dynamic control and rhythmic accuracy will be essential for a good performance. The use of the Gladstone pads is a good idea that could have been utilized more in the piece.

—Tom Morgan

**Latin Rondeau** III  
Tom O'Connor  
\$10.00  
**C.L. Barnhouse Co.**  
Thomas O'Connor is known for his

well-written pieces for young percussion ensembles. This is an interesting quintet for non-pitched instruments including snare drum, four tom-toms, cowbell, suspended cymbal, cabasa, bongos, and bass drum.

The introduction begins with the cabasa, with new instruments added every two measures until all five players are playing. While the parts are very playable by young students, the form is rather complex. The opening theme is played by the four tom-toms, and this theme returns several times during the piece, each time with different accompanying parts, suggesting the return form of the rondeau. The snare and tom parts are the most prominent, but there are opportunities for every player to shine at some point during the piece.

This is a good little piece for the young percussion ensemble. The repetitive Latin beat will appeal to younger players but there is plenty of musical variety to make the work educational and compelling for listeners.

—Tom Morgan

**Seawind** III  
Tom O'Connor  
\$10.00

**C.L. Barnhouse Company**

"Seawind" is a percussion quintet scored for vibraphone, marimba, shaker and timbales, two cowbells, and two timpani. Written in a Latin style, the composition has several two-bar ostinato-type patterns. Both the vib and marimba parts contain numerous double stops and may be performed with two mallets. The timpani is tuned to G and C through much of the piece, with special effects such as playing with the butts of the mallets on the bowls, and placing a cymbal on the head and playing glissandos from one pitch to another. The ensemble should be well within the reach of a good middle school or high school ensemble, and should be fun for players of all ages. It will certainly be a selection that audiences will enjoy.

—George Frack

**Tropicussion** III+  
Thomas A. Brown  
\$16.95  
**Warner Bros. Publications**  
The title of this percussion ensemble for six participants alludes



to the derivation of the rhythms featured in the two sections into which it is divided—the first featuring variations of a Latin mambo; the second, a spirited romp through rhythms owing their inspiration to African sources. The instrumentation relies heavily on Latin instruments such as timbales, cowbells, maracas, cabasa, claves, guiro, bongos, and congas. In addition, tambourine, suspended cymbal, three concert tom-toms, timpani, and three marimbas are used. Brown's experience as a writer of percussion music is in evidence throughout this piece, from his effective scoring for three timpani as a bass line in the mambo, to his treatment of the timbales, congas, and bongos, in which authentic performance traditions are captured.

Part I, "Mambo," presents several versions of a mambo, starting with a moderately paced example that provides solo opportunities for timpani and concert tom-toms, followed by a fast mambo (quarter note = 176) with a coda-like section that incorporates interesting special effects such as playing rhythms on a sliding stick to produce varied pitches. Part II, "Afro," utilizes a slow introduction with African inspired melodic writing for marimba, followed by an uptempo section that makes use of rhythmic layering utilizing the juxtaposition of 6/8 and 3/4 rhythms.

This ensemble would give a high school or young college ensemble an excellent opportunity to hone their Latin instrument performance skills, and provide an ideal vehicle for working on rhythmic challenges found in non-Western music.

—John R. Raush

**Kabe**  
J. Michael Roy  
\$20.00

C.L. Barnhouse Co.

"Kabe" is a percussion ensemble for ten players. The required instruments include talking drum (a gliss on a low tom-tom may be used as a substitute), xylophone, cowbell, marimba, agogo bells, cabasa or shaker, maracas, two bongos, two congas, two toms, timpani, and antelope horn, cow horn or conch shell. Antelope horn is preferred. The composer states that "Kabe" is "a shaman's song used by the Kuyu Tribe of French Equatorial Africa to attract alligators."

The piece begins with a sparse dialogue between the talking drum and the congas. Instruments are gradually added until the entire ensemble is playing. A four-measure crescendo leads to a sudden change to the cabasa softly playing a simple rhythm. Another gradual build-up begins, this time adding the marimba and xylophone in musical conversation. This section ends abruptly as well and a third build-up section begins. This time, the marimba and the xylophone are more prominent and rhythms are more complex. After yet another dramatic change in texture and dynamics, the piece builds once more to an exciting climax, intensified by the use of the antelope horn, singing over the top of the ensemble.

This is another quality piece by Roy, who is well-known as a composer for younger percussion ensembles. There are some fairly complex rhythms here, but the repetition format makes them very accessible for younger groups. Junior high and high school percussion ensembles will enjoy this piece, which would make an excellent closer to any percussion ensemble concert.

