PERCUSSIVE NOTES

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African Drumming in Drum Circles

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The Positive Effects of Drumming on Children with Autism

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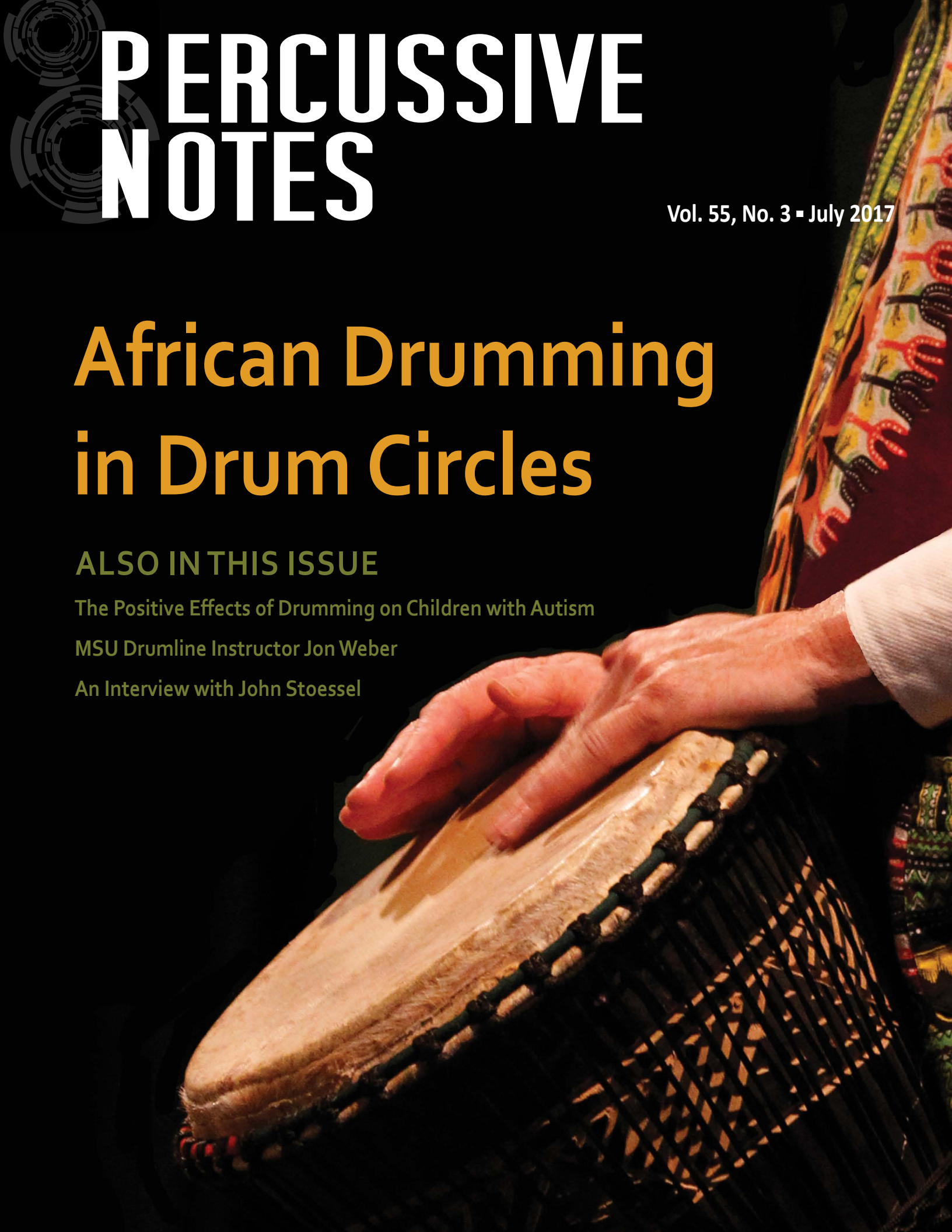

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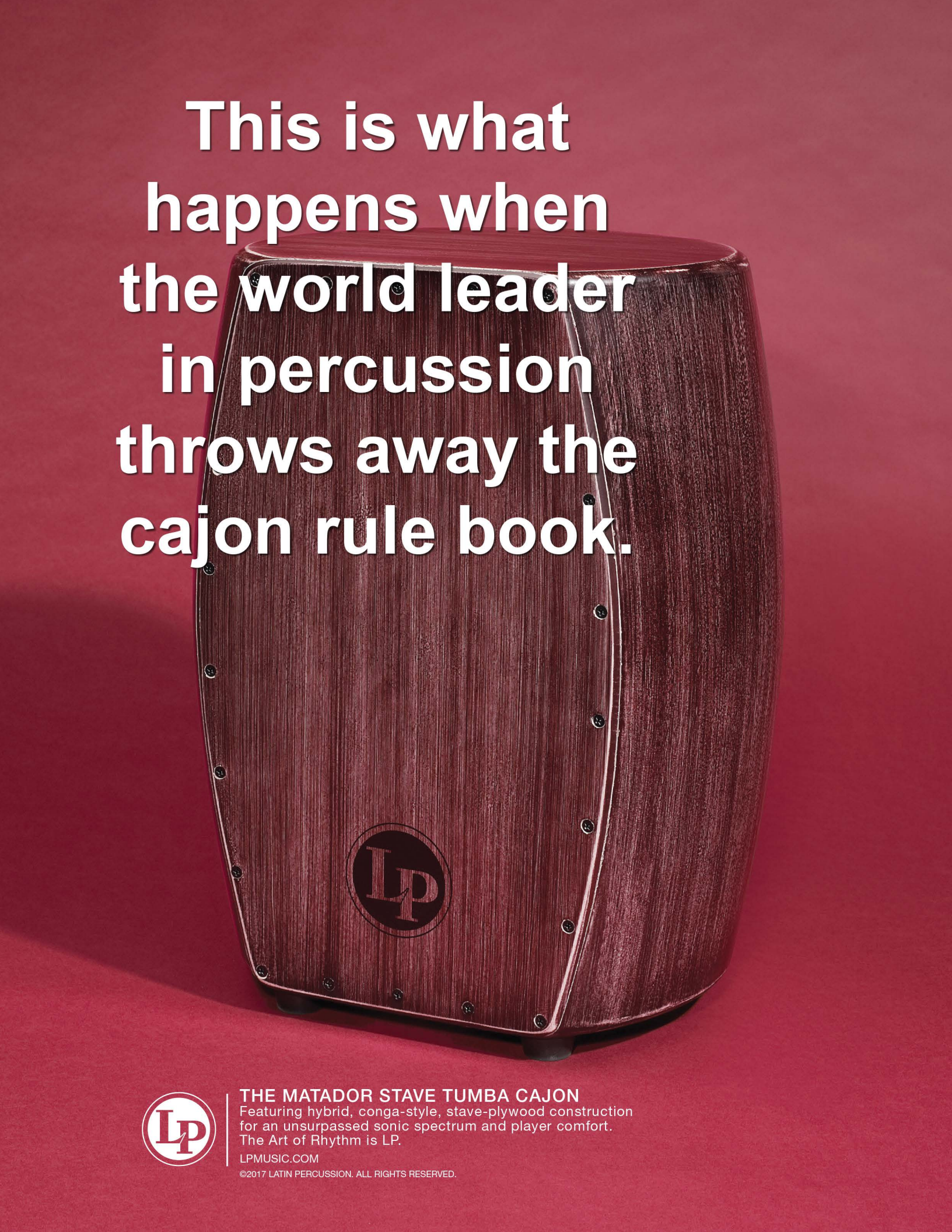

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PERCUSSIVE NOTES

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columns

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The PAS Connection: A Common Thread

By Dr. Brian Zator, President, Percussive Arts Society

Serving as PAS President over the past six months, I have enjoyed many opportunities to spread the positive word about our great organization. I've attended Day of Percussion™ events on the East Coast (New York City), the West Coast (Fresno, California), the South (Mississippi), and Taiwan, and I will travel to China in August for their first-ever PAS China International Percussion Festival. After visiting these wonderful events, I am constantly reminded of what makes PAS great: the opportunity to connect with and foster relationships with incredible musicians all over the world.

Additionally, I was able to take a one-semester sabbatical from my Director of Percussion position at Texas A&M University-Commerce, which allowed me and the entire PAS team to focus on achieving our short-term goals, while also researching and expanding our vision of long-term goals. Through numerous conference calls, conversations, meetings, percussion events, emails, and festivals, I am extremely excited about where PAS is right now and where we are going.

However, I am continually humbled to look back at the path that led to me to where I am today, and, I know many of you reading this update can relate to these same situations. Through connections, friendships, and unique opportunities, PAS is the common thread that binds us all together.

OLD FRIENDS

It was a blessing to start playing percussion in the late 1980s, in the north Houston area. A large group of talented young students attended rivalry schools during this time period, but we became good friends through competitions, auditions, and two transformative percussion teachers. We fought for top spots in groups and pushed one another to work hard.

Over 30 years later, we see each other at PASIC, talk to each other in PAS committee meetings, and work together on the PAS Board of Advisors. We have developed our own identities, but our common threads are our high school memories and our love and dedication to PAS.

FORMER TEACHERS

As I stated in my first PAS President update, two of my former teachers are PAS Past-Presidents. Dr. Larry Vanlandingham was my professor at my undergraduate alma mater, Baylor University, and he served as PAS President from 1982–84. Dr. V was kind, demanding, thoughtful, caring, and a mentor to all of his students; overall, he showed us how to treat people with respect. Mark Ford (PAS President from 2003–04) is the current Percussion Coordinator at the University of North Texas, where I earned by DMA. He gave me great opportunities to shine and pursue my goals. Once again, the common thread was PAS.

OPPORTUNITIES

Many of us can pinpoint certain people and opportunities that helped shape us as individuals or steered us in a direction we never thought possible. Performing in the front ensemble with the Cavaliers in 1994, 1995, and 1996 was one of those opportunities for me. I didn't know what to expect when I flew up to Rosemont, Illinois, for my first camp, but I would eventually learn how to play at a very high level, work with a wide variety of people, and create lifelong memories and connections.

Many of my instructors and fellow members of the corps have become well-known educators and performers in the percussion community, earned leadership roles in PAS, and overall, have remained good friends for over 20 years. We can enjoy looking back at our experiences on tour, and through our common thread of PAS, we can also talk about how PAS can shape the future of percussion.

NEW FRIENDS

One of the primary answers to the question "Why PAS?" is creating and cultivating friendships. Everyone who attends PASIC meets someone new, whether that person is starting a new job, is a freshman in college attending PASIC for the first time, or is a percussion icon we listened to as a kid. This experience is inevitable, and we wouldn't want it any other way.

PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY

The Percussive Arts Society's (PAS) mission is *to inspire, educate, and support percussionists and drummers throughout the world.*

Having the common thread of PAS to develop new friendships and reconnect with old friends is what defines our organization.

Our leadership teams are working hard to find more ways for us to connect with each other, as well as reach people outside of the percussive bubble. As I summarized in my last update, we are more than just an incredible four-day convention; we are musicians, educators, artists, ambassadors, friends, drummers, percussionists, and overall, people who are empowered to continuously spread the joy of PAS and enrich the lives of those around us. Over this summer, make a point to connect with old friends, make new friends, and always be on the lookout for the opportunity to discover and cultivate that common thread.

Percussively yours,
Brian Zator
President, Percussive Arts Society

ADVERTISERS INDEX

REBOUNDS

CONGA AND BONGO DRUM IN JAZZ REVIEW

It is unfortunate that the task to review *The Conga and Bongo Drum in Jazz* was given to someone who self admittedly has very little knowledge of conga and bongo drumming literature. The reviewer may be an accomplished educator in the field of mallet percussion, but hardly an authority on Latin percussion or jazz. She states, "I am not anywhere close to an aficionado on conga and bongo method books…" This begs the question why the book was not given to someone with greater expertise.

This is the first negative review we have received on the book. The reviewer repeatedly questions the intent of the book, which is clearly stated throughout the text as "an essential tool for band teachers and drummers playing Latin Percussion in jazz with special emphasis on swing." Her cursory "quick glance" at *The Conga and Bongo Drum in Jazz* demonstrates a complete lack of appreciation for this unique art form.

Although the reviewer doesn't think the book would interest "the 21st-century student," when I submitted the book for review, the PAS intern at the time wrote, "I took a quick glance through and the book looks really well put together for someone like me who hasn't played congas or bongos in a jazz setting, or at all for that matter."

This book describes a style of conga and bongo in jazz that represents an important contribution to jazz history that has never been previously explored in any text. I would expect the reviewer, as a music educator, would want to learn these rhythms and share with her students. Not once does she mention the contributions of legendary drummer Candido Camero and the rare footage of his performance with Bobby Sanabria, other than to complain that it was difficult to access because you could not just click on a button. To say "no need to purchase this if you own any of Ed Uribe's books" further shows a lack of understanding of this material and the nuance of swing. I would challenge her to provide one example in Ed Uribe's books *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion & Drum Set* or *The Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum Set* that demonstrates the bongo or conga in jazz with a swing feel.

Percussive Notes is probably the foremost academic percussion journal in the world. The impact of this inaccurate and flippant review is damaging. As stated in the book, all authors' royalties are being donated to the PAS through an endowment in the name of Candido Camero. In falsely claiming that the information in this book can be found in another, the reviewer does a huge disservice to the PAS and any financial support this book could potentially offer. This review was very disappointing and below the standard that one might expect from the PAS.

—Trevor Salloum

"OCCAM'S RAZOR" REVIEW

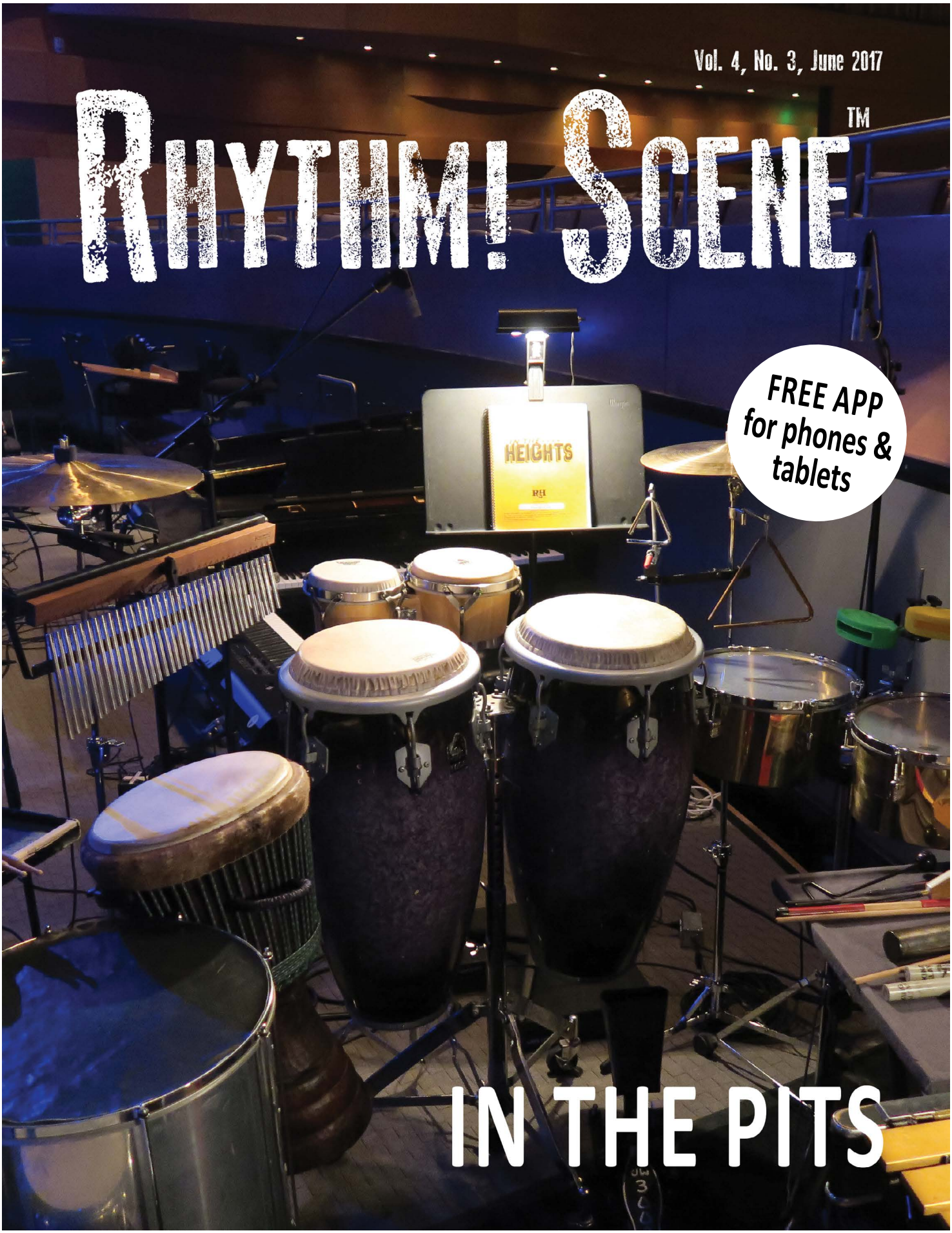
The May 2016 issue of *Percussive Notes* contained a review of my piece "Occam's Razor," for marimba and percussion quartet. It is evident that the reviewer took the necessary time to study the piece, and for that I am grateful.

Although it was briefly mentioned, I wanted to clarify an important point that should have been emphasized. The piece was indeed written as an intermediate-level solo with accompaniment, as I have always felt there was a need for more pieces at this level. As we are aware, many of the "solo with ensemble" pieces are written on the more difficult side of the scale, which excludes a great deal of players. The reviewer stated that I "hit the nail on the head" if I was aiming to write an "etude" in that style, so that is certainly appreciated.

I would also point out that my interpretation of the "Occam's Razor" principle may be a little more nuanced than the Oxford version. While the reviewer chose to apply the Oxford version of "the principle that in explaining a thing, no more assumptions should be made than are necessary" to the piece itself, my approach was to apply that concept in the writing process. My compositional interpretation was "when choosing between two or more methods, the simplest solution is usually the best." I came back to this idea many times when developing the piece; I would want to "beef up" a passage, but would remember why I was writing the piece and what was behind it.

Lastly, I'm not sure why the reviewer felt the need to include the word "hilariously" in the closing sentence. It is agreed that I should have included program notes (with the above explanations) with the score. However, if it was truly confusing, a quick email to ask for clarification would have been appreciated. Instead, it sounds a bit snarky, when in the end I hope that as professionals we are all on the "same side" of percussion education.