—Tom Morgan

**Tip of The Andes**  
Craig Hetrick  
\$12.50

Southern Music Company

Craig Hetrick has composed a spirited percussion sextet that will challenge the advanced high school or college ensemble. The players need vibes, four concert toms, three sets of crash cymbals, agogo bells, two suspended cymbals, two sets of bells, two tam tams, xylophone, timpani (four required but five would be preferable), four Roto-

III-IV

toms, vibra-slap, snare drum, marimba, guiro, temple blocks, tenor drum, triangle, claves, and bass drum. Multi-percussion setups and a strong sense of ensemble (due to the metric modulations and fast section in 7/8 time) are required for a successful reading of the piece.

Each part is not rhythmically difficult but the tempo and meter changes will provide the challenge in this piece. The melodies are often repetitive yet tuneful—something that will draw in players and listeners alike. Four-mallet work is usually confined to block chords and is repetitive. The timpani part requires several tuning changes. Quick instrument changes are frequently required of each player. Approximately five minutes in length, "Tip of the Andes" opens with a slow, sparse introduction that features several four-mallet vibe chords. The snare drum quickly propels the piece into a spirited section (M.M. = 132 in 4/4 time) marked by a chromatic bell ostinato and tom-tom/timpani melodies. A 7/8 section follows before another metric modulation back into 4/4 time and finally, a thundering coda. "Tip of the Andes" would be a great choice to open a concert or perform in a music festival.

—Terry O'Mahoney

**Between The Lines**  
Lynn Glassock  
\$24.95

V+

Meredith Music Publications

This percussion quintet was the winner of the 1998 Percussive Arts Society Composition Contest. This nine-minute composition is scored for the following: part 1—marimba, temple blocks; part 2—marimba, snare drum, four temple blocks; part 3—vibraphone, small bass drum, large bass drum, woodblock, cowbell; part 4—vibraphone, three log drums, two congas, two low toms; part 5—chimes, bongos, two high toms, gong, China cymbal, small suspended cymbals, two triangles, and cowbell.

Starting quietly and slowly (quarter note = 66) with player four on vibraphone in dialogue with player two on marimba, the composition develops a 12-measure introduction that segues into a second section highlighting a contrasting percussive groove (at quarter note = 84) comprised of temple blocks, snare drum without snares, small

bass drum, congas, and bongos.

This second section gives way nicely to the opening timbres of two marimbas, two vibraphones, and two triangles, and shifts smoothly to a tempo of quarter note = 104, then later, 112. The fifth section of this seven-section composition returns to the style of the opening slow section. The next-to-last section is very fast (quarter note = 126), before the coda (or seventh section) presents the opening material in a soft, dramatic ending. Structurally organized almost as much by the tempo shifts as it is thematically and timbrally, "Between The Lines" is suited for the mature college percussion ensemble. Neither of the marimbas required need to be greater than standard 4-octave in range.

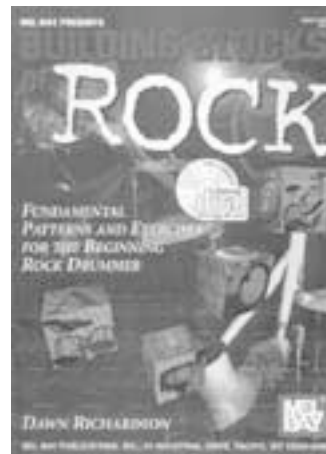
The beauty of "Between The Lines" is that it will permit a solid percussion quintet to sound larger than its size because of its multiple percussion setups. This is a superb composition by a superb composer for percussion, who has creatively crafted a prize-winning work.

—Jim Lambert

## DRUMSET

**Building Blocks of Rock**  
Dawn Richardson  
\$19.95  
Mel Bay Publications, Inc.

I-III



Dawn Richardson has authored a book that helps beginning rock drummers build up their vocabulary and technique through short blocks of exercises that progress quickly from simple one-bar rock patterns to two-bar phrases, quar-

ter-note ride patterns, one-bar fills, four-bar phrases with fills, sixteenth-note snare patterns, ride pattern variations, 12/8 time, sixteenth-note ride patterns, and open hi-hat patterns. Accompanied by a demonstration CD, this would be a very accessible and useful package for any beginning rock player.

—Terry O'Mahoney

**Clin D'Ceil**  
Rock Palace

II  
II+

Yves Baudouard  
\$10.25 each

Editions Aug-Zurfluh/  
Theodore Presser Co.

Yves Baudouard has written two short drumset solos for beginners that employ piano accompaniments. Baudouard provides a legend or notational key at the top of both solos. "Rock Palace" is slightly more difficult than "Clin D'Ceil"; however, both pieces are very similar in terms of difficulty level. Baudouard has provided the percussion world a much-needed source of literature: drumset solos for the beginner. Both solos are appropriate for recitals or percussion contests.

—Lisa Rogers

**Chicago Vol. 1 and 2**  
(Transcriptions)  
\$24.95 each

IV-V

Hal Leonard Corporation

These books feature note-for-note transcriptions of the music group Chicago's biggest hits. It is scored for the entire band: vocals, alto sax, trumpet, trombone, guitar, piano, background vocals, bass, drums, and percussion. Volume 1 contains nine tunes: "Beginnings," "Loneliness is Just a Word," "Make Me Smile," "Now More Than Ever," "Poem for the People," "Questions 67 and 68," "The Road," "To Be



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Free," and "25 or 6 to 4." Volume 2 contains 12 tunes: "Call on Me," "Canon," "Does Anybody Really Know What Time It Is?," "Feelin' Stronger Every Day," "Free," "Just You 'N Me," "Man vs. Man: The End," "No Tell Lover," "Old Days," "Once Upon A Time...," "Saturday In The Park," and "I've Been Searching So Long." The transcribed drum and percussion parts would make great reading material as well as an excellent stylistic rock study for any drummer. To see how the drummer for Chicago fit his part into the overall musical fabric is of great musical value. Written in score form and in incredible detail (all chords are completely voiced out; drum parts are very exact), this book would be useful for drummers who want exact transcriptions of drum parts for these songs, for groups of students who wanted to play these tunes by themselves, or band directors looking for small-group arrangements for three horns and rhythm section.

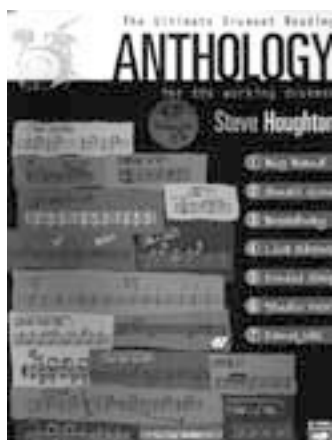
—Terry O'Mahoney

### The Ultimate Drumset Reading Anthology

Steve Houghton  
\$19.95

Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

Different musical situations require



different skills from a drummer. Knowing how to play a big band chart versus how to play a Broadway-type show can mean the difference between being employed or unemployed. Steve Houghton is a very talented drummer who works in a variety of music situations and, as such, recognizes the need to be able to read many different types of drum charts and be familiar with numerous styles and playing situations in order to make a living. In *The Ultimate Drumset Reading Anthology*, he has assembled a series of drum charts that will provide some "real life" chart-reading experience for the aspiring professional drummer.

IV-V

The book includes six traditional big band charts (*a la* Count Basie), six small-group charts, four example pieces from a Broadway-type shows, five tunes from a live stage act, four tunes (and a "cue sheet" for a magic act) that might pop up on a cruise-ship gig, thirteen studio charts, and six commercial dance-job tunes.

Houghton offers interpretation advice and performance considerations for each chart or musical situation. The book provides brief explanations of each chart, advice about how to play each chart, and solid suggestions about how to approach each musical situation. Houghton teaches by example as he demonstrates the various styles on the accompanying CD.

A reader should possess good reading and self-analysis skills in order to derive the most benefit from this book. Some exposure to each musical style being discussed would also be of benefit. For these reasons, the book might best be used by a student in conjunction with a knowledgeable teacher. For the drummer who wants to be prepared for a variety of musical settings, this would be an invaluable introduction.

—Terry O'Mahoney

### PERCUSSION VIDEOS

#### All About Bongos

I-II

Kalani  
\$19.95

#### Kalani Music

Percussionist Kalani covers all of the basics in this video for beginning bongo players—a brief history, general maintenance, basic strokes/sounds, warmup exercises, independence exercises, the martillo pattern, and how to change a bongo head. His explanations, demonstrations, and play-along sections are very clear and will help get the novice *bongocero* get off to a great start.

—Terry O'Mahoney

#### Poetry, Prose, Percussion & Song

Charles Williams/Tom Teasley  
\$19.95

#### T & T Music

Some readers may be familiar with a CD with the identical title of this *Poetry, Prose, Percussion & Song* video. Most of the pieces heard on that CD can now be heard and viewed on this videotape. The video omits a few of the CD's tracks that utilized other musicians, but adds a few selections not heard on the CD.

The material on this video draws from numerous sources, such as the





Charles Williams. Perhaps the most ambitious of all of the Williams/Teasley collaboration is "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and Johnson's "Go Down Death." Throughout, Williams' dramatic reading is embellished by Teasley's drumming, which recalls a traditional New Orleans jazz funeral procession.

Teasley displays versatility as a percussionist as he moves easily from drumset to vibes and an assortment of hand drums. His imaginative musical commentaries add a valuable dimension to Williams' recitations and vocalizations and elevate their performance to a higher artistic plane.