—Gene Fambrough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HEIGHTS
IN THE PITS

African Drumming in Drum Circles

By Robert J. Damm

Although there is a clear distinction between African drum ensembles that learn a repertoire of traditional dance rhythms of West Africa and a drum circle that plays primarily freestyle, in-the-moment music, there are times when it might be valuable to share African drumming concepts in a drum circle. In his 2011 *Percussive Notes* article "Interactive Drumming: Using the power of rhythm to unite and inspire," Kalani defined drum circles, drum ensembles, and drum classes. *Drum circles* are "improvisational experiences, aimed at having fun in an inclusive setting. They don't require of the participants any specific musical knowledge or skills, and the music is co-created in the moment. The main idea is that anyone is free to join and express himself or herself in any way that positively contributes to the music." By contrast, *drum classes* are "a means to learn musical skills. The goal is to develop one's drumming skills in order to enhance one's enjoyment and appreciation of music. Students often start with classes and then move on to join ensembles, thereby further developing their skills." *Drum ensembles* are "often organized around specific musical genres, such as contemporary or folkloric music of a specific culture" (Kalani, p. 72).

Robert Damm: It may be beneficial for a drum circle facilitator to introduce elements of African music for the sake of enhancing the musical skills, cultural knowledge, and social experience of the participants.

Acknowledging these distinctions, it may be beneficial for a drum circle facilitator to introduce elements of African music (culturally specific rhythms, processes, and concepts) for the sake of enhancing the musical skills, cultural knowledge, and social experience of the participants in a drum circle. Admittedly, the drum circle, by definition, would temporarily become a drum class or drum ensemble. Given that some proponents of African drumming characterize drum circles as meaningless chaos, and some drum circle facilitators follow long-established guidelines to "never teach" and "never introduce culturally-specific rhythms," it is difficult to propose exactly how to balance these disparate approaches. A unique perspective may come from committed drum circle facilitators who have studied African drumming with master teachers from Africa, have gone on to teach lessons and classes in African drumming, and effectively apply these complex cultural concepts in drum circles.

Alisha Ross: When I introduce a specific rhythm, I ask the participants to first say it, then say it and clap it.

ENSEMBLE PHILOSOPHY

Drum circles are known and valued for helping people connect to each other through music, for celebrating life through a shared drumming experience, and for promoting a spirit of participation, teamwork, and community. A number of social principles in African music correspond to philosophical concepts of community drum circles:

- Communal participation affirms togetherness (Agawu, 16).
- "The ensemble environment allows the amazingly skilled to make music alongside the less skilled" (Agawu, 167).
- "A shared point of temporal reference guarantees the coherence of the whole without discouraging the exercise of individual creativity" (Agawu, 167).
- "Competence is assumed on the part of *all* members of the community" (Agawu, 167–168).

Certain elements of African music might easily be integrated into the drum circle. Kofi Agawu, in *The African Imagination in Music*, defined the philosophy and practice of African ensemble performance as having four components: handclapping, time lines, polyrhythmic textures, and lead-drum narratives (169). These four elements, in varying degrees, may be introduced or emphasized within the context of a drum circle.

Hand clapping is an "integral part of music making in Africa" (Agawu. 89). "The normative musical function of clapping is to reinforce the emergent beat of music. Clapping compels involvement and synchronicity; it acknowledges foundation. Clapping typically consists of patterns constrained by the beat and/or patterns with distinct shapes that counterpoint the beat" (Agawu, 170).

Time line is a "short rhythmic pattern normally entrusted to the bell and played as an unvarying *ostinato* throughout a particular dance drumming. Time lines are patterns rather than mere pulses; they are integral to the music" (Agawu, 171–172). An example of a time line would be the iron bell rhythm known in Afro-Cuban music as *clave*. Time lines and their repetition contribute to the essence of African music, which is *groove* (Agawu, 14–17).

Polyrhythm is the "simultaneous use of two or more contrasting rhythms in a musical texture. A crucial feature of polyrhythm is that each constituent part is subject to extensive repetition. We might think of a polyrhythmic texture as one in which several ostinato patterns are superimposed" (Agawu, 176). The polyrhythm in African music results from the timelines, accompanying rhythms, and lead drumming. The accompanying rhythms serve a "less fixed function entrusted to a set of support drums that ensures the heart of the polyrhytmic texture" (Agawu, 168).

Lead drum narratives refer to "telling stories on the drum using a variety of patterns. The stories are sometimes highly elaborate and original, sometimes conventional, and often framed in liaison with the other musicians' patterns" (Agawu, 184). The lead drum narrative is "a relatively free section that rides on the texture provided by the rest of the ensemble" (Agawu, p. 168).

INSTRUMENTATION

Drum circles typically include the drums, bells, and rattles associated with West African drum ensembles. In particular, dunduns, jembes, slit drums, iron bells, and shekeres are frequently a part of the acoustic soundscape of the drum circle. Africa has a spectacular variety of musical instruments. Drums come in a wide variety of sizes; they may be played with sticks, hands, or some combination of stick and hand (Agawu, 93). "Many African drums have a relational pitch dimension that endows them with a joint melodic and rhythmic function" (Agawu, 94). "Iron bells are among the most common and ancient of African musical instruments. Bells can be played by children and adults, and by highly skilled and modestly skilled musicians. In the performance of popular Ghanaian dances… the bell is typically entrusted with a signature rhythmic pattern that it repeats without variation for the duration of the dance composition" (Agawu, 97). "Rattles are for the most part accompanying instruments, often marking the beat or playing one of the simpler, unchanging rhythms within a polyrhythmic texture" (Agawu, 97).

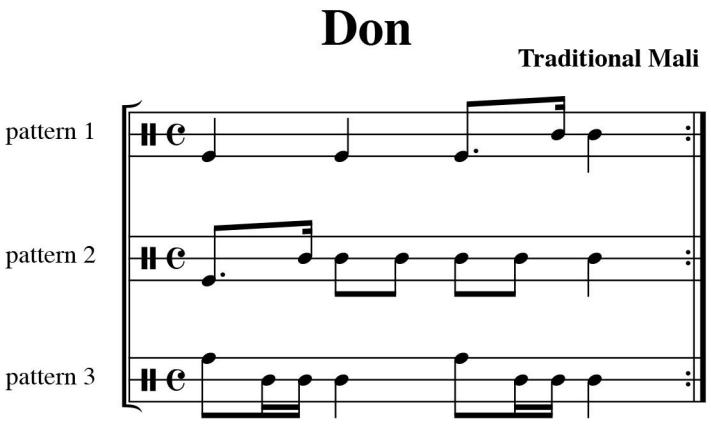
For those who value community drum circles and are also knowledgeable about African drumming traditions, the information provided here is intended to inspire you to thoughtfully and respectfully share elements of African drumming in selected drum circle settings. The following suggestions represent responses from a survey sent to drum circle facilitators also known for their interest in African drumming. This is not in any way an exhaustive list, but rather a sampling of strategies for integrating African concepts into drum circles.

Using African Rhythms as a Foundation for a Drum Circle

By Rick Mattingly

A few years ago, a colleague at the high school I teach at asked if I could do drum circles with his Spirituality classes. I knew that most of these students had probably never played a musical instrument before, and this was going to be a one-time event. The students were excited about spending a class period playing drums, but I detected some "performance anxiety"; they weren't sure just what they were going to be asked to do, and they certainly didn't want to embarrass themselves. If I had dived right in to leading a traditional drum circle, in which everyone could play whatever he wanted (I'm not being sexist here; it's an all-boy school), it could have just become a free-for-all. I had to find a way to control the situation

I decided to begin by teaching them a simple, three-part African rhythm I learned from Yaya Diallo. He referred to the piece as "Don," which he said meant "dance" in Mali, where he was born. Here are the three jembe parts; the bottom line is the bass tone, the middle line is the open tone, and the top line is a slap:



Since I was only going to work with each class once, I did not teach the slap technique. I just showed them the bass and open tones, and anything notated as a slap I played as an open tone.

I started with the top pattern. After a couple of minutes I stopped playing but motioned for them to continue. Typically, the group sped up, but they usually sped up together, which gave me the opportunity to compliment them for listening to each other.

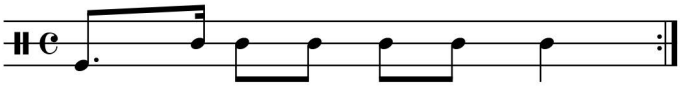
I then told them I was going to start them again at the original tempo, but I was going to quickly switch to a different, faster pattern. I said that if they listened to my pattern and heard how I was filling in the spaces between the notes they were playing, they would probably find it easier to play the original pattern without speeding up. It worked.

I then taught the second pattern. We played it together, and then I switched back to the first pattern while they continued with the second pattern.

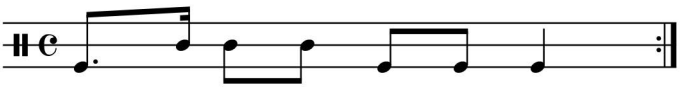
Next, I split the group in half. I started half the group on the first pattern, and once they had that going I started the other half on the second pattern. If either group started sounding disjointed, I would stand in front of them and reinforce their pattern, but I could usually stop playing after a couple of minutes and let them play by themselves. Then I would have the group that previously played the second pattern play the first pattern, and vice-versa. Once they had it going by themselves, I would start playing the third pattern with them.

After I taught the whole group the third pattern, I split them into three groups, with each group playing a different pattern. I rotated the groups so that each group played each pattern. They generally sounded pretty good with all three patterns going, but I told them that, standing in the middle of the circle, I was very aware of each group. Our goal was to make one unified composite sound, so I had them count off by threes. I started all the "ones" on the first pattern, started all the "twos" on the second pattern, and started all the "threes" on the third pattern. After they played together for a while, I rotated the parts and started again. I repeated that once more so that each student had a chance to play all three parts.

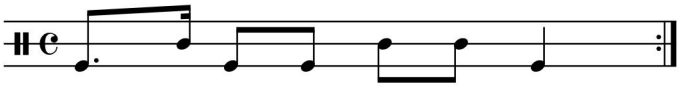
My goal in doing this was to give them the experience of playing together and listening to each other, and also to give them a very basic rhythmic vocabulary that they could use in a more traditional drum circle setting. I explained the premise of a drum circle was that everyone could play whatever he wanted, as long as it fit into the overall pulse of the group. I said that I was going to start out by playing the first pattern we had learned, and each of them could play any of the three patterns, but he didn't have to play them the same way we learned them. For example, instead of playing pattern 2 this way...



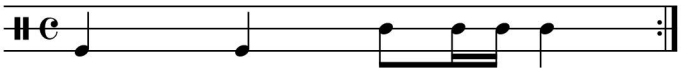
...it could be played like this...



...or like this.



I also said they could switch back and forth between two (or all three) patterns, or they could combine patterns. For example, patterns 1 and 3 could be combined like this:

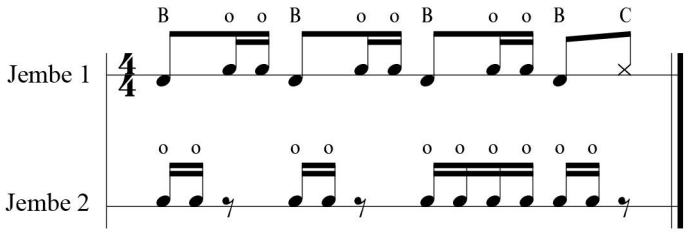


I told them that if they wanted to just keep a steady pulse, that was fine, too. I also told them that once we got going, I would play some different rhythms besides the ones we had learned, and if someone heard me play something he liked, he should feel free to play that rhythm. Finally, I said that they could make up their own rhythms as long as they fit the overall pulse of the group.

Working with three to five classes a year for eight years now, that approach has been successful. From learning and playing a simple three-part African rhythm, they gained the confidence to participate, and they also had a small rhythmic vocabulary to work with. Some students stayed with those original patterns, others experimented with variations of those patterns, and a few tried some rhythms of their own. But from playing the African piece, they quickly learned how to listen to each other and play different parts together.

HAND CLAPPING

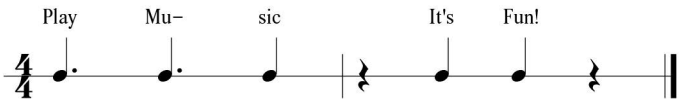
Robert Damm: Start a piece by having one half of the group clap the beat and the other half clap a bell rhythm. The piece could gradually expand into additional rhythms played on body percussion and eventually transition into drums and percussion instruments. The luba drum rhythm, as taught by Toeknee Bailey, features hand clapping; this two-part composition works well in drum circles.



B = bass
o = open tone
C = clap hands

Jeff Holland: I use clapping to teach clave, bell, and kata patterns (rhythmic sequences that relate to many Haitian and rumba rhythms); call-and-response, Keith Terry *Body Music*; TaKeTiNa (rhythm workshop involving stepping, clapping and chanting); audience participation; and teaching parts.
Ed Mikenas: Introduce clave by having the group clap "Play Music, It's Fun!"

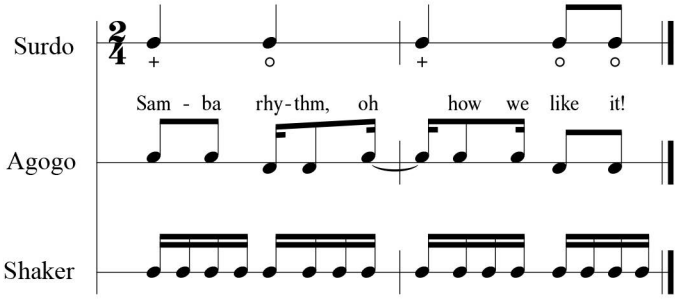
John Yost: I sometimes use ethno-specific patterns as a platform lesson that morphs into an in-the-moment piece.



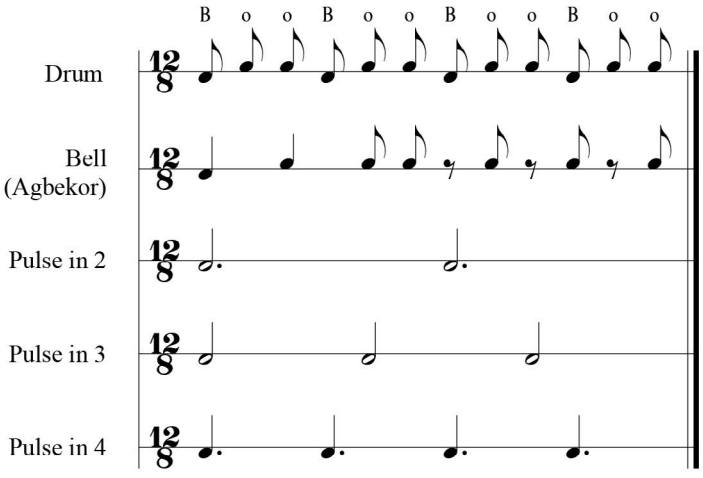
Alisha Ross: When I introduce the patterns for a specific rhythm, I ask the participants to first say it, then say it and clap it. Then we begin to play on our drums, very gradually speeding up as needed.
Sule Greg Wilson: I always begin with clapping and singing. I use singing and body percussion to create an internal sense of the music before anyone touches an instrument.
John Yost: I use clapping to keep space between beats in a fun way, as a way to shift away from drumming during a transition point, and to bring the circle volume down to create a window for vocal or quieter sounds.

BELL PATTERNS ORIGINATING IN AFRICA

Robert Damm: I start a samba groove by having the bass drums play a two-measure 2/4 pattern of mute, bass, mute, bass-bass, add an agogo (double bell) part by vocalizing "samba rhythm, oh how we like it!," and direct the shakers to play four sounds on a beat (sixteenth notes) by vocalizing chika-chika, chicka-chicka.

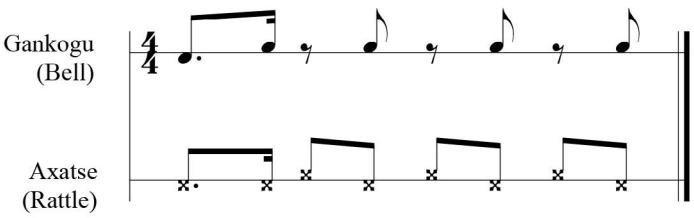


Jeff Holland: I use 6/8, 12/8 long and short bell patterns.
Ed Mikenas: Play agbekor bell rhythm with "Mother Rhythm" drum patterns (bass-tone-tone-bass-tone-tone using alternating R-L-R-L-R-L hand sequence) as a way of teaching how a three pulse and a four pulse can work together with the same rhythm.



B = bass
o = open tone

Alisha Ross: I introduce a bell (cowbell or gankogui) for call-and-response, and I often tell the participants that this is the "timekeeper' or "metronome" of African drumming in many cultures.
Sule Greg Wilson: If possible, I use Adowa, 3/2 or 2/3 clave, or a 12/8 pattern.
John Yost: I sometimes use different 6/8 patterns and Afro-Cuban patterns to push the groove forward, mark the pulse, and create melody.
Tom Teasley: Mostly I use the gahu gankogui pattern.

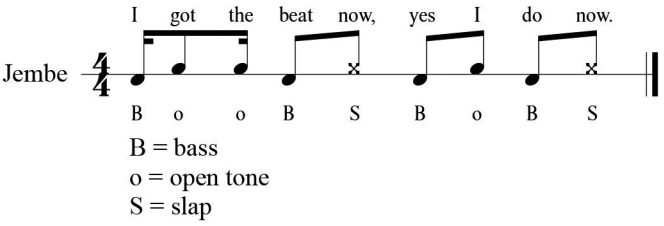


RATTLE/SHAKER PATTERNS ORIGINATING IN AFRICA

Robert Damm: Shakers usually intensify and support the beat by playing ostinato patterns of quarter notes or eighth/sixteenth-note subdivisions.
Ed Mikenas: I emphasize eighth notes.
Frank Shaffer: I do a 1-and-3 pattern (half notes) or something similar and suggest similar patterns to others.
Tom Teasley: Mostly I use the gahu shaker pattern.
Sule Greg Wilson: Shona hosho patterns fit well, as does a Cuban six on shekere.

DUNDUN, BASS DRUM, OR SUPPORTING/FOUNDATIONAL DRUM RHYTHMS ORIGINATING IN AFRICA

Robert Damm: The bass drums can play a foundational rhythm for many African-influenced or African-inspired rhythms such as New Orleans swing, various 6/8 grooves, clave-based grooves (e.g., the Bo Diddley beat and bamboula), fanga, and traditional dances such as kuku.
Jeff Holland: I pass out bass drum parts for kuku, madan, and fanga as well as rhythms that are not culturally specific, and I use the bass drum for call-and-response.
Alisha Ross: One rhythm I love to use, especially with children and populations with special needs, was taught to me by Kalani. He and Ryan Camara introduced macru in a way that stuck with me: "I got the beat now, yes I do now."



I often introduce the rhythm as a celebration rhythm from West Africa, and we will jam on some of the supporting rhythm patterns until participants feel comfortable enough to begin to make up their own within the framework of macru. I also do this with "Fanga Alafia" from time to time, especially in cases with senior citizens in assisted living/memory support because the song is simple enough to remember. I like to use these types of rhythms as guideposts for beginning a rhythmic jam session that is accessible to all and sets participants up for success. I remind them that if ever they get lost in the rhythm, return to the simple "heartbeat" of the groove and work on keeping the beat steady for the group until they feel comfortable enough to make up their own rhythms.
Sule Greg Wilson: I use samba surdu and contra-surdu patterns. Mande Lamba dunun and songba parts can usually blend quite well. As for structures, there is the Nyabinghi "Lub-Dub"/Heartbeat, and any number of what I refer to as "claves" that are used to offer cohesion to group drumming situations.
John Yost: I sometimes use kuku, kassa, dunumba, and other ethno-specific patterns/arrangements/drumsongs as a platform lesson that morphs into an in-the-moment piece.

POLYRHYTHM

Ed Mikenas: Teaching African dance forms typically involves three different rhythms. I make sure that participants are able to play each rhythm.
Jeff Holland: Sometimes I explain that music can be felt in duple meter, triple meter, or both. A quick activity is playing "Both—right-left-right" with hands on lap.
John Yost: This I do in the beginning "dictator phase" or in a debriefing.
Tom Teasley: I frequently take the traditional 12/8 bell pattern and have the circle step from a perspective of two and then change to a perspective of three.

LEAD DRUM SOLOS

Jim Greiner: I bring the volume of the circle down and cue people to solo on top of that. I first demonstrate simple ways to construct solos based on the person's original pattern.
Jeff Holland: Besides allowing good soloists to take turns (talk) in a circle, I usually encourage self-expression through 3+1 or 7+1 phras-

Tom Teasley: I encourage soloists to play in a call-and-response manner.

ing depending on tempo and ability. The group grooves for three measures, then the soloist takes one. I usually go around the circle a couple of times, depending on the number of participants.

Ed Mikenas: Participants are first required to be able to play all the supporting parts and execute the "call." They are then asked to think of language that they are inspired to express and "say it" on the lead drum.

Alisha Ross: I often use the encouragement to "play what you feel." Although my rhythmic instruction is very deeply embedded within West African drumming traditions, I am usually leading interactive rhythm sessions in which learning African music is not the goal. I use my own knowledge of African rhythms to help keep a steady, grounded beat for circles; to help me introduce basic rhythm-keeping concepts to participants in an accessible way; and to share the spirit of community with the participants so they can experience the fun, the energy, and the empowering feeling that is the drum circle. With children soloists, I encourage them to play what they feel (we often experiment by playing feelings of anger, happiness, sadness, frustration, energy, etc.) and also encourage the ensemble to keep a steady beat for the soloists so they have a rhythmic framework within which to work.

Tom Teasley: My approach is more from the jazz tradition than traditional African. As a result, I encourage soloists to play in a call-and-response manner. I encourage the use of space and conversational concepts.

Sule Greg Wilson: Playing lead can only happen if the player understands how the rest of the parts being played are connected, support each other, and create the whole. Lead patterns can then double, reverse, or dissect any part being played and improvise via addition/subtraction around the clave/fundamental pattern upon which the ensemble's participation is based.

John Yost: I facilitate lead drumming through echo, call-and-response, and creating reveals by sculpting particular people who are soloing, showcasing players, and switching to others.

Sule Greg Wilson: Playing lead can only happen if the player understands how the rest of the parts are connected, support each other, and create the whole.

INSTRUMENTATION ASSOCIATED WITH WEST AFRICAN DRUM ENSEMBLES

Robert Damm: Jembes, tubanos, frame drums, bass drums, iron bells (gankogui, atoke, frikywa), wide variety of shakers (shekeres, tube shakers, gita), and donkey jawbone rattle.

Jeff Holland: I use jembe, dunnuns, shekeres, and occasionally a balafon player. Dancers sometimes add various shakers.

Ed Mikenas: djembes, iron bells (ogun), shekeres (some made from recycled gallon fruit punch bottles), carillon (scrapers made from brass pipe), and gonkogui.

Alisha Ross: Mostly I utilize djembes, both traditionally made wooden/goatskin as well as commercially manufactured ones. I also use several Remo Bahia drums and the lowest tubano drums, which I refer to as the "heartbeat" drums because of their low bass sound. I often explain that in many African drumming traditions there is a bass drum (dundun) that acts as a grounding mechanism for drummers and dancers alike, which can lead us back to the basic beat or "heartbeat" if we ever feel lost in the rhythm.

Frank Shaffer: I use a shekere and iron bells and encourage others to use them if they wish.

Tom Teasley: Jembe, iron bells, shakers of various sizes, and several instruments from the North African and Middle Eastern traditions as well as West African.

HAND DRUM TECHNIQUES (E.G. SLAP, TONE, BASS) ASSOCIATED WITH AFRICAN TRADITIONS

Jim Greiner: I teach tone and bass techniques at the beginning of circles. I note that slaps are one of the primary techniques of hand drums, but slaps should be learned and practiced in private since they are more challenging.

Jeff Holland: I always teach basic sounds and suggest correct technique. There are so many ways, but I showcase the sounds in repetition or with a common pattern. For more advanced drummers, I use call-and-response. Sometimes I teach a few rhythms such as fanga or kuku just to get people comfortable.

Ed Mikenas: All of my hand techniques are taught using English because that is the vehicle through which most of my students have been expressing themselves since they were born. I use "bass," "edge," and "slap" as the way of introducing students to proper hand placement, which would ultimately lead to good tone production and develop proprioceptivity (relating to stimuli connected with the position and movement of the body) as an ancillary tool.

Alisha Ross: I introduce hand drumming to participants in the context of playing the West African djembe. With adults and teens, I call them bass, tone, and slap, but with children, I only introduce two sounds, the "boom" (bass) and the "tap" (tone). Later, if I'm introducing a basic rhythm, I'll augment phrases with the corresponding booms and taps. If the children are showing a particular affinity and want to take it further, I'll introduce the slap as well,

and they will work a bit on making their tones and slaps sound distinct from one another.

Frank Shaffer: I just use the bass and tone concept when first giving instruction on the various sounds of the drum.

Tom Teasley: I teach slap, tone, and bass, but supplement that with conga techniques including heel-tip applications of American rudiments.

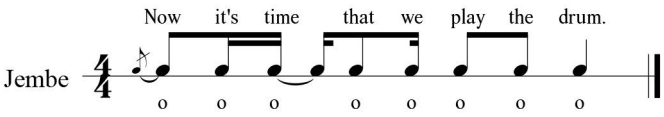
Sule Greg Wilson: After people are able to sing, stomp, and clap parts and can hold their own with folks playing other parts, then we can move to doing the same thing on whatever given instrumentation people have.

John Yost: In the teaching/dictator phase, I teach techniques such as bass, tone, and slap.

DRUM CALLS AS SIGNALS TO BEGIN, TRANSITION, OR END A COMPOSITION

Jeff Holland: I use drum calls to start, stop, signal breaks, signal dancers, and more. We have a strong West African drumming influence in our area, so many drummers in our circles are familiar with drum calls. If not, they catch on quickly.

Alisha Ross: I utilize a technique that I learned from Tom Foote, the director of Rhythm Kids. The opening drum call for a 4/4 rhythm would be "Now it's time that we play the drum" and the corresponding call to conclude the rhythm is "Now it's time that we stop the drum."



These days, I focus more on the concept of taking a group from "I" to "we' in a way that feels intuitive to the group, so I don't utilize drum calls as much. Usually, I say the standard Arthur Hull "One, two, let's all play!" and I count down from four to one with a stop cut to end a rhythm. I also show these cues to the children and teens I work with so they can lead the group themselves!

Sule Greg Wilson: I usually use "Shave and a haircut, two bits," since that's something that folks already know. From there, we use call-and-response to teach other phrases.

John Yost: I use drum calls in drum classes and in circles where people already understand the references/signals.

CALL-AND-RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Alisha Ross: I often lead call-and-response with my groups but not in a culturally specific way. I introduce the concept of echoing a rhythm (repeat what I play), and then if there's time I will introduce the concept of "I play something, you respond with something else." With children, the easy way to do this is what Kenya S. Masala suggests, which is "When I play 7, you play 3." Utilize various numbers so the group can count them out and not get lost in the response. Encouraging adults to respond with something different than what I play is a challenge! Many beginners want to simply copy what I play because they are used to following directions and don't feel comfortable creating something on their own. My challenge is to introduce more interactive activities throughout the session that will demonstrate that it's okay to be creative, it's okay to make a "mistake" (which is really just a solo or a chance to play something new!), and we welcome rhythms and ideas that are new and different.

Jeff Holland: I use drum calls to start, stop, signal breaks, signal dancers, and more.

Sule Greg Wilson: I sometimes use drum patterns common to the Guinea Ballets or to Brazilian batucada.

John Yost: I use call-and-response in vocal windows and as an orchestral or musical tool in community drum circles.

CULTURALLY SPECIFIC DRUM RHYTHMS

Jim Greiner: I learned fanga from and performed it with Babatunde Olatuni.

Jeff Holland: I teach fanga, kuku, sinte, morribayassa, lenjin, yankadi, macru, and jingo.

Ed Mikenas: Dansa and ta-ri from Mali; djole, kuku, mandjiani, and soko from Guinea; fanga, gwo-ka (Guadaloupe); Haitian conga and yanvalou (Haiti); junkanoo (Bahamas) mambo, rumba, and tumbao from Cuba; Nigerian highlife; and titidan (Ivory Coast) are all pieces I have used at one time or another in classroom/workshop/drum circle settings. I would select rhythms according to the length/focus/need of each group/workshop/circle.

Sule Greg Wilson: I usually teach folks the first and second accompany parts to Lamba mixed with Shim Sham Shimmy from the U.S. That's enough to hold, entertain, and challenge most participants.

DRUM MNEMONICS

Jim Greiner: I use bass, tone, and pa (for slaps). I use a very simple "say and play" method to help people immediately overcome the fear of making "mistakes" by first vocalizing rhythmic patterns. During my two years of drumming in Africa, I often noticed that people would be vocalizing the patterns they were playing. It occurred to me that by vocalizing their rhythms, they were internalizing them. This "say and play" method is also a great way to help people feel comfortable verbally communicating with one another during corporate team-building drumming sessions.

Jeff Holland: I use Babatunde Olatunji's "gun-dun-go-do-pa-ta" mneumonics, but also "Be-De-Ba" from Bolokada Conde and others, as well as "musical sentences" and various "drum languages."-

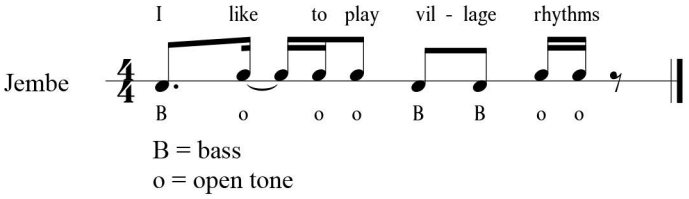
Sule Greg Wilson: What I teach as "And a bit o' butter," I learned from native Mande speakers as something like "Brang-ga, bing-y

brang-ga," a phrase that takes into consideration the tonality of their particular drums.

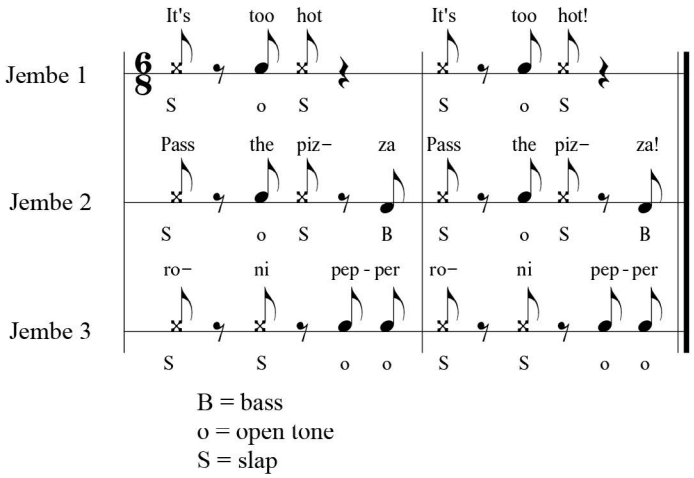
John Yost: I usually make up my own poems or djembe mnemonics. I have many and I make up vocal mnemonics during classes when I teach kassa, kuku, djan, zouli, sinte, and too many other rhythms to mention.

ENGLISH OR AFRICAN WORDS AND PHRASES TO TEACH RHYTHM

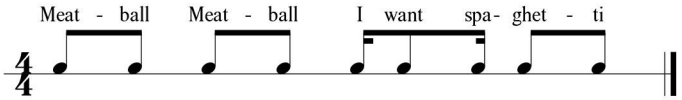
Jeff Holland: I use phrases such as "I like to play vil-lage rhythms" for fanga and "ba kum bede" or "I love to drum" and "kookoo for koko puffs" for kuku.



Ed Mikenas: I use phrases in the English language to teach rhythms. This is a much easier way for beginning students to remember both the rhythms and what hands are supposed to be doing. For example, the three rhythms of mandjani would be taught as "It's too hot!," "Pass the pizza," and "ro-ni, pep-per-ro-ni."



Alisha Ross: Here I borrow from the great facilitators who have been my mentors. In almost all circles I lead (children, youth, adults, seniors), I utilize Jim Donovan's rhythm seeds technique; you introduce a short, simple pattern that is easily repeated and then encourage participants to layer in whatever they feel like playing. Some of my favorite Jim Donovan rhythm seeds that make an "instant drum circle" groove are "Hey you, play that drum," "Come on it's getting late," "Meatball, meatball, I want spaghetti," and "I play drums with you."



Tom Teasley: I sometimes have students use the syllables of their names as a starting point to teach rhythmic phrasing.

Sule Greg Wilson: "And a one, and a two, and a pebble in my shoe" is a way to teach a basic pattern. I demonstrated seven such patterns on my DVD.

INTEGRATION OF DRUM RHYTHMS AND AFRICAN DANCE

Jeff Holland: I integrate dance with drumming for fanga, kuku, sinte, morribayassa, lenjin, yankadi, macru, and jingo.

Ed Mikenas: I always mention that in African culture, dancing and drumming are one activity, each requiring the other.

Sule Greg Wilson: What I share depends on the levels of proficiency of the people present. Just stepping and alternating side to side, as in Gambian Serouba, is difficult for many to do while playing and singing.

John Yost: Fanga; and kuku, sinte, and dununba [from Guinea].

INTEGRATION OF DRUM RHYTHMS WITH AFRICAN SONGS

Jeff Holland: I integrate songs with drumming for fanga, kuku, and che che kule.

Alisha Ross: Sometimes I will utilize "Fanga Alafia" with senior citizens in assisted living and Alzheimer's/dementia populations. Both the African and the English words are easy to sing and remember. If we are playing macru, I occasionally introduce a macru song that I learned from Kadiatou Conte-Forte of the Balafon West African Dance Ensemble.

Sule Greg Wilson: If teaching African songs, I generally use "Shosholoza" (a Nedbele folk song that originated in Zimbabwe but was popularized in South Africa), "Maim-Bo" (which is the beginning of a repetitive phrase song for the Kakilambe dance/music from Guinea), or a Diondong song from Senegal.

John Yost: "Ara Mi Le" (on Babatunde Olatunji's *Healing Session* CD), "Fanga Alafia" (in *Drums of Passion Songbook: The Songs of Babatunde Olatunji*), "Moribayassa" (on Mamady Keita's *Afo* CD; the rhythm is in his book), various songs with kuku, "Baga Guinea" (in Famadou Konate's book with CD: *Rhythms and Songs of Guinea*), with kassa, and "Amatie" (a song I learned in Guinea) with djole.

INTEGRATION OF DRUM RHYTHMS WITH AFRICAN STORIES

Robert Damm: I use stories such as "Anansi and the Secret Name," "The King's Drum," and "The Leopard's Drum" and poems such as "The Distant Talking Drum" and "Toodle-loo! Toodle-lei" for school programs.

Jeff Holland: I've used many African fables. I also have a tall ngoma drum with animal carvings I use in school programs when I tell stories.

Alisha Ross: Baba Lyons, in South Florida, is an amazing storyteller who has internalized many traditional African stories and folklore. He integrates repetitive phrases and rhythms that encourage listeners to actively participate in the stories. Baba mixes fictional Zulu, Ashanti, Yoruba, and Benin stories and songs with actual events in order to enlighten today's youth with a stronger sense of history and self. The stories invite audience participation and incorporate traditional African musical instruments such as kalimba and drums. Baba concludes his program with a participatory sing-along in a native African language and a "drummers' circle" where the children learn an African rhythm.

Jim Greiner: I use a simple "say and play" method to help people overcome the fear of making "mistakes" by first vocalizing rhythmic patterns.

Tom Teasley: I frequently work in partnership with a colleague who uses the poetry of Langston Hughes that we integrate with the student ensembles.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL INFORMATION

John Yost: I tell the tradition/purpose of the rhythm when teaching it.

Robert Damm: I explain the role of jembe and other drums to call people to the celebration. Before beginning an African-inspired rhythm, I give a brief introduction to its geographical origin and cultural function. I sometimes use ubuntu as a theme for a drum circle and share quotes that describe the philosophy throughout the program. Before we play a clave-based groove, I give a brief history of the rhythm as an iron bell pattern in West African dance music, its function as a rhythm stick (clave) pattern in Cuban music, its importance as the "Spanish tinge" of early jazz, its role in mardi gras and second-line music in New Orleans, and its influence in rock-and-roll and funk music (e.g., the Bo Diddley beat).

Jim Greiner: I introduce every drum circle with the fundamental traditions of four instrument families. I do this to help people realize that they will become a part of the rich worldwide tradition of playing rhythm instruments in order to build community bonds and to celebrate together. These instruments include the djembe, the tambourine with skin head, the tambourine without skin head, and maracas. The djembe comes to us from West Africa and the ancient Empire of Mali, which was one of the world's most advanced and creative cultures in the 13th century. The name "djembe" is thought to have originated from the Bambara people of that region from their words for "gather" and "peace." The tambourine with a skin head is one of the most ancient of drums and is a member of the frame drum family that goes back at least several thousand years to early Mesopotamian cultures. It was then played primarily by women who were honored and valued as integral to the spiritual and healing rites of the people. The tambourine without a head, or jingle ring, is one of the most popular of hand held percussion instruments in contemporary Western-style popular musical forms including rock, funk, rhythm & blues, and others. The maracas, shakers often played in pairs, are found in Caribbean and Central American music, though rattles on handles are also found in many cultures worldwide. They are used in both performances and rituals. I bring these instrument families together to demonstrate how the various timbres combine to create a unified sound—a great active metaphor for different people to combine their unique skills for group success.

Jeff Holland: I explain what each rhythm means and where it originated. I also tell how the instruments are made.

Ed Mikenas: I talk about drumming for the important stages of life, helping the aged with gardening, and the hunting culture.

Alisha Ross: With children and youth, I often explain the social purpose of the drums, and introduce the concept of playing drums as part of lifecycle events (birth, marriage, healing, death, etc.). I explain the concept that everyone has rhythm (starting with the most basic concept of all living beings: the heartbeat) and that we just need a few simple tools to bring that rhythm out of us and utilize it in a way that can empower ourselves, our group, our community, and the greater good.

Sule Greg Wilson: If we have Cuban instruments, I talk about the Yoruba and Kongo influences. If there's an ashiko, I share the history of how that drum came to the States.