—John R. Raush

West African "Funga Alfia," Nelson Mandela's presidential inauguration speech ("Our Deepest Fear"), the poetry of James Weldon Johnson ("The Creation" and "Go Down Death") and the poetry of Langston Hughes ("Since I Laid My Burden Down" and "Dancer"), memorably delivered by baritone

**Show Me the Rhythms! Music Video for Bongos**

**Show Me the Rhythms! Music Video for Congas**

Kalani

**\$19.95 each**

**Kalani Music**

These two Kalani videos are each devoted to ten rhythmic patterns, for their respective instruments,



including traditional as well as popular patterns suitable for a variety of musical genres. In each tape, the rhythms are taught by using a three-step procedure.

First, the pattern is demonstrated and information about its musical background presented. Next, the student is given an over-the-shoulder view of Kalani playing the example at a slow 80 beats per minute. Finally, the pattern is played up to speed with an accompanying music track. The music tracks are set opposite the tracks for the bongos and congas in the stereo field, thus giving the student the opportunity to first play the instrument track alone. Once the rhythm pattern is mastered, the student can pan to the left to hear the music alone while playing the bongo to conga part.

One additional feature adds to the pedagogical merit of these tapes. A "notation bar" that features "time rhythm boxes" is added to the bottom of the picture. In each box a symbol appears that represents one of the sounds played on the instrument, as, for example, an "X" for a muted slap tone on bongos. Thus the student has a notational scheme to follow in addition to viewing the pattern being played.

The rhythms taught on the bongo tape are the martillo used with the cha cha, and two variations of that pattern played with the mambo, a 6/8 pattern for a guiro, and patterns for songo, funk style, calypso, reggae, samba, and

"Motown style." The conga video investigates the marcha, mambo, guaguanco, a 6/8 pattern (Columbia), and patterns for songo, funk, calypso, reggae, samba, and "pop style."

These videos go the extra mile to help the viewer master the material in a logical, pedagogically sound approach. For students who have already developed basic performance skills on bongos and congas, they are well worth their price tags.

—John R. Raush

## MARCHING PERCUSSION

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*Parking Lot Etudes* is a collection of five works for unaccompanied drum line, suitable for either a drum feature or as cadences to accompany movement of the band on or off the field. Each four- to five-minute etude is written for a snare drum line, tenor line (using quint), and five bass drums. Most of the pieces are written in a straight-forward march style with some occasional twists (meter change, split parts, special stickings). The etudes are written for accomplished percussionists; tempos (M.M. = 120–138), accent patterns, rhythms (sexuplets, septuplets), meter changes (4/4, 15/16), and the rhythmic accuracy required of the bass line are very demanding. The snare and tenor lines include many specialty strokes (rimshots, buzz rolls, crush rolls, cross-overs, muted rimshots, and performing on a neighbor's drum). A college-level percussion section could give each of these works a satisfying reading.

—Terry O'Mahoney

## MIXED INSTRUMENTATION

### Sonata for Timpani and Brass

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This one-movement work in two sections opens with a rather free-sounding timpani part (requiring five drums) written over slow, sus-

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tained brass chords. This section is followed by a lyrical section during which the timpani melody is an imitation of materials found in the muted trumpet line. The next section is a quick tempo with many fugal-type statements by various instruments. The third trumpet and third trombone players double by performing on triangle and woodblock. This section leads to a timpani cadenza that has been edited and scored by Guy Gauthreaux of the U.S. Navy Band. The work concludes with long sustained chords by the brass, layered over a 6/8 African-type bell pattern performed by the triangle, woodblock, and timpani.

The composition covers a variety of styles with references to Western, African, and Middle Eastern cultures. Although five drums are needed, G is the top note, so two 26-inch or two 23-inch drums can be used. The work is brilliantly-scored and should be an excellent choice for a recital program.

—George Frock

**Treasures of the Repertoire**

Nicholas Bardach  
\$20.00

N. Simrock/Theodore Presser Co. "Treasures of the Repertoire" is a short composition for one or two percussionists and piano. One player could perform it and play the timpani part ad lib, or two players could perform it with one playing xylophone and bells and the other playing timpani and bells. The repertoire used is: Humperdinck, "Ride of the Witch" from "Hansel and Gretel"; Delibes, "Bell Song" from "Lakmé"; Tchaikowsky, "Chinese Dance"

from "The Nutcracker"; and Saint-Saëns, "Les Fossiles" from "Carnival of the Animals."

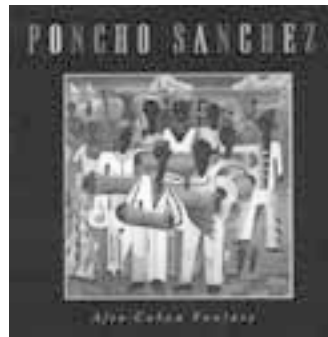
Bardach's arrangement uses the original material, and at times embellishes it to make it more soloistic. The timpani part is added as an ad lib, but it adds character to the music. The piano part is not difficult and is strictly an accompaniment.