OTHER ELEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH AFRICAN DRUMMING OR CULTURES

Jim Greiner: One of the many elements I brought back from my African drumming journey, and that I integrate into all of my corporate and community drumming sessions, is the importance of getting into a groove—of staying with a rhythm, or anything in life, long enough to internalize it.

Jeff Holland: I always offer information for people to find lessons and other cultural information.

Ed Mikenas: I wrote a play titled "Two Different Faces of a Moment" based on an African story. The play brought together drumming, dancing, storytelling, and the Yoruba concept of "enactment."

Alisha Ross: In many West African cultures, everyone drums and dances. This is an especially difficult concept for adults to understand, since it's been ingrained in their brains from childhood that only those with "talent" can participate in musical experiences. Many adults will tell stories of a teacher who discouraged them from playing an instrument, or singing, or dancing due to their lack

Frank Shaffer: I just use the bass and tone concept when first giving instruction on the various sounds of the drum.

of talent. Within the context of West African cultures, drumming and dancing is a matter of course. Sure there are professionals, but pretty much everyone knows a few drum rhythms and some dance moves, beginning when they are able to walk (toddlers dancing in Senegalese sabar circles comes to mind!).

Tom Teasley: I frequently use digital looping and other technology in my very nontraditional drum circle facilitation.

Sule Greg Wilson: I teach people to use tradition-based techniques of playing and orchestrating, to allow them to begin to glean how to play the instrument they have chosen to learn. From there, they may go as in-depth as they wish. It would be good for people to know that dedication and work are demanded, and that success as a player—even a recreational one—takes respect for the process, and the history, of any instrument.

CONCLUSION

Drum circle purists and African drum ensemble purists alike may be opposed to the suggestion that a drum circle is an appropriate place to introduce African drumming. However, as John Fitzgerald explained to me: "There are plenty of folks doing drum circles who already offer traditional rhythms. The biggest distinction between teaching specific traditional rhythms in a drum circle versus a formal class is in the atmosphere of inclusion and emotional safety that a great facilitator creates. Of course, there are traditional teachers who create that atmosphere with their students and who would never identify themselves as drum circle/rhythm facilitators. Arthur Hull and other facilitators acknowledge Baba Olatunji as their inspiration for creating drum circles. Arthur had a lot of time with Olatunji, so there was actually a close association with African drumming for the earliest drum circle facilitators."

Sule Greg Wilson shared a number of profound insights concerning the topic addressed in this research project: "Drum circles and African drumming are both about creating community, but they use different cultural norms to achieve community. Drum circles take place in a circle as a metaphor for a safe place, where there is no 'leader.' That's never the case in African drumming. Africans and Post-Africans freely acknowledge those with the expertise and wisdom to lead and direct the experience through the music or through the dancers in symbiosis with the lead musician; that's their "safe place." African ensembles have a 'master drummer/dancer' who, through breaks in the music, song, and dance, signal changes in the music. The trained musicians and dancers respond accordingly. Drum circles, following classical European musical/cultural norms, have a conductor/facilitator who, through gestures or signals, tells the ensemble what to do. Drum circles emphasize participation through playing instruments provided by the facilitator. In African and Post-African cultures, with the spiritual power released through the music, instruments are not shared with strangers, much less passed around time and time again.

"To generalize, most people who come to drum circles do so out of curiosity and to engage in 'recreational percussion,' but not to learn any given instrument. Africans and many Post-Africans have used drum and dance as a way to connect with ancestors and culture. So, to introduce African drumming elements into drum circles might just entail that drum circle participants do not drum. Instead, they follow a different paradigm in which they absorb the song, the dance, and the music, and take responsibility for knowing it and co-creating it rather than having these elements be the responsibility of the conductor. In this case, we might need to create a distinction between a drum circle that functions as a recreational event and a drum circle—with a different name—that is an occasion for learning and developing proficiency on African drums and other percussion instruments deeply based in African traditions.

"Fundamentally, drum circles are disparate from the basic tenets of African drumming. Each group comes to the table with different expectations, and assumptions. Understanding and bridging that is where the 'intersection' will be found."

Arthur Hull wrote in a recent *Rhythm!Scene* article that recre-

Ed Mikenas: In African culture, dancing and drumming are one activity, each requiring the other.

ational drummers and culturally specific drummers are actually "two sides of the same coin": "On my life's rhythm journey, I not only discovered that the essence in one of those rhythm cultures was the seed of the other, but that each rhythmaculture had something that the other sorely needed. From one was the ability to explore and express rhythmical improvisation, and from the other was the understanding of basic fundamentals of music making."

Given that there has always been a connection between drum circles and African drumming, that the social principles in African music correspond with philosophical concepts of drum circles, and that the characteristic practices of African music align with drum circles, it may be beneficial to selectively integrate African drumming into drum circles. The author hopes that the list of sample strategies for sharing African concepts in conjunction with the resources found in the bibliography will be helpful to facilitators who wish to make a direct connection to African drumming in some of their drum circles.

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The Zimbabwean Marimba: "World Music" in the West

By Taylor Ambrosio Wood

Photos by Jan Christensen, Artistic Director at Sonic Kaleidoscope

"World music" is a term you may have come across while browsing through musical genres on iTunes or Spotify playlists, selecting courses at a university, or as a separate section in a music store. This term, coined by ethnomusicologist Robert E. Brown, refers to music created all over the world. With that definition, the term "world music" essentially encompasses all music made by all people.

While a nice sentiment, it is so broad a term that it almost renders itself useless, and "world music" now typically refers to "non-Western music." Modern-day globalization has allowed people to hear music from the other side of the world that they would not have heard otherwise. While this network of connections is amazing, one must question whether this immediate access to music of different cultures helps archive and keep that music alive, or rather leads to the appropriation of that music's culture into Western society. This issue can perhaps be viewed best through a particular instrument that was created for the sole purpose of keeping a people's culture alive: the Zimbabwean marimba.

To get a better understanding of how and why these instruments came to be, we need to take a brief look at the history of the country. Zimbabwe—now a presidential republic in southern Africa—was home to many great African empires such as the "Kingdom of Mapungubwe" and the "Great Zimbabwe" ruins. For centuries, the native people of the land have been the Shona and the Ndebele people—that is, until British settlers colonized southern Africa in 1923 and named it Rhodesia (divided into three districts: Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland), after Cecil Rhodes, a British mining magnate. However, Britain's obsessive hold on southern Africa began to crumble in the 1960s as the native people began rebelling against the British government, launching the country into a 15-year civil war. This civil war was fought among three parties: the Rhodesian Government (led by Ian Smith), the Zimbabwean African National Liberation Army (led by Robert Mugabe), and the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (led by Joshua Nkomo). As the African and British cultures continued to clash, music and the arts took a different approach.

During Southern Africa's colonization, renowned classical European flutist Robert Sibson created the Rhodesian Academy of Music, which taught classical and European music throughout Rhodesia. This new music academy pleased the Rhodesian government, but Sibson felt that it suppressed the rich musical traditions of the native Shona and Ndebele people, which he considered the lifeblood of the country. Worried that their musical tradition would eventually be lost and assimilated into British culture, Sibson had an idea. As the civil war began, the conflict between the White colonist population (one percent), the Shona (82 percent), and the Ndebele (14 percent) escalated. The white minority ruled all land and voting rights, and all public spaces were segregated. Sensing this rising tension and desperate to preserve the traditions of the native Africans, Sibson created the Kwanongoma College of Music in 1961, a branch of Rhodesian Academy of Music that would be dedicated to the preservation and study of African music.

Sibson had a difficult task ahead of him; he had to create a new instrument to be used for instruction at the Kwanongoma College of Music that was native to Africa, but not so rooted in native tradition that the Rhodesian government would disapprove of it. To accomplish this task Sibson assembled a team of ethnomusicologists: Andrew Tracey, Dr. James McHarg, Trevor Lea-Cox, and Nelson Jones. After much deliberation, the team settled on the marimba, an instrument not native to the territory (to please the British government) but that had its roots in neighboring countries such as Zambia and Mozambique. To fulfill their goal of keeping the native African music alive, the team turned to the *mbira* as a template.

An Mbira in a dezi

The mbira is a traditional African instrument dating back 1,300 years and considered to be the primary instrument of the Shona people. It is used to communicate with the ancestors by way of a unique "buzzing" sound, which is produced by bottle caps or beads that are attached to its frame. The most popular mbira tuning system was *Nyamaropa* (similar to the Mixolydian mode in Western traditions), so that became the tuning of the marimbas. The *dezi*, or gourd shell that functions as the mbira's resonator, became PVC resonators below the marimba bars. At the end of each PVC resonator is a small piece of plastic that is glued across the opening that replicates the "buzz" created by the bottle caps on the mbira.

This new instrument now needed repertoire; thus, Alport Mhlanga joined the faculty at Kwanongoma College to compose new music for the marimbas and teach it to the students. Mhlanga composed new works and created adaptations of traditional mbira music for the marimbas. Mbira is always played in pairs—one person playing the *Kushaura* ("to

Zimbabwean Marimba Resonators

A Zimbabwean Marimba Ensemble

lead") part and the other playing the *Kutsinhira* ("to intertwine with") part—and each mbira is played with three fingers. Each finger translated into one marimbist's part, resulting in six parts. A lead part was added to give cues, so the marimba ensemble became seven players total: one lead, two sopranos, two tenors, bass, and baritone. The texture created by these interlocking parts was new but was rooted in the mbira music of the Shona people.

This new ensemble caught on like wildfire, and soon Mhlanga was not only teaching at the college but at neighboring high schools and public schools as well. He even began teaching at the predominantly white Northlea School. Mhlanga was certain the Zimbabwean marimbas were great teaching tools for any student of any background or color.

At the Kwanongoma College of Music, students learned not only how to play these instruments, but how to compose for and build them as well. Because of this, as students graduated, they would return to their village or town and build a new set of marimbas. Mhlanga likened this to a fundamentally Shona way of thinking: everything dies and spreads its seeds so it may grow somewhere anew. The marimbas spread all over Rhodesia and were accepted and loved by both the Africans and the settlers.

Possibly the most important graduate of the Kwanongoma College of Music was Dumisani Maraire (1944–99). Already known as a master mbira player, he went to Kwanongoma to study the marimba and ended up creating his own performance ensemble. After graduation, Dumi moved to the United States to teach at the University of Washington from 1968 to 1972. Because his education at Kwanongoma required him to be able to build the instruments, he built Zimbabwean marimbas in Washington as well. All who studied with him and watched him perform wanted to learn and participate in the marimba experience. Thus, the Zimbabwean marimba fire spread along the West Coast to multiple cities in Washington, Oregon, and California.

Not until 1980 did the Zimbabwean African National Liberation Army (led by Robert Mugabe, now the president of Zimbabwe) win the civil war and free the country from British rule. Today, the marimbas are used by many Zimbabwean performing artists and are celebrated by the country, as well as in the United States. "Zimfest," for example, is a festival that occurs every year in the United States celebrating Zimbabwean music. This festival has master classes with Zimbabwean musicians, vendors that sell many of these instruments, and performances by artists from the United States, Zimbabwe, and Europe. Zimfest is a representation of the Zimbabwean music itself: something that brings people together.

Zimbabwean marimbas truly are unusual instruments, created by European settlers to preserve an ancient African tradition. In a way, they were created in an attempt to preserve peace during a time of civil war. These instruments and their music have been embraced by different types of people all over the world, proving that music can connect us across borders.

As "world music" continues to become more available and less exotic, we must take time to celebrate the unique sounds and histories of each individual culture. The story of the Zimbabwean marimba demonstrates how a more careful appreciation of these cultures can make us all better musicians, better citizens, and better curators of the world's music.

Taylor Ambrosio Wood first discovered the joy of playing music with the Zimbabwean Marimba when she was nine years old. Impassioned by Zimbabwean music, Taylor also began studying the mbira (a traditional Shona thumb piano) with Jan Christensen. At age 15, she became an early entry undergraduate at Southern Oregon University and studied classical marimba, percussion, and music theory under Dr. Terry Longshore. She also studied classical marimba in Germany with ebojsa Jovan Zivkovic. At age 17, Taylor was accepted to the Boston Conservatory of Music, where she studied music composition with Marti Epstein; percussion with Keith Aleo, Samuel Z. Solomon, and John Grimes; and marimba with Nancy Zeltsman. While at the Conservatory, Taylor scored a short film called *Project Senegal* to raise money for the Fontaine School, and created and directed her own all-women percussion ensemble, Scaramouche. Taylor has won numerous awards including the Oregon State Mallet Championship (twice) and the Women in Music and Gaming Scholarship awarded by the Center for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics at Stanford University. Wood holds a B.M. in Percussion Performance from the Boston Conservatory of Music and an M.M. in Scoring for Film, Television, and Video Games from Berklee College of Music in Valencia, Spain. **PN**

Groove, Grid, and Cycle

Expanding awareness of pulse, meter, and structure

By Jerry Leake

My source material for this article is derived from three decades of studying and performing traditional African and Indian music. All the examples are adapted to playing drumset. It is not essential for you to acquire traditional background on a world percussion instrument.

To begin, what is a groove?

PART I: GROOVE

Grooves are built around repeating cycles of time with sustainable and repetitive components—mostly in the form of rhythm from the bass and drums—grounding the listener to an organization of musical patterns. However, potent grooves can be played using nearly every instrument in the world. It is the player's approach and attitude that determines the instrument's role within the ensemble. Artists like James Brown incorporate strong grooves played on rhythm guitar, which essentially functions as a percussion instrument.

The primary strength and sustainability of a groove centers on rhythmic repetition and redundancy. It is a critical element for enticing listeners who may not understand why their senses are responding in certain ways—why the urge to move their body surfaces within the vibrations. Repetition makes it possible for listeners to store musical phrases into memory. It is the stable ground beneath their feet. However, without some form of development or variation in the music, listeners would become bored and the music becomes static.

A well-defined and interesting groove possesses a magnetic pull that compels people to actively participate as listeners, dancers, and players. This pull can encompass an unlimited range of musical styles, cultures, and instruments. I am a member of two unique world-music ensembles. Natraj integrates music from Africa and India into tight contemporary arrangements with plenty of space for soloists to explore improvisation. Grooves are always present. Because compositions introduce regular variations and shifts in form, the listener does not have a chance to become fully immersed and habituated within a given groove before it changes to something else. Depending upon the length of solos, the duration of Natraj compositions tend to be similar from one performance to the next.

A "dub trance groove" band, Club d'Elf, explores music from the bottom up. The bass, drums, and percussion establish grooves that are sustained for much longer periods of time (20 minutes or more). Generally, players avoid intricate variations and ornaments that might throw listeners off. Such distractions are most noticeable when people listening with their eyes closed suddenly open their eyes in response to something audibly unexpected. When I anticipate changes in the music, I observe how listeners respond to musical shifts. When a change occurs, perhaps for a moment they wonder what had severed their trance-like state. The well-planted groove had taken listeners to a relaxed and comforting place, while subtle or profound variations maintain their interest no matter how long the composition may last.

All "dance music" genres rely on well-defined and heavy grooves to fuel the kinesthetic body-moving energy. This is especially true of electronica such as techno and jungle that contains scratching, digital sampling and looping of other recordings. Ambient (new age) music, however, does not introduce strong groove elements that might cause people to dance. Ambient often incorporates high-end sound generating technology, and functions more as a backdrop to an environment, not the propelling element within the environment.

Repetition for its own sake is not the point. As mentioned, music needs to have variation to sustain listener interest. For players it requires a level of patience and discipline to know "when to change" (or conversely "How long do we stay here?"). In this setting, discipline is necessary for the rhythm section to maintain one pattern throughout most, if not all, of the composition. In the early days of d'Elf I felt as though I were assuming the role of a live "drum machine." But I soon realized that such an attitude defeats the purpose of the music and contradicts the essence of "groove." In these settings, musicians must achieve a higher level of humility without trying to "entertain" with flash, variation, and rapid progression through musical form. Patience and trust are the essential elements that help shape the music.

Sound + Time = Groove!

Players do not need to possess incredible technique on their instrument or have assimilated volumes of traditional repertoire to groove with feeling and musicality. Quarter notes played on an empty bottle with a coin can "swing" on profound levels. If the sound of the bottle projects in consistent and controlled ways, if the space between strikes is intuitively balanced, if the soul meets the ground, then the musicians will find their place, pace, and space within the groove pocket.

Drumset Examples

By and large, drummers understand the meaning of the word "groove" for playing repetitious patterns to support any style from rock, funk, Latin, or Afro-Cuban. Jazz drumming, however, is not (necessarily) built with a groove sensibility and foundation. Jazz drummers are constantly in a state of musical flux and change, flowing with and around the entire ensemble. The drummer functions not only as the "engine" to the music but also the spontaneous spice to the composition and soloists.

As mentioned, a groove is usually (but not exclusively) a one- or two-bar pattern that is maintained for an entire section of music. Ornamentation is added to retain "human" interaction in the moment. The smallest meter that will begin my examples is 2/4. The pulse is binary (eighth and sixteenth notes), and two quarter notes occupy one bar. Even in slow tempos, a single bar is short. In very fast tempos it can move at a blinding rate of one bar per second. For our purposes, establish a medium tempo with each beat lasting one second for a two-second "groove."

This first series of examples focus on a phrase inspired by the African rhythm "Gahu," adapted to drumset. The 3+3+2 clave-like bell pattern is played with the strong hand on cymbal, the bass drum keeps the "beat," and the weak hand plays the "sogo" drum pattern on floor tom. Pressed tones onto the floor tom are achieved by pressing the stick into the center of the head. A plastic drumhead is not as "sweet" as goatskin, but the approach still works. Example 1 sets the stage. We will refer to this as phrase "A."

Example 1

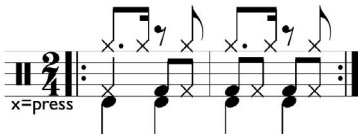
PART II: EXPANDING THE HORIZONTAL GRID

The short groove in Example 1 is loaded with potent energy to propel the music without variation. The following examples will "expand the grid" of our horizontal awareness by changing the size and shape of the pattern.

Our initial groove is established in a grid matrix of 2/4. Very little muscle memory is needed to maintain the groove, as is minimal thought and preparation. The player experiences no "brain sweat" or technical challenge, nor is he or she needing to plan ahead while in the moment. Our awareness of "musical time" is as concise and clear as the pattern itself.

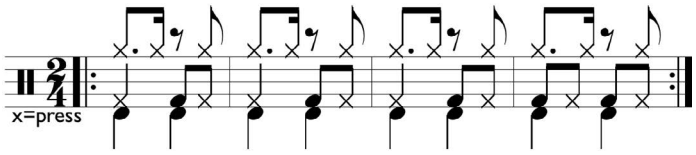
We can take phrase "A" and create a two-bar phrase ("B"), as shown in Example 2. These treatments are based on sogo improvisations that have been structured for our purposes.