"Treasures of the Repertoire" is a neat way to learn the excerpt material and at the same time have some fun. Although the repertoire does not represent the mainstream xylophone and bell excerpts, it is material that one must know to become a professional percussionist. This material would work well for a studio lesson or masterclass session.

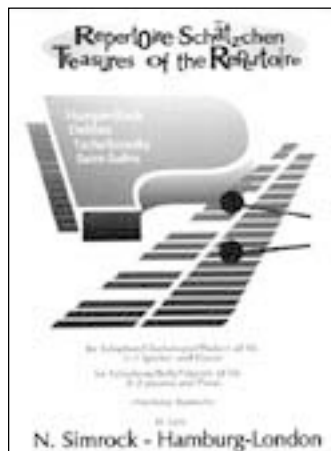
—John Beck

**PERCUSSION RECORDINGS**

**Afro-Cuban Fantasy**  
Pancho Sanchez  
Concord Records



Conga player/band leader Pancho Sanchez is one of the most respected performers in the field of Latin jazz. His ensemble performs in the instrumental tradition of Machito, Stan Kenton, and Cal Tjader and this 12-tune CD features guest vocalist Dianne Reeves. Sanchez's repertoire includes both original compositions as well as jazz tunes arranged in an Afro-Cuban style. His arrangements are artfully done, feature great soloists, and always feature a strong groove (which is great for dancers!). On *Afro-Cuban Fantasy*, he includes four cha-chas, a samba, two mambos, a ballad, a pachanga, an Afro-Cuban 6/8, and several tunes that combine rhythmic styles (a tune in 6/8 and 4/4,



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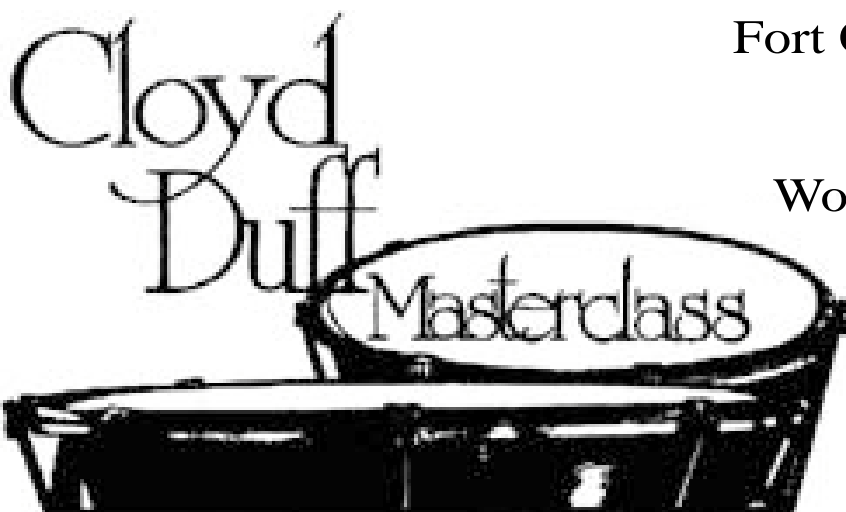
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and a samba/mambo).

The entire recording features the percussion triumvirate of timbales/congas/bongos in addition to a horn and rhythm section. Many of the most common Afro-Cuban rhythms may be found on this recording, making it attractive to those who desire to play along with the tracks. Reeves sounds like a big band singer from the 1950s, with phrasing and a vocal quality that recalls that era. Although Sanchez chooses to shun the spotlight in terms of extensive soloing on this album, that does not detract from its overall appeal. This is a very enjoyable, listenable CD that would appeal to anyone interested in Latin-jazz music.

—Terry O'Mahoney

### April Sessions

Steve Yeager  
\$15.95

### Windfall Music

*April Sessions* features the vibraphone virtuosity of Steve Yeager alongside the trio of Bobby

Peterson (piano), Irv Williams (tenor saxophone), and Tom Lewis (bass). In the liner notes, Yeager says: "I wanted this recording to be about melody and time. Many of the selections here are great vocal tunes that have been covered by my favorite instrumentalists and singers." Some of my favorite selections on the recording are: "When Sunny Gets Blue," "The Days of Wine and Roses," "When I Fall In Love," and "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face."

The selections feature Yeager in various ensemble settings (duo, trio, quartet) with the other musicians. The different settings, along with the extraordinary balance in recording quality, make the recording a very enjoyable listening experience. Yeager's prowess as an improviser is evident with each selection. The other musicians featured on the disc add an incredible sense of energy and "high-octane" musicality as well.

—Lisa Rogers

**Christopher Norton: Creston Concertino for Marimba**  
Christopher Norton/Nashville Chamber Orchestra  
\$15.95

### Alabaster Music

"Under cover of night, the soft-toned marimba slipped quietly into classic port yesterday at the Carnegie Chamber Music Hall..." So wrote critic Louis Biancolli in his April 30, 1940 review of Ruth Stuber's premiere of Creston's "Concertino for Marimba and Orchestra Op. 21," now generally conceded to be the first major solo work for the marimba. Biancolli remarked in the same review that Creston knows "how to (write for) a small orchestra supporting the marimba's timbre." And yet, it has been difficult to appreciate this, at least in recorded versions, for in the almost 60 years since its premiere, there have been very few recordings of that work (none on compact disc) that present all three movements, complete with orchestral accompaniment.

Christopher Norton received international attention when he finished as a finalist in the Leigh Howard Stevens International Marimba Competition in 1995. His performance of the Creston on this CD should secure him even more notoriety.

He plays with the technical elan and confidence of the virtuoso, conveying the reckless energy and rhythmic excitement Creston has infused into the outer movements. He charges up and down the instrument, throwing off rapid scales, arpeggios, and octave passages with unerring accuracy—and makes it sound all too easy. In the middle movement, he displays another quality: his musical profundity. He allows no technical impediments presented by the four-note rolled chords to get in the way of his musical instincts in sculpting an expressive, romantically inspired melodic line.

One cannot say enough about the Nashville Chamber Orchestra's contribution. Under the baton of



Paul Gambill their accompaniment is well-played, sensitive, rhythmically "right on," and kept in excellent balance with the soloist.

In addition to the Creston, the CD features five other works: Norton's adaptation of Bach's "Suite No. 1 in G Major for Solo Violoncello," two of his own compositions for solo marimba ("November Evening" and "Forsythian Spring"), Daniel McCarthy's "The Call of Boromir" for marimba and horn, and Bob Becker's "Cryin' Time."

The high musical standards set in the "Concertino" are maintained throughout the entire CD. For example, one only needs to hear a movement or two of the Bach suite to conclude that the mallets that Norton adroitly wields are grasped by the hands of a consummate musician/performer. There is, however, another side to his musical personality, revealed in his two refreshing, imaginative original compositions, in which a distinct jazz influence simmers just below the surface.

Two ensemble performances round out the disc. "The Call of Boromir," which displays McCarthy's knack for writing attractive, rhythmically interesting music proves an excellent vehicle for an inspired duet with hornist extraordinare Leslie Norton.

"Cryin' Time" is a moving work for marimba, vibraphone, piano, and soprano soloist described as a "hurtin' country/western love song" in which pianist Nikki Stoia and soprano Barbara Hannigan are joined by Bob Becker and Norton playing cascading runs on vibes and marimba.

One cannot help wondering what Louis Biancolli, who first reviewed the "Concertino," would think if he could listen to this CD. No doubt he would be impressed by the excellence of the performance on the disc and the quality of the music that is now being written for the instrument. More importantly, he would know that he was justified in his exuberance at the arrival of the marimba "into classic port." Thanks to young mu-

sicians like Norton, we can be assured that the marimba is maintaining its position on the concert stage and recital hall with performances that fulfill the highest artistic standards, and that its future is in good hands.

—John R. Raush

**Many Axes**  
Rawcliffe/Wilkinson/Dutz  
**\$15.00**

**Many Axes**  
*Many Axes* features a live performance by the unique trio of Brad Dutz (hand percussion), Scott Wilkinson (wind instruments), and Susan Rawcliffe (ceramic artist). Nothing is written down or planned other than the combinations of instruments, and perhaps a thought as to the mood and concept of the piece. The instruments are either clay, bamboo or wood, and consist of original ones created by Susan Rawcliffe, various wind instruments, drums, and gongs. Only one tune was composed; the others were improvised. This CD represents the interaction of three

people who create a palette of sound and mood that engages all those who listen. It is unique and well-done, and although it perhaps is not for everyone, for those who are into this space, it is a good listen.

—John Beck

**Memories, Conversations & More**  
Jeannine Maddox-Voegele  
**\$15.00**

**Force Recordings Studio/  
Scott Davidson Music**  
Not only is this CD a showcase for the artistry of the talented Swiss marimbist Jeannine Maddox-Voegele, it also presents five of the most significant works in the contemporary marimba chamber-music repertoire. The disc features performances of Akira Yuyama's "Divertimento for Alto Saxophone and Marimba," a piece that is already a fixture in the college marimbist's repertoire; Keiko Abe's "Memories of the Seashore" (version for two marimbas), "Conversations in the Forest," and "Prism for Two Marimbas"; and Takayoshi

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Yoshioka's "Three Dances for Solo Marimba and Percussion Ensemble."