Example 2 (B-phrase)



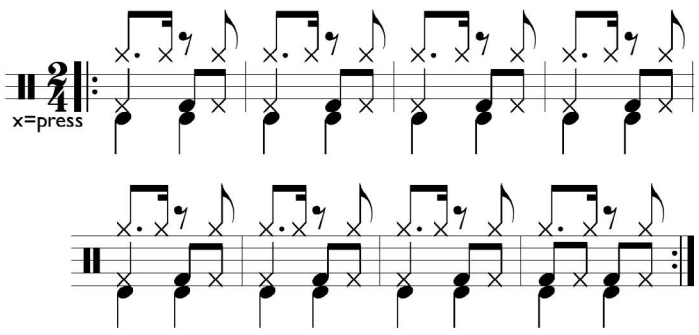
We can create a 4-bar phrase "C" using the treatment shown in Example 3. Phrase C is built using "A+A+B."

Example 3 (C-phrase)



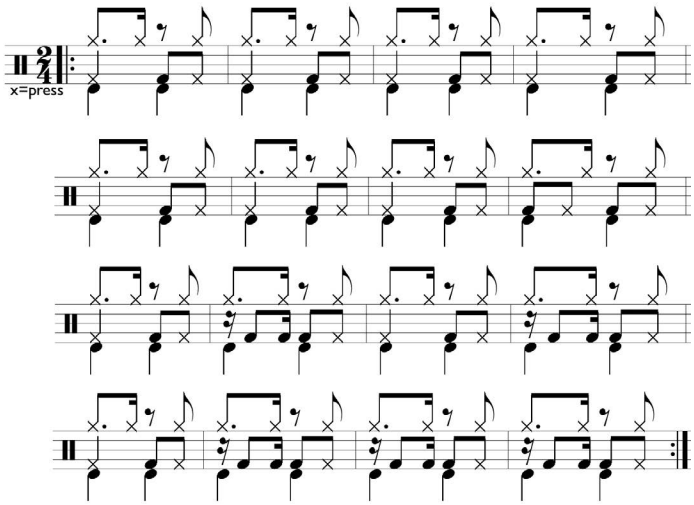
Continuing this doubling model we can derive an eight-bar phrase thusly: A A A A A A B (Example 4).

Example 4



Our paradigm projects us to a 16-bar phrase, using more challenging variations for our weak-hand sogo pattern (Example 5). Once you crack the code of limb independence, you will discover the spark-like combinations of energy and gravity with the unchanging Gahu bell. The bass drum continues the rock-solid "ground beneath the feet."

Example 5



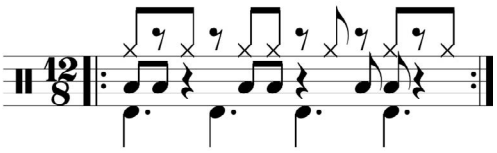
When you develop comfort with hand mechanics inside the enlarged form, you should start to feel an expanding awareness of time and structure inside your mind and body. Horizontal grid expansion is not something you can directly point your finger at as it happens, nor is it something the listener will notice as you play. What results is an enhanced internal Gestalt—a higher-level sensibility of pattern structure as it relates to a "functional groove."

12/8 Structures

Our work thus far has been based on the fundamental practice of developing a short groove with increasingly larger and ratio-based phrases. Longer phrases in 12/8 and 24/8 reveal more challenging treatments and grid expansion of just a "single bar" pattern. Shown in Example 6 is the 12/8 Agbekor/Bembé bell, bass drum in a four pulse (the beat), and a cross-rhythm in "three" played on drums. Because ternary 12/8 is significantly larger than binary 2/4, your conscious/subconscious grid awareness will expand in an equal amount.

Notice in this, and the phrases that follow, how drum patterns align on or off of the bell pattern. This creates internal anchor points to solve the puzzle of the phrase. In Example 6, the three cross-rhythm played on the drums, in relation to the bell, is on off / on on / off on. This alignment pattern is a retrograde mirror of itself.

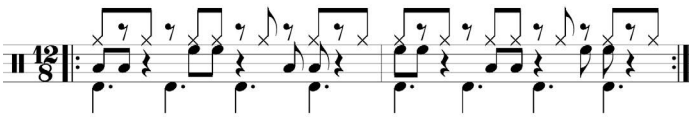
Example 6



The challenging phrase in Example 6 is part of an intensive study on cross-rhythm, independence, and language that I explore with my drumset students. It explores not only a "horizontal grid" awareness but also "vertical grid" awareness (discussed later).

We can double our awareness even further by orchestrating the three cross-rhythm using different drums to create a two-bar phrase, alternating from snare to tom. The phrase in Example 7 begins with snare in bar 1, flipping to the tom in bar 2, and back to the snare in bar 3 to repeat the two-bar phrase. Example 7 should be played for an extended period to absorb (through relaxed meditation) the sophisticated "melody" and expanded psychological awareness.

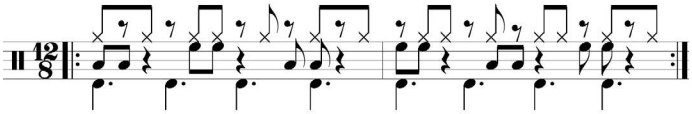
Example 7



The pattern in Example 7 can also be reconceived in the player's imagination as 24/8 meter: two bars of 12/8 combine to form one long phrase. A multitude of variations can be derived using drum orchestration to create even larger four-bar phrases.

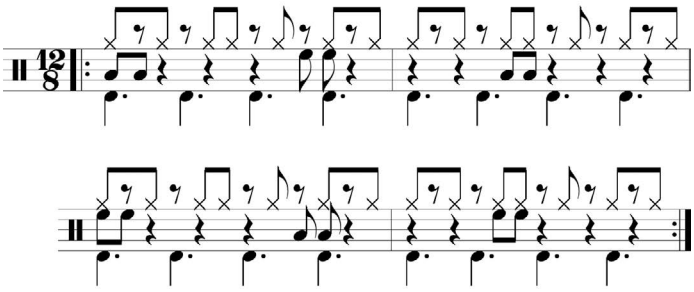
Higher-level grooves and grid expansion arises from phrases built inside a pure 24/8 super-structure. In Example 8, the bell pattern in the second bar is different from the first bar. The two-bar bell structure is known as "Palo Bell" in Cuba ("Palo" means "religion"). Think of the first bar as the "call" (question) and the second bar as the "response" (answer).

Example 8



We can expand the grid of Example 7 by playing every other pair of three cross-rhythm patterns. Shown in Example 7 are six cross-rhythm pairs (three snare, three tom). If we play just the one, three, and five pairs while alternating the snare/tom sequence, we yield a four-bar phrase derived from the same mechanics as before (Example 9). In this way, we can see how much influence drum tone "melody" has on our time/grid awareness, independence, and player confidence.

Example 9



When comfortable with Example 9, apply the two-bar Palo bell phrase from Example 8 into the drum melody. Clearly, there are no limits to how deep you can go.

Adjogbo and 24/8

The phrases that follow represent my most challenging arrangements of African repertoire. They incorporate a unique bell pattern from the Ewe composition and dance called "Adjogbo." Even in Africa, the bell pattern (which, in essence, is a large three cross-rhythm) is often *not* utilized due to its complex and potentially confusing structure. David Locke states that when this unique bell pattern is played, the more identifiable 12/8 shaker pattern functions as a "time-keeping reference," with the bell adding an upper-level ornament to the phrase.

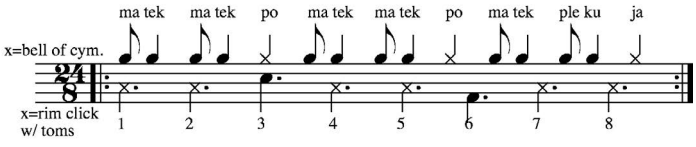
The Adjogbo bell pattern is built as a strand of three identical subunits: x x – x x – x –. Each subunit comprises a 3+3+2 shape, equaling eight total pulses (strokes + rests). Multiply eight pulses by three subunits and you have 24/8. Because the three subunits are identical, it is easy to lose one's place in time ("Where is the 1?").

An important aspect of the Adjogbo bell is the addition of pressed or muted tones by keeping the stick pressed against the bell after striking. The "X" notehead in the bell phrase marks pressed tones; all other tones are played with normal resonating strokes. In drumset context you can use a mounted cowbell to play open and closed bell tones, or use ride cymbal with the pressed tone played on the bell of the cymbal, and all other strokes played on the body of the ride cymbal.

To aid in my own awareness, I incorporate a treatment of the matekpo bell language from the Ewe people. This marks the three subunits and creates distinction in the third unit. The syllables "po" and "ja" mark the "pressed tones" on the bell.

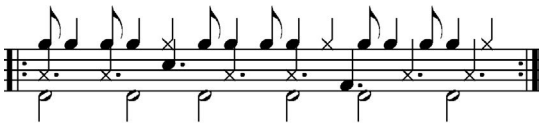
The drum phrase shown in Example 10 represents two important items: the eight pulse units (numbered) that mark the "8-beat," and an orchestration of the beat using different drum tones to establish a large 3+3+2 melodic contour. Practice this first with rim clicks to lock in the beat to the cymbal pattern. Then apply the drum melody that will cause you to feel and hear the phrase beyond its role as "beat keeper."

Example 10



Example 11 adds the bass drum playing a six cross-rhythm. This aligns comfortably with each bell subunit, thereby stabilizing the phrase with anchor points. We can see that the relationship between the bass drum in six and the drum melody in eight results in two sets of four over three (4:3). The change in drum melody between each 4:3 set disguises the similarity between the first and second half of the polymeter.

Example 11

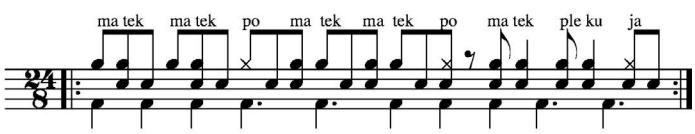


Shown in the next two high-level examples is the 24/8 adjogbo bell, the bass drum playing a totoji-inspired rhythm (my treatment), and two versions of the "kagan" rhythm. (Kagan is a small barrel-shaped drum that adds off-beat "spice" to the phrase.)

The first kagan phrase, shown in Example 12, is not normally used in Adjogbo. I include it to reveal how the kagan rotates to three unique positions when set to the adjogbo bell. In the first subunit the kagan is being chased by the bell: bell = "x x –" whereas the kagan = "– x x". In the second subunit the kagan is chasing the bell: bell = "– x x " / kagan = "x x –" (the opposite of the first subunit.). The final mathematical combination occurs when bell and kagan align, resolving any chasing/following tension they previous experienced. (Note: in Example 10 the eight-beat drum melody also rotates to three different positions inside the bell.)

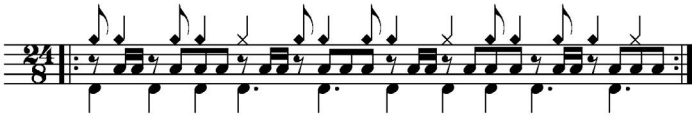
The bass drum now incorporates the rhythm of the totoji drum, adding more unique designs to our evolving phrase. You may want to begin with the basic "8-beat" for bass drum before attempting this new syncopated treatment.

Example 12



Example 13 contains the adjogbo bell, the traditional two-beat kagan, and bass drum with totoji imagination. Notice in this expanded grid how the three separate limbs render phrases built in a 2-over-3-over-4 matrix. As stated, the bell comprises three subunits ("3"), the bass drum is built using two equal four-beat totoj phrases in both first and second half ("2"), and the kagan is built with four two-beat phrases ("4"). Not only are we exploring high-level time and grid awareness, we are also rendering an intense 2:3:4 phrase combination. The difficulty of this phrase cannot be exaggerated. Such higher aesthetics of psychological time awareness (grid) and limb independence (2:3:4) will require careful and patient study.

Example 13

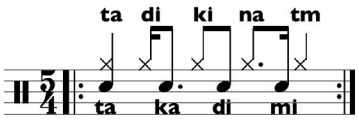


Expanding the Vertical Grid

The previous "horizontal grid" study explored the basic concept of expanding a gahu-inspired phrase from 1-bar to 16-bar structures. We also examined 12/8 and 24/8 super structures that expanded our "horizontal grid" awareness and our "vertical grid" awareness. That is to say, we felt more internal "depth" to the phrase, using cross-rhythms and rotations while also feeling the width of the phrase (especially in 24/8 treatments).

However, it is possible to expand the depth/vertical grid of a short single-bar groove. To represent this, I focus on a drumset pattern derived from mathematical principles and language of South Indian music. To begin, our hands will establish a 5-over-4 polymeter: five in the cymbal and the four in the snare. Example 13 (in 5/4) establishes this phrase using *ta di ki na tom* language in five for the cymbal and *ta ka di mi* language in four for the snare. As you become comfortable with the hand mechanics, alternate speaking the five and four languages for added focus and phrase ownership.

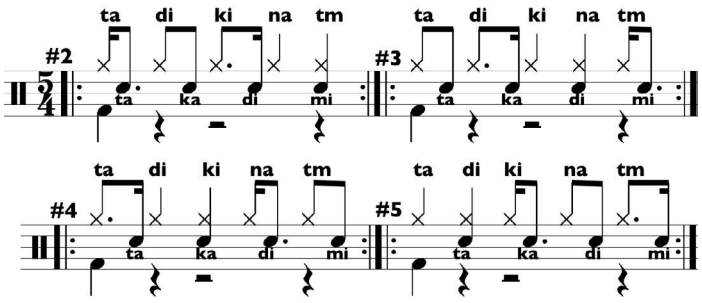
Example 13



Phrase Rotation

There are five possible positions achieved by rotating the snare to each successive sixteenth note. Example 14 reveals the remaining four snare positions (labeled 2–5), with five and four languages included. To help retain your awareness of the downbeat, add the bass drum on beat 1 as shown.

Example 14

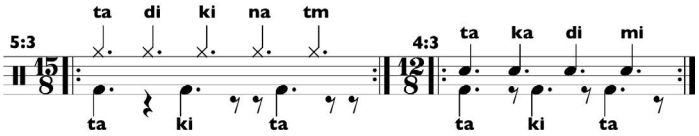


In the one-bar grooves in Example 14, your vertical grid awareness has been enhanced using mathematical theory and phrase rotation. The less-familiar language component will be challenging, so work your way in gradually.

5:4:3

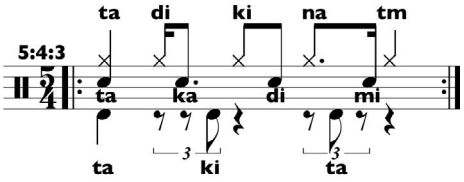
Our mission is to now add in the final layer by incorporating the bass drum in a three cross-rhythm to the previous phrases. We will begin with the first snare position. Playing and speaking the bass drum in "three" to the cymbal in "five" establishes a 5:3 ternary matrix that can be conceived in 15/8. This is shown in Example 15. The bass drum in three also has a 4:3 relationship with the snare in four, as seen in the 12/8 example. Work on these paired combinations before applying all three layers/gears.

Example 15



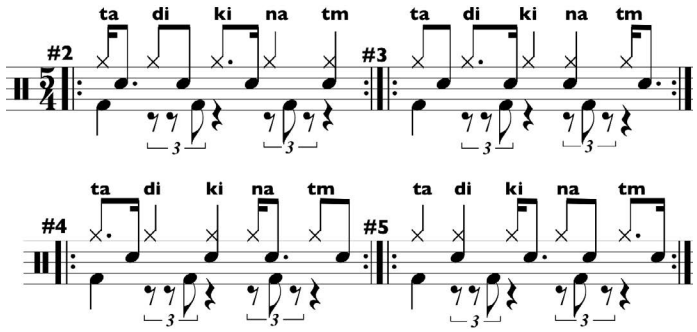
The goal is to now combine 5:4:3 time layers in 5/4. Success will allow you to feel the complex depth of the three gears/layers working (and fighting) inside a single-bar groove. In Example 16, using the first snare position, notice that all three elements come together on beat 1. None of the other strokes align at any point inside the phrase. Beat 1 is your only reliable anchor point. It marks phrase origin and destination. The three time layers (gears) include their corresponding spoken language to feel the complete depth of the expanded vertical grid.

Example 16



Of course, it is possible to rotate the snare to its remaining four positions while maintaining cymbal and bass drum positions, as shown in Example 17. In these, I retain only the language in five to avoid unnecessary clutter. As you achieve mastery, try to speak the four and three languages. In all of these treatments, the cymbal and bass drum begin together on beat 1. In #2, snare and cymbal align on beat 5, then on beat 4 in #3, beat 3 in #4, and beat 2 in #5. The point is for you to keep these anchor points close in mind and body for overall fluidity and comfort.

Example 17



The key to playing such unusual phrases is to relax, striving for a high level of meditation and "surrender" to all the inherent tension. With so many gears working like a complex clock, you must be patient to let time run its course. Always work in additive stages: focus on the hands first before integrating any spoken languages. Then apply the bass drum without language to feel the working gears in motion. Finally, add in the languages for the highest level of phrase "ownership."

PART III: CYCLE (RHYTHM CYCLE, TIME CYCLE)

When discussing musical time, the word "cycle" is as ambiguous (and tenuous) as the word "grid" or "grid expansion." *Grid* and *cycle* have nothing to do with how music is perceived by listeners, who have no awareness of how a player organizes phrases, just as a movie attendee does not know the behind-the-scenes aspects of how a film is made. For some people, knowing such background information spoils the illusion of reality, fun, and entertainment.

Skilled musicians possess a large storehouse of repertoire, licks, techniques, and things that work well for playing in one style (and moment) to the next. They also have philosophical concepts that guide their train of thought, providing added purpose and foundation to their musical ideas. "Concepts," by and large, do not require a great deal of "information" or "note taking" to grasp; they are generally simple ideas that generate large avenues of possibility and application. It is the concept of "cycle" that we now need to address, one that exclusively centers on psychological awareness unique to every musician.

What is a cycle? Do you currently play with cyclic awareness? Does your music require such higher aesthetics of time awareness? If you don't play with cyclic awareness, are you any less the musician than someone who does? These are typical questions that arise when tackling a foreign and somewhat abstract notion. For the most part, all music that has a tactus pulse (beat) can be thought of as taking place within a cyclic framework. Our previous 2/4 "groove" occurs in a very short cycle of two beats, whereas the 24/8 expanded grid examples occur in a much larger cycle. So where does the distinction take place? And why is it important?

Indian Music Cycles

In academic and theoretical terms, the word "cycle" tends to reference North Indian classical music that begins a performance in slow and long rhythm cycles: *ati-vilambit tintal* (very slow 16-beat cycle). In some instances, a 12-beat cycle (*ektal*) can be slowed down to such a degree that each "beat" (*matra*) is subdivided into eight smaller beats. This creates the illusion of a 96-beat cycle that requires over a minute of time to complete before starting again. This extreme timeframe can be baffling to even educated listeners. It has even confused tabla players who get lost within the epic construct, miscalculating subdivisions, accidentally changing speed, and dropping entire beats. Even the featured artist and other accompanying musicians might not notice drumming/timekeeping errors. In such stretched contexts, time takes on deep and profound psychological awareness in the mind, body, and spirit of the player. How the listener responds to abstract timeframes is another matter entirely.