Maddox-Voegele's performances with saxophonist Urs Oettli in the Yuyama work, and with Keiko Abe in "Memories of the Seashore" and "Prism for Two Marimbas" offer valuable opportunities for serious student to "go to school." For example, college marimbists who have worked on solo versions of the two Abe pieces will gain new insights into those works by hearing the versions for two marimbas with Abe herself playing the first part.

In "Conversations in the Forest," Abe develops thematic material that is also used in "Prism for Solo Marimba," "Prism for Marimba Duo," and "Prism Rhapsody for Solo Marimba and Orchestra" into a dazzling work, in which Maddox-Voegele is ably assisted by members of the Conton Percussion Ensemble. Yoshioka's "Three Dances for Solo Marimba and Percussion Ensemble" is a thoroughly imaginative and captivating piece

that is full of musically expressive opportunities for the marimbist.

The highlights on this disc are the musical collaborations of Maddox-Voegele and Keiko Abe, who deliver duo performances that reveal a close artistic rapport that can be explained by Maddox-Voegele's stint in Japan as Abe's student. Perhaps due to the fact that this disc consists of live performances, as an occasional subtle cough from the audience attests, there is an immediacy and excitement in this music that is often absent in recordings made in the sterile atmosphere of a studio. The result is that listeners, in the comfort of their own living room, can experience the same visceral reaction as that evidenced by the collective gasp of incredulity heard from the audience at the conclusion of the disc's final track.

—John R. Raush

**Where We Come From**  
Vital Information  
Intuition Records  
Drummer Steve Smith and his

band Vital Information look back to their musical influences to create this aptly titled recording. All four members (Smith, guitarist Frank Gambale, keyboardist Tom Coster, and bassist Jeff Andrews) proudly carry on the tradition of groove-oriented instrumental music that was prevalent during the 1960s and '70s. While the influences of such notable groups as Booker T. & the M.G.'s, Tony Williams' Lifetime, the Meters, Miles Davis, and George Benson is evident on the CD, the music retains its own identity and sparkle.

The CD contains 17 works—seven original tunes, Ornette Coleman's "Happy House," a swing version of Led Zeppelin's "Moby Dick," Jaco Pastorius's "Blow Fish Blues," two tunes on which the band improvised and just "let the tape roll," and five musical inserts (short improvised interludes). The recording has a definite retro sound, due primarily to its use of Hammond B3 organ, hollow-body guitar, old K. Zildjian cymbals, and acoustic bass. The best aspect of

the recording, however, is the spontaneous and loose feel. The players sound like they're really having fun and playing from their hearts. This is not a slick, overproduced, calculated recording that is precise but without soul. It sounds exactly like what it is—a group of talented musicians who can improvise and compose tunes with strong grooves.

Smith really stretches his chops on this recording. Most of the tunes are funk-oriented, that style of 1960s–'70s drumming typified by shifting backbeats, loose hi-hat ride patterns, and syncopated bass drum figures, but Smith often shifts the groove to a more swing-oriented feel (often in mid-solo). The recording contains several nice solos from Smith as well as some tasty implied metric modulation during both solos and groove sections. Anyone who misses the funky, freewheeling instrumental music of the past should check out this recording.

—Terry O'Mahoney

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**Young At Heart**  
Tony Williams Trio  
Columbia Records

Although advertised as the only recording by the Tony Williams Trio, it was hardly a new format for the drummer. His original Lifetime band with Larry Young and John McLaughlin was a trio, as was the Great Jazz Trio with Hank Jones and Ron Carter, which Williams assembled. But Williams was a more dominant presence in those groups than he is on this 1996 studio date with pianist Mulgrew Miller and bassist Ira Coleman.

This sounds more like Miller's solo project than a Tony Williams album. The tunes are mostly standards and ballads, and the final track is solo piano. Williams only contributed one composition, and on most tracks his drumming is more in the style of an accompanist than of an equal partner.

Fans of drum pyrotechnics might be disappointed, but otherwise it's a relaxed session in which the players sound as if they were simply enjoying themselves rather

than trying to prove anything. This won't add anything new to Williams' legend as an innovator, but there are a few spirited four-bar drum breaks and some deft brushwork that few drummers could pull off. Miller "noodles" at times, but overall is extremely melodic in his solos.

—Rick Mattingly



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## William H. Marsh, Infant Drummer

*Musical prodigies are well recorded throughout history, Mozart being perhaps the most famous. The drumming community has a strong tradition of young prodigy entertainers, including infant drummers featured by P.T. Barnum and famous child stars like "Traps, the Drum Wonder" (later known as Buddy Rich). The below account of "William H. Marsh, Infant Drummer" appeared in an 1852 issue of Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion, published in Boston, MA.—Lisa Rogers and James A. Strain, PAS Historians*

### THE LITTLE DRUMMER

This extraordinary prodigy, a little less than four years of age, has been creating especial surprise and pleasure among the musical world of New York, and more especially with instrumental performers. His name is William H. Marsh, and he was born in the city of New York, February 25th, 1848. From his earliest infancy, this little phenomenon displayed a remarkable appreciation of time, and as soon as he was able to use his little hands, their first impulses seemed to be an effort to pro-



duce regular musical sounds, by drumming, in perfect time, any air that struck his ear.

Observing the bent of his mind, his father was induced to purchase him a twenty five cent drum, when he was a year old, which he at once commenced using, without any instruction. Just before he was two years old, while recovering from the measles, and before he could sit up, he would cry for his drum, and sit in his cradle and play upon it, although so weak he could scarcely hold the sticks. At the age of two, having worn out the first one, his father purchased a new drum, costing fifty cents, which he was permitted to play upon in the front yard, to the great amusement of the crowds who collected in the streets to listen.

During the last summer he was taken to a military parade, and instead of being attracted by the nodding plumes and gay uniforms of the soldiers, his eye and ear caught and followed the fife and drum, which was the first he had ever seen, and he seemed crazy to try his hand on a large drum, with something better than whistling to drum by. Although he could hardly wield the large sticks, yet he surprised all the musicians, and became the lion of the hour. Not long since his father was solicited by a member of the corps to which he is attached, to have him presented. He listened to the drummers a moment, measured tap, then rattled away, following the music with such animation and precision as to astonish all present. The corps voted him a whole uniform like their own, in which he has appeared at their annual ball.

The little drummer has recently given several concerts, in his native city, with great success, and attracted crowded audiences, as well as in this city. His performances at the Tremont Temple elicited the highest encomiums of praise from the press, and were attended by large and delighted audiences, especially the juvenile portion of our community. His touch is strong and manly, and most singularly belies the tiny arms with which he handles the drum-sticks, while his appearance is that of one who feels what he is doing. In short, little Marsh is a *natural* drummer.

PN

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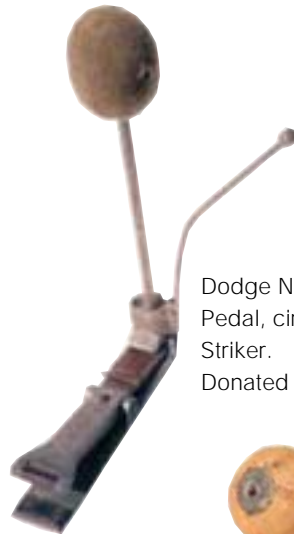
Early 1950s—The Original Ghost Pedal features circular “clock” style springs designed for a smooth action in both directions. This pedal was originally developed by Bob Ramsey of Springfield, Oregon, with the assistance of Shelly Manne. Donated by Florence “Flip” Manne



1920s Leedy Mfg. Company “Professional” Bass Drum Pedal with Cymbal Striker. Donated by Robert Stuart



Double pedal arrangement from Roy Knapp's trap set. On the left is the original 1909 Ludwig & Ludwig pedal, and on the right is the modified 1924 Ludwig & Ludwig pedal. Donated by Jim Knapp.



Dodge No. 12 Bass Drum Pedal, circa 1900 with Cymbal Striker. Donated by Gordon Peters



1960s “The Phantom Action Ghost” Pedal—This second generation pedal was further developed by Ramsey and endorsed by Shelly Manne. The Ludwig Drum Company acquired the Ghost pedal in the late 1970s and developed the next generation. This pedal was discontinued in the early 1980s. Donated by Florence “Flip” Manne



1924 Ludwig & Ludwig Bass Drum Pedal with Cymbal Striker. This pedal belongs to the “Jack O’Grady’s Varsity Entertainers” drumset. Donated by Joel Leach



Smoothie Pedal—No date is available and little is known about this pedal with its unique horizontal spring design. Donated by Royal Studio Cartage



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Shown above (clockwise from upper left) are an assortment of the current range of Remo Tympani Heads, including WeatherKing Clear, Renaissance and WeatherKing Hazy. Shown at left (from left to right) are Remo Drumhead artists: Jonathan Hays (NY studio), Cloyd Duff (legendary tympanist), Roland Kolitz (NY Philharmonic/Julliard), Tale Lassines (Milwaukee Symphony), Raynor Carroll (LA Philharmonic), John Brock (Rochester Philharmonic/Eastman School Of Music) and Everett Beah (Boston Pops/Esplanade).



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