When comparing African timelines to Indian cycles, I use graphic shapes to represent the progression of time. In terms of a short groove, we can imagine bars of time chugging along, repeating indefinitely until a change is needed. In the Ewe music of Southern Ghana, one can imagine a constant and consistent "wave" moving from point A to point Z (Time's Arrow). There is little change in tempo, aside from heightened player energy. A short wave reflects short "groove" cycles (2/4, 4/4) and a longer wave reflects longer "expanded grid" cycles (12/8, 24/8).

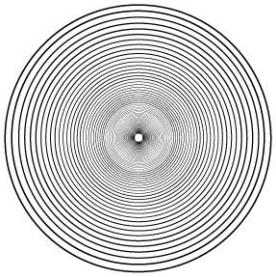
African Wave (constant tempo, short/long cycles)

Since we can talk about bell patterns as "bell cycles," the word "cycle" is clearly not exclusive to describing and theorizing Indian music. But an important distinction needs to be made.

If a "wave" best reflects the flow of African music, then a "circle" (Time's Cycle) will best reflect cycles of Indian music. Not just a singular circular outline, but increasingly smaller circles built within the larger, gradually shrinking in size as the music accelerates through time. Time acceleration is an important characteristic of North Indian classical music. Over long periods of development, circles/cycles are spinning so fast that they can no longer be visualized. As *sam* (beat 1) flies by, it is hard to hear phrase endings flowing into new beginnings. Time in this context moves so fast that a group of four beats (called *vibhag*) may even be perceived as the "new pulse."

Cycle of Indian Music

(long cycle accelerating through time, becoming short cycles)



In very slow, long rhythm cycles the tabla player feels a profound sense of "moving away from home" in time before "approaching home" from the back end of the cycle/circle. In the groove and expanded grid examples from Parts I and II, such "moving away from home" awareness does not take place. In those situations you are "in the moment" of time as opposed to feeling the sensation of "departing and returning" that occurs with deep cyclic awareness.

Indian Context

In general, South Indian Carnatic music is based on mathematics. Players assemble strands of cells together to form a chain of "words bound together" (the definition of the spoken drum language called *solkattu*). In North Indian Hindustani music, tabla repertoire is based more on composition (themes) with numerous variations that develop the theme. For our immediate purpose, a South Indian reference allows us to feel more of an expanded cyclic awareness with pattern/limb familiarity and repetition.

Drumset Examples

The three following examples in 5/4 are inspired from South Indian (Carnatic: mridangam) context. Phrases are built by establishing a constant drum structure in bar 1 that repeats in bars 2 and 3. It is the cymbal pattern (in a "three" cross-rhythm) that rotates in and around the phrase, creating tension and different anchor points.

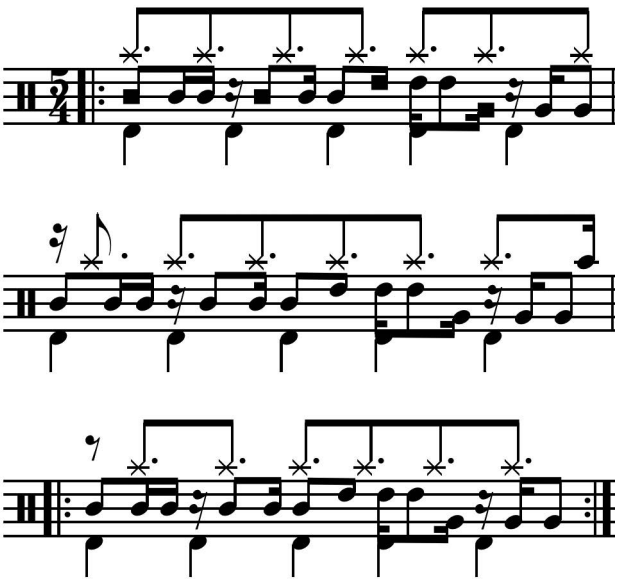
Language

The following phrase utilizes the snare, mounted tom, and floor tom to mark the four identical shapes of the five-syllable phrase: "*ta di ki na tom.*" In the examples, only the first, third, and fourth syllables (*ta – ki na –*) are rendered (the "–" symbol represents "rests" within the phrase).

As you play the drum melody, try to speak the four syllable sets that align with drum strokes: *ta – ki na – / ta – ki na – / ta – ki na – / ta – ki na – /*. In our notation, the snare plays the first two syllable sets, the tom plays the third, and the floor tom plays the fourth. The "square" notehead marks the beginning of each *ta – ki na –* series. Again, the bass drum and drum melody in all three bars are identical (repetition and familiarity). It is the cymbal pattern in "three" that establishes cyclic awareness and challenge, as seen in Example 18.

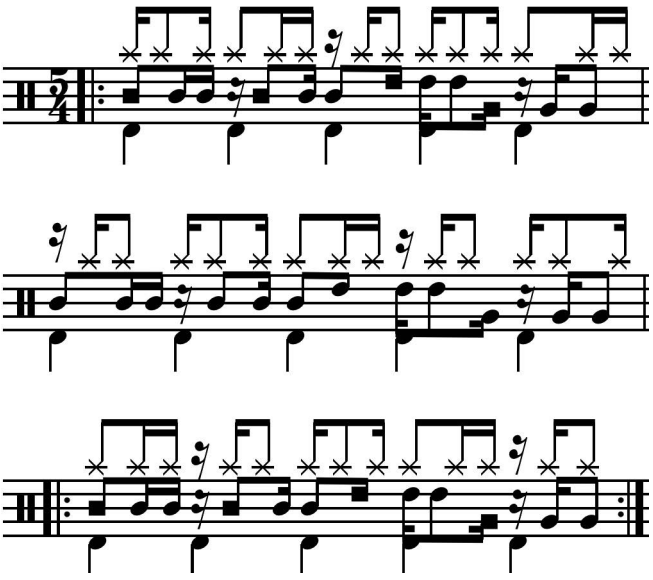
You may also notice that the cymbal is playing a 4-over-3 (4:3) to the bass drum: four dotted-eighth notes set over three quarter notes.

Example 18



Example 19 takes the previous cymbal pattern and increases stroke density. Instead of playing the cymbal as "x – – x – –" we now find the phrase "x x – x x – ", essentially doubling the previous density.

Example 19

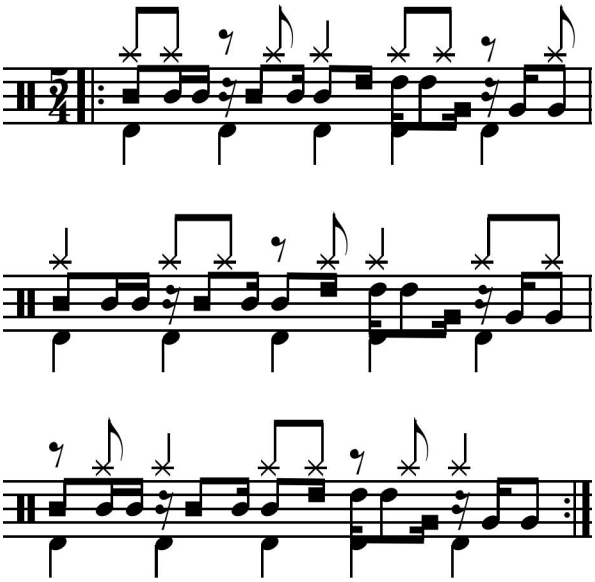


In Example 20 the busy cymbal pattern of Example 19 is now played in a half-time feel. This sparse phrase may increase psychological challenge due to the fact that the drum melody is significantly busier than the cymbal. This is usually the opposite of most drum phrases in which the ride pattern is busier than drums.

CONCLUSION

Groove, Grid, and Cycle: three unique perspectives, attitudes, and awarenesses of phrase structure. The word "groove" is familiar to everyone. It has found its way into the lexicon of pop culture, describing how one feels and interacts with the world: "my groove is off" / "that's groovy" / "get your groove on." In music, extended and unchanging grooves can be transformative, causing people to go into trance-like states of ecstasy and euphoria. "Groove" is as ubiquitous a word as "rhythm."

Example 20



"Expanding the grid" does not result solely from "expanding a groove." In our sogo examples, we extended a short phrase to rewire our neural network of time and space awareness. Psychology and philosophy are important tools for any artist in any medium. In lectures, I talk about "self-archeology." This is the act of exploring one's self through definable experiences and influences of past history: teachers, music heroes, mentors, etc. True self-archeology goes beyond the traceable events in our CV of life. "Expand the grid" in your conscious and subconscious world and it expands in your playing. It also expands in your composing as you visualize and organize time from the ground up.

Rhythm cycles abound in all forms of music, from repeating patterns and grooves, into common forms such as a 12-bar blues, to immense time cycles in slow 12-beat *ektal*.

What does this all mean in terms of our music making and performance practice? Simply put: ideas equal freedom. With greater organization and depth comes greater freedom to break free from the confines of structure. It allows one to experience music as both a player and observer. Students will not sit to practice and say to themselves: "Okay, time to play some expanded-grid rock grooves." These higher aesthetical philosophies are not something you should attempt in such a concrete and rigid state of mind. It is something you will experience and observe in your imagination. Expanded grid and cyclic awareness results not by forcing the point to the surface. It occurs by relaxing the mind and body with the possibility becoming a probability.

Jerry Leake is an Associate Professor of Percussion at Berklee College of Music and the New England Conservatory. He leads the world-fusion band Cubist, whose four CDs feature his diverse talents as a composer, arranger, and performer. He is a co-founder of the Indo/Jazz band Natraj and the dub/trance/groove collective Club d'Elf. Jerry has also taught and performed internationally with the Berklee Global Jazz Institute. On tabla, he has accompanied Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Chitravena Ravikiran, and Kadri Golpanath. Jerry graduated from Berklee College, where he studied vibes with Gary Burton and hand percussion with Pablo Landrum. In India, he studied with Rajeev Devasthali and T. K. Ramakrishnan, and in Ghana with Dolsi-Naa Abubakari Luna and Godwin Agbeli. Jerry has written eight widely used texts on world percussion, numerous articles for *Percussive Notes*, and presented a TEDx seminar on his rhythm method, "Harmonic Time." **PN**

An Interview with John Stoessel

By Mark Berry

John Stoessel has shaped the triangle playing of several generations of percussionists with his quality triangle beaters that he has made since 1967. He is best known for first bringing to market a type of triangle beater that greatly reduced the undesirable "tick" sound created by traditional rod-style beaters. He is also known for his tambourine jingles developed in the 1970s and sold in collaboration with Maurie Lishon, owner of the renowned Franks Drum Shop in Chicago.

Mark Berry: *Let me start by asking you to share your musical background and experiences growing up.*

John Stoessel: I was born in 1938 and I grew up in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, near Chicago. Mom was a talented piano player and violinist, and Dad was no slouch on the piano. They had a Charles Fredrick Stein 4.5-foot grand with the lightest touch I ever felt. Since mom made it look so easy, I wasn't intimidated by the piano at home. I played a lot by ear, with some lessons through high school. I liked church hymns and I liked Beethoven. I was also in chorus from first grade through college. Because I could sing and had absolute pitch, I became a default choir leader. I sang in churches—and liked it—but while singing was enjoyable, I maintained a passion for instruments.

MB: *Did you grow up wanting to be a professional musician?*

JS: As I thought about being a professional musician, my dad's voice of reason kept leading me to pursue science, with music as a strong secondary interest. I earned a Bachelor of Science degree from St. Procopius College in Lisle, Illinois. It's now been renamed Benedictine University. I obtained the equivalent of a Bachelor of Music Theory degree from DePaul, and met most of the requirements for a master's degree, but I never finished due to several major life events—newborn children, deaths in the family, and a job change.

MB: *How did percussion fit in with your piano and voice background?*

JS: I took percussion lessons from James Jerome Ross, principal of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Ross was a friendly, sociable fellow, and we became personal friends. In 1962, I was invited to the North Side Symphony Orchestra of Chicago to fill in some small percussion parts for a concert. What a great opportunity that was! I did well on triangle and cymbals, and I loved the classic pieces they were doing. So I stayed for the next concert, and the next one after that, then the next year, and the years after that. I played with the NSSO from 1963 to 1972. What a blast it was!

MB: *Tell me about your background in science, particularly in working with metal.*

JS: From 1960 to 1972, I was in the Chemistry and Special Materials Divisions at Argonne National Laboratory. At Argonne I worked with many metals including some for nuclear research. I should point out, nuclear fuel alloys are designed to produce peaceful energy in 99 percent of the industry; we didn't do weapons-type business. I then went on to work for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration as a consultant and field agent—again, putting the science to work in safety and health assessments. All that time I was able to play nights in community orchestras and spend time making triangle beaters, tambourine jingles, and do occasional research with other instruments—mallet instruments mostly.

MB: *There are several advertisements in* Percussive Notes *from the 1970s promoting "Stoessel Jingles." Tell me about these tambourine jingles.*

JS: My teacher, Jim Ross, was the one who wised me up to the tambourines of that time, and how poor sounding most of them they were.

MB: *In a 1979* Percussive Notes *interview written by Van Tony Free, Chicago Symphony Orchestra percussionist Jim Ross spoke highly of your tambourine jingles.*

JS: Yes, Mr. Ross had this pre-war tambourine that sounded amazing. I noticed a substantial difference in sound between that instrument and what was being made commercially at the time. It turns out that the pre-war tambourines had jingles made of white brass, which is a copper alloy. You see, during World War II there was a copper shortage. The majority of the United States' supply of copper was going towards the war effort—bullet and shell casings and wiring for communications. The 1943 steel penny was a good example of how strict things were. After the war was over, tambourine makers did not go back to the more expensive copper-alloy jingles because the steel-jingle instruments were selling—and steel jingles were much cheaper to punch out.

MB: *White brass is also known as German Silver, yes? And so you began to develop German Silver jingles that sounded like the pre-war tambourines?*

JS: That's correct. In 1967 I developed German Silver tambourine jingles, the likes of which had not been available since pre-war times. I also went one step further and got some bronze—phosphor bronze, type A.

John Stoessel

MB: *You were the first ever to use phosphor bronze for tambourine jingles, is that correct?*

JS: First ever to my knowledge. The phosphor bronze provided that "ancient" sound I was looking for.

MB: *Tell me about your collaboration with Maurie Lishon, owner of Franks Drum Shop in Chicago.*

JS: I lived in the Metro Chicago area and visited Franks Drum Shop often. Mr. Ross taught there. Maurie Lishon had this pet project—an old beat up tambourine he'd kept from his jobbing days. It was a single row, the head was half gone, and the shell had taken a beating, but it was repairable. I was able to restore that instrument, adding my German Silver jingles. Lishon, along with Roy Knapp, called it a winner. I think Lishon always had a soft spot for me because of my restoration of this old, favorite instrument.

By the very late sixties my tambourine jingles and triangle beaters were beginning to sell. That got Lishon's attention. We collaborated on the Lishon model tambourine design—my jingles, single row, special escutcheon pins, glued and tacked skin heads, and the right kind of wood. Lishon made them in-house at Franks Drums Shop and sold hundreds of them over the years.

Lishon encouraged me to go visit George Gaber, who was the percussion professor at

Indiana University, and to show him my tambourines and beaters. Eventually I made the trip to Bloomington. While there, Gaber introduced me to John Cage, who was the guest composer for that weekend, and I went to one of his campus concerts. Gaber and I became friends, and while he never bought from me direct, I suspect the word got out. When I came home, there were more orders for Franks, and that seemed to be the pattern: get out and meet people, go back and make stuff, repeat as necessary.

MB: *How did Stoessel triangle beaters come about, and what was their connection to the Cleveland Orchestra?*

JS: In 1967, Doris, my first wife, and I were restless and headed to Cleveland over the Christmas holiday. Jim Ross had previously suggested that I show my tambourines and jingles to the members of the Cleveland orchestra percussion section. On that trip I did just that. I went to hear the orchestra and took my tambourines and jingles with me. There was but one percussionist on that week. It was Robert Matson, and he was playing timpani. Matson seemed impressed with the tambourines, and was sorry the other members of the section weren't there. I left three tambourines with Matson so the other percussionists could try them on their upcoming tour. I hoped they would get back to me and provide some feedback.

Soon they did, and the tambourines were a hit. They bought them all. This paved the way for further trips, and we soon got to talking about a dissatisfaction with the excessive contact noise of the commercial triangle beaters at the time, which were mostly traditional rod-style beaters and "eye-hook" beaters. I decided to do some experimenting while the orchestra was on the road, trying to invent a triangle beater that had reduced contact noise—a beater with less "tick."

My solution was a triangle beater made from two materials. I used a large diameter tube for the beater face and connected it to a small diameter beater handle that was wrapped in rubber. I used an insulating material to fill the void between the handle and the face. This insulating material, along with the separation of the face from the handle, gave me exactly what I was looking for—less "tick." The design was unconventional, but it worked. The beaters brought a substantial improvement to the sound of a properly played triangle.

Stoessel triangle beaters

My first beaters were sent to Richard Weiner while on tour with the Cleveland Orchestra. Mr. Weiner approved and gave me some specs to help refine them. Beaters of this design are still made and sold today as the Richard Weiner signature triangle beaters—nearly fifty years later.

MB: *I recall a 1972* Percussive Notes *article by Cleveland Orchestra percussionist Robert Matson where he compliments your beaters. Yours were the first beaters incorporating rubber handles. What other ways were you able to innovate?*

JS: I was the first to market a double-sided triangle beater, which was an idea I had within a year or so of my first beaters. I didn't like having to switch beaters from heavy to light in contrasting passages. The double-sided beater solved this. However, the combinations were difficult to stock with so many variances. They were best done as custom orders.

I was attentive to the weight of my beaters, with an awareness of how it affected playability and feel. I was the first to make beaters having the same diameter, yet having different weights. This was accomplished by using different gauge tubing for the beater face. The thinner gauge tubing was lighter and the thicker tubing heavier. Also, I was the first to use color-coding bands as a means of helping the triangle player distinguish quickly between the various sizes of beaters.

MB: *For decades your beaters have been on countless required and recommended materials lists for high school and college percussion students. Your beaters have impacted and improved the quality of sound of several generations of musicians. Both students and professional percussionists continue to embrace them. How does this make you feel as you reflect on nearly fifty years of making triangle beaters?*

JS: I'm happy to know that so many percussionists have enjoyed using them, and that I've been able to play a small part in shaping their triangle artistry.

Mark Berry is a percussionist, performer, composer, and educator. He is Professor of Percussion at Western Kentucky University and Principal Timpanist with Orchestra Kentucky. He has performed with the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra, the Owensboro Symphony, and the Jackson Symphony. Berry's percussion playing and soloist recordings can be heard on the Centaur, Equilibrium, Naxos, and Soundset labels. His compositions are published by Bachovich Music Publications, C-Alan Publications, HoneyRock, Living Sound Publications, and Tapspace. Berry has earned degrees from the University of Michigan (DMA, MM Performance) and The Ohio State University (BMusEd). His principal teachers include Michael Udow, Salvatore Rabbio, James L. Moore, Fernando Meza, and Michael Bump. PN

Preparing the Instrumentation for Cerrone's "Memory Palace"

By Daniel Pate

"Memory Palace," by 2015 Rome Prize-winning composer Christopher Cerrone, was written in 2012 for New York-based percussionist Owen Weaver. This work has become a popular addition to the repertoire and a featured piece on many concert programs. This popularity is due to the uniqueness of Cerrone's approach to instrumentation as well as his use of electronics.

Christopher Cerrone

The title, "Memory Palace," refers to a technique used by orators to remember very long speeches by placing mental signposts in imaginary locations and walking through them (Cerrone, 2012). In this composition, the "Palace" Cerrone has created is a way of sharing personal memories of his past with the listeners. All the sounds you hear from the electronics and the titles of the movements are taken from moments in the composer's life. For example, the sound of crickets that are used as the soundscape for the first movement were recorded by Cerrone on a camping trip with friends, and the wind chimes of the third movement were sampled from the set that hangs in his parents' backyard.

"The piece also evokes one of my favorite aspects of music—its ability to trigger long-forgotten memories and emotions. Simply drop the needle on an old familiar song and you suddenly remember—for better or for worse—exactly how you felt at that time in your life. In my opinion, it's the closest thing to time travel. The slowly unfolding yet short movements chained together in 'Memory Palace' have a knack for providing a wellspring of memories, whether you lived on Claremont or not. All you have do is let your mind wander to your own life and times" (Weaver, 2012).

The challenges that a performer faces in the preparation of this work are also unique compared to many other multi-percussion works because, in addition to learning the traditional musical aspects of melody, rhythm, voicing, etc., the performer is asked to design and construct many of the instruments from metal and wood. Though the instrumentation is not impossible to construct, the thought of undertaking this task may cause many percussionists to shy away from performing this work. The purpose of this article is to give a detailed technical and practical guide for the preparation and performance of this work, which future performers will be able to use as a starting point from which they may continue to customize their own personal setups.

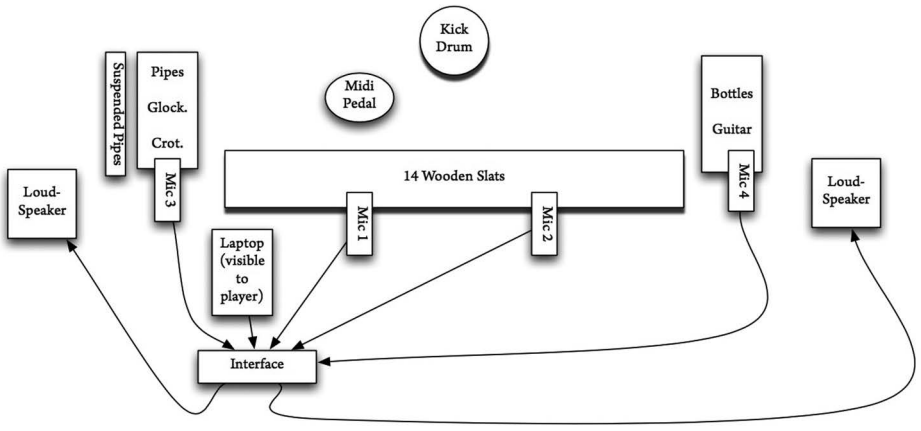
I mention several interpretational concepts that address musical difficulties I have encountered in my own performance of this piece, but I have attempted to avoid any outright statements of interpretational dogma so as not to influence future performances of this work. I believe future performers should focus on developing their personal interpretation, and I merely wish to provide a starting point by removing any initial practical barriers presented by this unique instrumentation.

BUILDING INSTRUMENTATION

The instruments chosen for "Memory Palace" are quite unusual because they are to be hand made by the performer using materials found at a local hardware shop. The choice to use handmade instruments was by request of the commissioning percussionist, Owen Weaver, so that the work may be performed without the worry of transportation and rental of large percussion instruments like a marimba or vibraphone. Limited information is given by the composer within the score regarding the construction and design of these instruments, aside from the desired pitches that must be produced.

The process of preparing the instruments can cause barriers for performers because of the time, initial cost of tools and supplies that could be incurred, and the possible lack of initial knowledge and skills of woodwork or metalwork needed. However, I have found that by constructing my own instruments, I was able to connect on a more personal level with this piece. Through the effort of building and designing the instruments, the music becomes not only a connection to the composer's past through the use of the recorded soundscapes, but

Diagram of setup for Memory Palace (Cerrone, 2012)



also a personal extension of the performer through his or her efforts.

Though the composer specifies that the instruments must be made using wood planks and metal pipes, he does not specify the types of material he prefers or which types were used in the creation of the electronics. Because the exact material used to build the instruments is not specified in the score, the choice is left to the performer based on price and availability. While using better quality material to construct the instruments will yield better results in terms of sound and playability, I don't necessarily believe that it is important to the overall performance of the work, and the budgetary needs of performers will not reflect poorly in their performance. As seen in the score, the composer requests a preference for the use of less than fine quality instruments such as a cheap guitar, glass bottles, and materials frequently available at a hardware store to create these instruments.

WOODEN SIMANTRAS (PLANKS OF WOOD)

Wooden simantras are an ancient instrument which is rooted in the Eastern Orthodox musical and religious tradition (Libin 2011). The use of simantras, made of both metal and wood, have become a very popular sound source for contemporary percussion works and are frequently used in interpretations of works by Iannis Xenakis, James Wood, and Michael Gordon (Libin 2011). Most instrumentation requirements call for simantras to merely be tuned progressively from low to high without much worry about the specific pitch of the instrument. This can be achieved by simply cutting the selected pieces of wood into progressively smaller sections, which will give the desired pitch relationships. In both the second and the fourth movements of "Memory Palace," however, the performer is required to cut and tune 17 graduated simantras to specific pitches. The calculations and methods that must be used in order to be consistent with your methods are quite simple, and I will show examples of the calculations I used to construct my wooden simantra instrument that is used for movements two and four.

Types of wood commonly used for Simantras

Simantras (planks of wood or metal) are usually made of types of hardwood similar to that which is used in the making of guitars or marimba keys. This is due to the wood's density, which increases its resilience to being struck and the overall quality of sound produced. The most common woods used in the making of contemporary simantras are Rosewood, Paduk, and Purple Heart, which can be cut to various sizes and are frequently mounted to a frame in order to increase resonance. These types of wood are usually only available at specialty shops and are difficult to find at a typical hardware store, so I used poplar, which is another type of hardwood, because it is easy to work with and it is cheaper than most other hardwood options, while still producing a good tone.

Tuning Simantras

In order to cut and tune the 17 graduated simantras, several calculations must be made to determine the length of the bar as well as to find the nodal points for mounting the bar on a frame. The following method was used to create my simantras using the equal-tempered scale as form of tuning that more accurately matched the electronic material. The method of tuning discussed here also may be used in the construction of the instruments for pieces such as David Lang's "So Called Laws of Nature"

Instrumentation for Movements 2 and 4

Tuned Simantras

and Steve Reich's "Music for Pieces of Wood," as well as to create a set of "sixxen" for the percussion ensemble works of Iannis Xenakis . Please note that these calculations do not account for adjustments in the width of the bar, and therefore this method only will work if the width remains constant between the sample and the subsequent bars.

1. Cut a sample piece of wood and determine the length and frequency in Hrz. using a measuring tape and electronic tuner.

$$L_0 = Length\ of\ Sample\ Bar$$

$$x = Frequency\ in\ Hrz.\ of\ Sample\ Bar$$

2. Determine the frequency ratio to the next desired pitch by dividing the frequency of the desired bar by the frequency of the sample bar (Eq. 1).

$$f = \frac{y}{x}$$

3. Finally, divide the length of the sample bar by the square root of the frequency ratio, which will give the result of the length of the next bar (Eq. 2).

$$L_1 = \frac{L_0}{\sqrt{f}}$$

Here is an example of this process using my calculations with the Note "A3" as a sample bar.

1. The length and the Hrz. of the sample bar.

$$L_0 = 25.063"$$

2. The Hrz. of the next simantra in the sequence to be cut, which, in this case, is C-sharp 4, which has a frequency of 277.183 Hrz.

$$y = 277.183\ Hrz.$$

3. Determine the frequency ratio by using the chart provided in Table 1, which will give the frequency ratio as it relates to the interval above or below the sample pitch or by dividing the Hrz. of the desired bar by the Hrz. of the sample bar (Eq. 3).

$$1.259 = \frac{277.183\ Hrz.}{220.000\ Hrz.}$$

4. Divide the length of the sample bar by the square root of the frequency ratio, which is 1.118 (which I have also provided in Table 1 for convenience) from above, which will result in the length of the next desired bar, which in this case was roughly 23.97 inches in length. (Eq. 4.)

$$22.417" = \frac{25.063"}{\sqrt{1.259}}$$

This method will generate a result close to the needed pitch as long as the simantra bars are being cut from the same piece of wood. I recommend, however, that you plan on cutting the simantras slightly longer because of the variables that are not accounted for in the calculations. Also, due to the density and thickness of the wood being used, any time you are cutting a new piece of wood, you will have to cut another sample bar and redo the calculations in order to find the pitch of the wood.

Once the simantra blanks have been cut, they must be fine tuned to the required pitch, which can be done by sanding specific sections of the bar to raise or lower the pitch. To lower the pitch of the simantra, sand the bar on the edge; to raise the pitch, the bar must be sanded in the middle. Several methods of sanding can be used depending on the tools that are available and the cost, such as a grinder, Dremel tool with a sanding attachment, or hand sanding. I chose to use a Dremel tool since that was already available to me and is more portable. A grinder requires mounting to a table, which isn't practical for most percussionists looking to perform this piece as they may not have access to a woodworking shop.

The next step is to calculate two nodal points on the simantras in order to properly mount them to any style of frame and maximize the resonance of the instruments. To calculate the nodal points on each bar, multiply the total length of the bar by .225 or 22.5 percent, which will give you the measurement that the nodal point will occur from the edge of each bar.

$$Nodal\ point = 0.225 * z$$

Once the nodal points have been determined, the simantras can be mounted on a frame or placed on a trap table, depending on the performer's preference. I chose to create a portable open-bottom frame modeled after a marimba frame without resonators and attach each simantra to a post consisting of a screw that had been insulated with a rubber tube similar to what can be found on a typical marimba rail.

This model of frame allows the simantras to be played using the mandolin-roll technique required for the piece while eliminating any unnecessary movement of the bars that may occur during performance. The simantras sound much better if they are allowed to freely resonate and have an open space that doesn't inhibit the vibration of the air.

MALLET CHOICES

Movements II and IV require several sets of graduated mallets ranging from soft yarn to hard rubber, of which the performer has at least two pairs of each. These mallets can be personally chosen by the performer based on his or her personal preference. I have found a performance technique that I believe all players will benefit from in order to play the mandolin rolls with good sound. This technique involves tying the ends of the mallets together using an elastic hair tie; this is beneficial while performing because of the frequent mallet changes that occur while another hand is performing. By tying the mallets together using this hair tie method, performers can reduce the mallet-switching time because they don't have to worry about having the mallets in the proper grip in the hand and can focus on the sound being created.

Table 1.

Pitches needed for tuned simantra

Tone of Simantra	Interval from Previous Pitch	Frequency (Hz)
F#3	-	184.997
G3	m2	195.998
G#3	m2	207.652
A3	m2	220.000
C#4	M3	277.183
D4	m2	293.665
F#4	M3	369.994
G#4	M2	415.305
A4	m2	440.000
C#5	M3	554.365
D5	m2	587.330
F#5	M3	739.989
G#5	M2	830.609
A5	m2	880.000
C#6	M3	1108.73
D6	m2	1174.66
F#6	M3	1479.98

Table 2.

interval ratios for equal-tempered octave

Interval	interval ratio above root	Square root of interval ratio above	Invterval ratio below root	Square root of interval ratio below
m2	1.059	1.03	0.944	0.972
M2	1.122	1.059	0.891	0.944
m3	1.189	1.09	0.841	0.917
M3	1.259	1.118	0.793	0.891
P4	1.335	1.155	0.749	0.866
A4	1.414	1.189	0.707	0.841
P5	1.498	1.224	0.668	0.817
m6	1.587	1.260	0.63	0.794
M6	1.682	1.296	0.595	0.771
m7	1.782	1.335	0.561	0.749
M7	1.888	1.374	0.53	0.728
P8	2	1.414	0.5	0.707

Frame Examples

PIPES

Performing Movement 3, "Foxhurst," requires the collection and construction of several different metallic percussion instruments, including glockenspiel bars, crotales, and unmounted and mounted tuned pipes. The score states that the performer may choose to use tuned gongs, bell plates, or temple bowls as a substitute for the hanging pipes for which the piece is scored, but finding the correct pitches for these options can be expensive if the performer does not already have access to them. The use of tuned gongs, bell plates, or temple bowls does not necessarily lead to a better performance of the work compared to the use of tuned pipes, as those sounds tend to be quite different compared to the original source material of the wind chimes in the back of Cerrone's family home.

Table 3.

Pitches of Tuned Pipes

Pitch	Interval from previous pitch	Frequency (Hrz)	Number of Pipes needed for Performance
B3	-	246.94	1
D4	m3	293.66	1
E4	M2	329.63	2
G#4	M3	415.30	2
B4	m3	493.88	2
D5	m3	587.33	1
E5	M2	659.25	1

Construction

The construction and fine-tuning of the mounted and unmounted chime bars is very similar to the methods used in creating the wooden simantras, in that a length of pipe must be cut and tuned using the inverse ratio calculation (see previous section for description of calculations). Thanks to the consistency in density and overall uniformity of the material due to modern manufacturing, the performer can determine the necessary lengths for the pipes without having to cut extra samples.

The metal pipe I chose for my instrument is called ¾-inch Electrical Metal Conduit, or EMC, which is frequently used in construction to run unexposed electrical wires within a building. While cutting wood with a hand saw or circular saw can be quite easy, cutting metal adds challenges in that the saw must have a blade that is rated for metal. Because of the cost of such blades, and the additional safety equipment needed in order to cut the metal without risk of injury, I chose to use a pipe cutter by hand, which offers the same results although it does take a bit longer to finish the project.

Once the pipes have been cut and the nodal points calculated, it is necessary to drill several holes at the nodal points of the bars that will be hung in order to mount them onto the stand. An additional step of grinding down any sharp edges should be done so as to not injure yourself or anyone who may help you set up your equipment. My methods of mounting these pipes went through several different designs, but I ultimately decided on a portable method in which the chimes are tied together using parachute cord, available at most hardware stores, and then hanging one-inch wooden dowel, which is then placed on top of two cymbal stands. In order to hang the pipes with minimal string contact, I insulated the nodal holes with a rubber tube, which made stringing the pipes much easier because it allowed the string to move freely without being caught on any rough edges. In order to minimize any unnecessary movement of the pipes so they don't inadvertently strike one another, a large counterweight should be affixed to the bottom of the entire instrument.

GLOCKENSPIEL BAR FRAME AND CROTALE FRAME

As I was creating these instruments, I felt it important to not discount the need for proper mounting of the small percussion instruments, so I chose to create portable frames for both the glockenspiel and crotale notes. By mounting these notes on rubber door insulation on top of some scrap pieces of wood that was wrapped in black drawer-lining material (found in most hardware stores), I was able to create several small frames that could be set atop any type of table to give me a uniform playing level for all of my metal instruments.

Electrical Metal Conduit

Crotale/Glockenspiel Frame

Chime Design Examples

The mallets required for the performance of Movement 3 are: 1. two plastic mallets with moleskin wrapped around the head; 2. one soft yarn mallet; 3. one plastic mallet.

Due to the difficulty of this section's polyrhythmic material, and in order to keep the similar lines intact, I chose to use three plastic mallets covered in moleskin in the bass, tenor, and alto mallet positions, with the hard plastic mallet in the soprano position. I could then translate the polyrhythmic lines into a uniform physical motion that could be practiced as a unit. This solution, however, created an issue because I would then have to change the bass mallet to soft yarn at the climax of the section. Rather than attempt this feat and risk destroying the mood that had been built, and in order to simulate the effect of a soft mallet strike on the mounted pipes, I wrapped another layer of moleskin around the desired beating spot on the pipes in order to soften the attack of the harder mallets. By using this method, I was able to achieve the desired effect without the switch to soft mallets.

CONCLUSION

"Memory Palace" is a wonderful addition to our percussion repertoire and works well work on any percussion concert because of the beauty and simplicity of the instruments' sound and visual ascetic. Though the instrumentation takes a bit of time to design and construct, the skills learned from by doing this have numerous benefits due to the cross uses with other contemporary percussion works. I hope performers continue to develop and improve upon the methods and the design elements in a way that they become not just musical instruments, but pieces of art that are both beautiful in their visual esthetic and economical in terms of materials.

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Ear Training for Timpani Students

By Randy Max

Ear-training class and learning to accurately tune the timpani can be quite daunting for many timpani students. Taking dictation, sight singing, and other "fun" activities are often very challenging for students who grew up playing the drums as opposed to pitched instruments such as winds, brass, or strings. Just after high school I attended the Eastern Music Festival and remember one of the other percussion students saying he really wanted to "work on his ear" that summer. I remember thinking. "How do you work on your ear?"

A short time later, when I first entered conservatory, I found that the ear training (*solfège*) classes, as excellent as they were, were too advanced. Some students seemed to breeze through them, but I clearly needed something more basic to begin with. I often thought about the concept of "working on your ear" and came up with my own routine designed specifically for tuning timpani, which I would like to share in this article.

The actual physical tuning of the timpani is easy; pushing a pedal or turning a chain, etc. The hard part, of course, is *hearing* the pitch in your ear that you need to tune. For me, one word unlocked the mystery of how to do this: singing. I began spending time daily doing the following five exercises, which was the basis of what would become a lifelong daily routine. All of these exercises involve sitting in a quiet room at a well-tuned piano.

PART 1

This is what I call the warm-up, or the daily "tuning up" of your ear. Begin by playing one note on the piano, preferably in the middle of your voice range, and listen to it for a while (30 seconds or so), playing the note again after the sound has decayed. Allow the note to resonate in your ears, and focus on everything about it; timbre, vibrations, tone, etc.

After this period of listening, begin singing the note as *softly as possible*, making sure that your voice blends perfectly with the note being played on the piano. It is important when doing this exercise that you continue focusing on the note being played on the piano as you sing, and that you do not sing louder than the piano. Gradually make a crescendo to about *mp* and back to *ppp*. Concentrate on remaining in perfect unison with the piano as you make the *cresc – dim* (see Example 1).

When doing this and all ear-training exercises, use *fixed-do solfège* syllables, so that C is always *do*, D is always *ré*, E is always *mi*, etc. This will help to solidify the pitch of the note and its corresponding consonant. In other words, C, for instance, becomes attached to the *oh* sound of *do*. In time, you will most likely begin to notice that if you sing a C, but call it *la*, it will sound wrong.

There exists an entire set of syllables for each of the chromatic notes (*do, di, ré, ri*, etc.) though mostly in *fixed-do solfège* only the seven syllables are used: *do, ré, mi, fa, sol, la*, and *si* (or *ti*). C-sharp is called *do sharp*, for instance, and B-flat is called *si flat*, and so on.

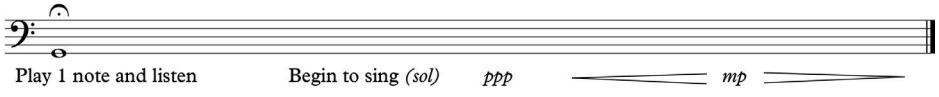
Do this exercise using scales and arpeggios, one note at a time, first listening and focusing on each note, and then practicing *perfectly* matching the pitch with your voice.

PART 2

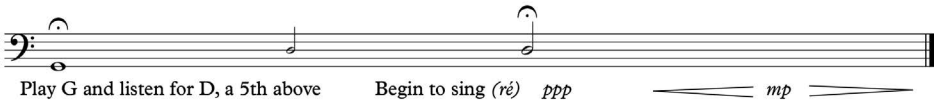
Sing intervals. One of my favorite exercises for developing your ear for tuning is to do a variation of the above warm-up, listening to the harmonics (overtones) of notes being played on the piano, and singing them, too. For example, play G in the low register of the piano, and listen carefully for the D that is sounding a fifth higher in the overtones. As in the warm-up, listen to this for a while, allowing the D to resonate in your ears and then softly begin singing (*ré*). Once you start to hear this fifth harmonic, it becomes even more present and is the perfect way to tune this interval on the timpani (see Example 2).

Next play C on the piano and listen for the G harmonic sounding a fifth above. This time sing G a fourth below, simply matching the G you hear sounding in the harmonics of the C you are playing (see Example 3).

Example 1



Example 2



Repeat this on all the different notes, singing either a fifth above the note you are playing or a fourth below. I prefer to do this exercise mainly in the lower register of the piano (from middle C and downwards), as you can hear the harmonics more clearly, and these are also the range of notes you will be tuning on the timpani. This is excellent practice for developing your ear for tuning the two most common intervals on timpani, the perfect fourth and perfect fifth. Continue by singing all the different intervals, first playing a note on the piano and then singing either up or down to the desired note.

PART 3

Sing Bach chorales. A book of chorales is perfect material for developing your ear for tuning. Now that you are able to perfectly match pitches on the piano (having done the warm-up exercise often), begin by playing the bass line of a chorale, singing in unison with what you play. As stated above, remember not to sing too loudly, blending your voice perfectly with the piano. Continue by playing the bass line and singing the melody (the top line). Choose a different chorale every day. Play and sing the inner voices as you progress (see Example 4).

PART 4

Sing from sight-singing books such as *A New Approach to Sight Singing* by Sol Berkowitz. Begin by choosing material that is simple and tonal. Before singing, play a simple chord progression in the key to be sung. For example, if the exercise is in the key of G, play Example 5 to get the tonality in your ear.

Play the chord progression and sing the exercise. When finished, compare your tonic note with the piano. When you become proficient at this, a good variation is to play the chord progression in another key from the one being sung, and still sing in the original key. This is good practice for tuning while the orchestra is playing in a different key from the notes you are tuning.

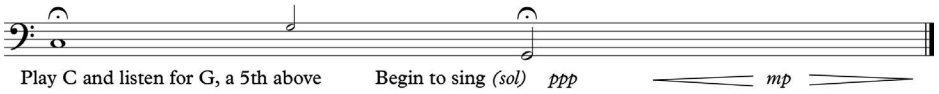
PART 5

Sing from orchestral scores of pieces you are practicing and playing. An example is to play and sing (at the piano) the opening bars of Brahms' "Symphony No. 1." Play the timpani part with your left hand and sing the violin/cello part, as shown in Example 6.

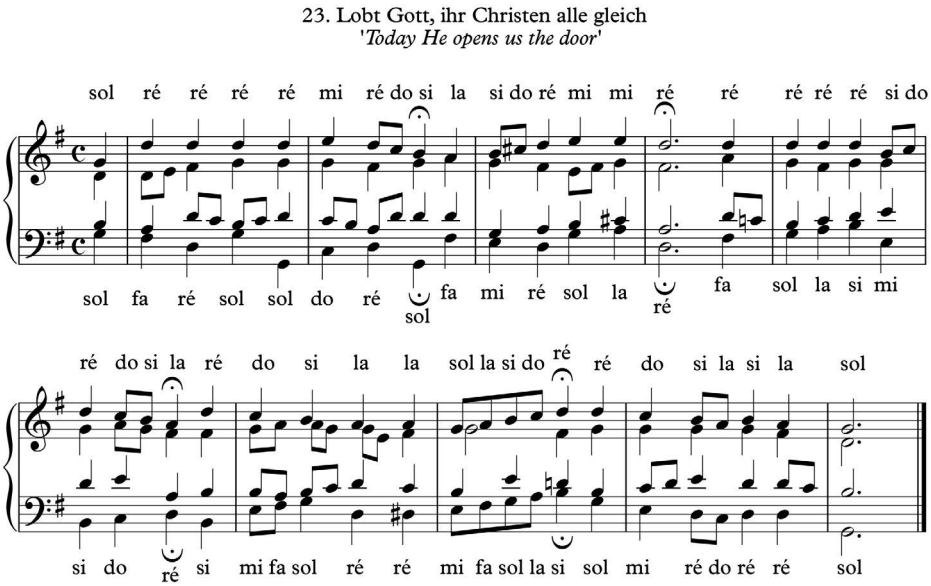
In this exercise, concentrate on the intervals between the repeated C's and the melody, as just about every interval is explored. For instance, the first move away from C in the melody is to C-sharp. Focus on the distance of the half-step interval and really listen to the dissonance of these two notes. Likewise, in the second bar focus on the whole step between C and D. As the melody rises, concentrate on each interval; minor third, perfect fourth and fifth, minor and major sixth, and so on.

When you are comfortable singing the melody with the piano, practice this by just playing the C's and sing the melody without playing it on the pia-

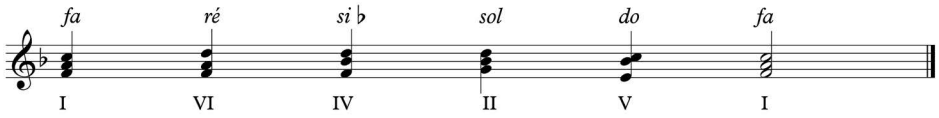
Example 3



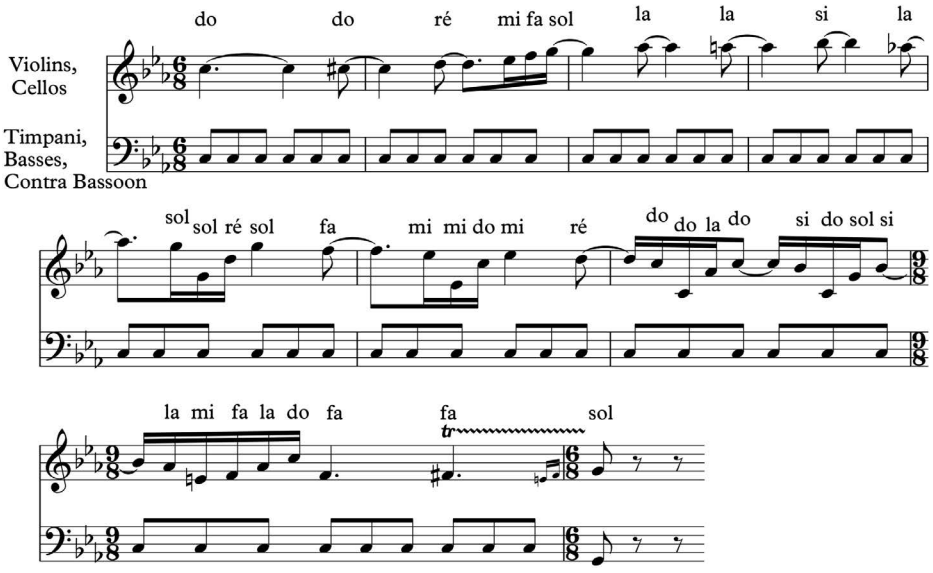
Example 4



Example 5



Example 6



no. The next step is to play the C's on the timpani and sing the melody, which is an excellent exercise for developing your ability to really *hear* the pitch of the timpani head.

If you have access to timpani in the room where you practice *solfège*, integrate timpani tuning in your ear-training sessions. With each of the above exercises, take a moment after one note is sung, or a chorale, and tune the timpani to the note(s) or key you are singing.

By doing this routine daily, your ability to tune timpani will improve rapidly, and ear-training classes will become more enjoyable. Do your ear training first thing in the day to make sure that this important aspect of timpani playing development is not overlooked. Better to practice *solfège* every day for 15 minutes than once every two weeks for four hours.

If you find that ear-training class and timpani tuning pose the same challenges that I did, I hope you will find my approach helpful.

Randy Max is principal timpanist of the Rotterdam Philharmonic, where he has played since 1988. Prior to that he was timpanist and percussionist of the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra and the Orchestra of St. Luke's in New York. He is currently visiting professor of timpani at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in London. Randy is the author of *Orchestral Excerpts for Timpani, with an audio CD*, published by Theodore Presser, and his arrangements of Schumann, *6 pieces for Pedal Piano, arranged for Timpani and Piano*, are published by Bachovich. **PN**

Field Recording Basics

By Kurt Gartner

While artistic and scholarly motivations to create field recordings have existed and developed over many years, there have also been many advances in recording technology. The significance of Béla Bartók's work in collecting thousands of folk tunes in and near his native Hungary has been well documented. In the process of transcribing and notating this music, he captured field recordings of many performances using the Edison phonograph. Following were decades of field recordings made by performers and ethnomusicologists like Mike Seeger and Alan Lomax, as well as countless proponents of musique concrète, scientists, news reporters, and Foley artists. Contemporaneous were advances in recording technology, from the portable reel-to-reel recorder to the digital age and the many present-day recording platforms. With better technology and equipment available at lower costs, field recording production is ever more accessible. The following is an introduction to the basic equipment, techniques, and best practices of field recording.

Essentially, field recordings are those made outside of the studio environment. Field recordings may be environmental, such as the sounds of nature or of humans' urban cacophony. They may be of music, performed formally or informally, in a concert hall or on the street, in rehearsal, in concert, or spontaneously. The recordings may be for capturing a performance, studying a rehearsal, conducting an interview, or loop sampling. With each setting come aesthetic goals and technical challenges. By asking yourself some questions and establishing your own priorities, you can make informed decisions about the equipment you'll use and how to see a successful project through.

GIG-DRIVEN RIG SELECTION

The selection of the ideal rig for your recordings will largely be a function of your priorities (i.e., the aesthetic and technical demands of your projects). Some fundamental priorities may include the following:

- Quality/purpose of result: Is this for commercial production and sale, personal documentation of a performance for later study, or a simple rehearsal recording?
- Ambience vs. presence: Do you want to simulate the experience of an audience member, sitting at some distance and hearing a blend of performers and their space, or are you trying for greater presence of individual performers and/or sections as one may experience from studio recordings? (This will determine number, type, and placement of microphones, as well as the recording platform itself. Multi-tracking is possible in many configurations.)
- Simplicity: Are you interested in speed and ease of setting up? Will your project require additional connectivity on site such as MIDI Time Code or Word Clock? Will you need a recording engineer, or is this truly "DIY"?
- Portability: How often or far will you move this rig, and what kind of space will you have on site for this setup? Will you be able to plug into AC power?
- Robustness: Will this rig be used in harsh physical environments (e.g., shock/motion, heat, cold, moisture)?

Once you've considered those questions, as well as your own, you're in an informed position to assemble your rig. Primarily, the focus of this article will relate to portable recorders, although some aspects of the computer/software option will also be addressed. At minimum, either option will include one or more microphones, some means of converting the microphones' analog signals into the digital domain, and a platform/interface for recording (and perhaps editing) these converted signals in a transportable file format.

In terms of the possible quality of the finished product, both computer and portable recorder options offer wide ranges of choices. Generally, greater quality comes at a higher cost. Primary drivers of the cost include the quality of microphones, the mic preamps (if applicable), the analog-to-digital (A/D) converters, and the editing capabilities of the recording interface. If you need to record more than two-channel stereo, you will need additional microphones and associated preamps, inputs, and converters.

MICROPHONE TYPES, PATTERNS, AND PLACEMENT

Types of microphones, their directionality or polar patterns, and guidelines for their placement could be the topic of a whole series of *Percussive Notes* articles, and many such articles and other reference materials are readily available via the Internet. Common types of microphones include dynamic, condenser, and ribbon. Though they are considered less durable than dynamic mics, the more sensitive condensers are generally the mics of choice for field recording. Some portable recorders (especially the less expensive ones) have built-in condenser mics. Some portable recorders feature interchangeable mic modules for greater flexibility. While built-in mics lack the great specs of higher-end external condenser mics, they make for a highly portable, even hand-held setup. Several models of portable recorders have XLR and/or other external microphone inputs as well as the built-in mics, often usable in combination. Condenser microphones require phantom power, generally delivered through the mic's XLR cable. Portable recorders with XLR inputs provide phantom power. If you're taking the computer/software option, phantom power via XLR cable will be generated through an external converter interface. Microphones that are powered and connected directly to computers via USB are also available.

Also important is the polar pattern of a microphone, which represents the sensitivity of the mic at various angles relative to its central axis or direction of facing. Common patterns include omnidirectional (closest to being equally sensitive at any angle in three dimensions), bi-directional (also called "figure 8"), and cardioid (a unidirectional mic that rejects off-axis sounds). Some microphones feature switchable patterns, providing more flexibility in recording on site without forcing you to bring all the microphones that you own. Placement of microphones (i.e., which direction they're facing) is an important determination that is reached in tandem with specific microphones and their polar patterns.

Here are two techniques, each of which requires only two microphones. One common setup and good starting point is an XY coincident pair: two matched cardioid microphones, one above the other, creating a 90-degree angle. Picture the elements of the microphones forming the point of a V facing the performers. This technique captures a good representation of what our ears would hear, balancing direct and ambient sounds throughout the stereo field. Mid-side technique is another coincident pair, in which a central microphone such as a cardioid is faced directly toward the performers, while a figure-8 mic is set up very close to the mid mic, but facing left. In this configuration, the figure-8 (bi-directional) microphone is most sensitive to sounds reflecting from the sides of the stage. The signal captured by the figure-8 mic may be extracted into distinct left and right channels, resulting in a total of three editable channels (left, right, and center). The relative balance of mid and side microphones' tracks (which may be edited independently within your DAW or portable recorder) can affect the listener's perception of width or prominence of the stereo field. Notably, some stereo microphones (built-in as well as external) are preconfigured at standard angles such as XY and mid-side, eliminating novice pitfalls of mic placement.

Miking styles that are more direct and introduce additional microphones to your setup are certainly possible, depending on the capacity of your hard-

ware and software. While adding complication to your physical setup on site, you gain the advantage of greater editorial control after the recording is complete. For example, you may utilize these styles and techniques to capture more presence from a soloist or to achieve a surround sound effect. A completely different technique is to place a single microphone or stereo pair in the seating area of a venue, yielding an audience-perspective recording. This technique was recommended at an annual Cloyd Duff Timpani Master Class I attended years ago, as a tool for self-study of one's timing and balance in orchestral settings. With experience and experimentation, you'll be able to anticipate the combinations that will best suit your purposes in a wide variety of settings.

BEST PRACTICES OF RECORDING AND STORAGE

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link, right? Even if you have an excellent portable recorder or converter/computer/software combination along with great microphones, there are some other simple but important measures to assure a great recording. Here are my interpretations of a few axioms that I've heard from recording engineers over the years.

If you're using external microphones and your gear sends and receives balanced signals, then you must use balanced cables to take advantage of your setup. While an unbalanced cable includes only a signal wire and a ground wire, a balanced cable includes three wires: the ground wire and two signal wires. As noise or interference is introduced to the signal wire of the unbalanced cable, the noise is sent through unabated to the next component in line, such as the microphone input of your mixer or portable recorder. Noise may be introduced in a balanced cable, but it is eliminated through polarity inversion (the reason for having two signal wires in your cable). If you have balanced signal gear but use unbalanced cables, you won't have this noise-cancelling advantage.

Get a soundcheck whenever possible, including some recording and playback in a controlled environment before the actual performance. If you're trying to monitor as you're recording, then you need sound-isolating headphones or earbuds. Set levels throughout the performers' dynamic range, if possible. If your levels are too low, the result will be noisy from all the ambient sound. If your levels are too high, you may face bad results through distortion. A/D interfaces have adjustable mic sensitivity (trim) of their own, representing another important step in the digital chain. Many also have optional limiters, which cap levels and allow you to hedge your bets against distortion.

Generally, recording engineers assume that performances will be somewhat more dynamic than soundchecks, but this is a function of the performers and the musical setting. Certainly, percussion performances may include extreme dynamic contrasts, so you'll benefit from using the highest quality equipment available. On some occasions, you may take advantage of an auto-level feature included in some rigs. This automated dynamic compression may be useful in a situation such as a lesson or master class, in which you're recording sound sources of different dynamic levels coming from different directions. The recorder increases the gain when sound source levels are low, and vice versa. Some configurations of computer- and portable recorder-based rigs allow for wireless control of levels and transport functions.

Fine audio recording demands a technical command and an artist's ear.

Another factor in the quality of your finished product is the resolution of your recording. Reading the specs on the A/D resolution (bit depth and sampling rate) alone may not be revealing as cost factors, however. For example, a popular entry-level portable recorder lists its A/D resolution at 24-bit/96kHz, as does a current professional model that costs more by a factor of almost 70. Nevertheless, bit depth and sampling rates are important factors in the quality of your recording, and are generally adjustable in computer and portable recorder situations. Bit depth affects the dynamic range of each sample, while sampling rate affects frequency response. The audible difference in these settings can be profound: 8-bit audio comprises 256 distinct dynamic levels for each sample, 16-bit audio yields up to 65,536 levels, and 24-bit samples give you 16.7 million different levels. Of course, recording at high A/D resolution generates more data, requiring ample media storage capacity and efficiency. And, while 44.1 kHz has long been representative of "CD quality" audio, much higher sampling rates are commonly available on today's recording equipment.

So, what's the right A/D resolution for your situation? A dependable rule of thumb is the Nyquist-Shannon Sampling Theorem. The Nyquist Frequency represents the sampling rate that is twice the highest audio frequency of the recording. At this factor of two or greater, the discrete representation of sound (samples) can accurately reproduce the original continuous, analog sounds (wave forms). As the audible frequency range of the human ear is roughly 20 Hz to 20 kHz, the use of a sampling-rate range of 44.1-48 kHz is generally appropriate. Perhaps the most logical reason to use sampling rates *less* than 44.1 kHz is to consume less data in recording or storage. It's understandable that many professional musicians are frustrated by both the popularity and the relative lack of quality of MP3 files, which often reveal significant loss of frequency response relative to the CD standard. It's advisable to record at high resolution, knowing that you can edit this down later for production of MP3s if necessary. There are some reasons to sample at rates generating playback of frequencies *greater* than 20 kHz, including the study of ultrasonic wave forms (such as some wildlife), or to maintain full bandwidth in reduced-speed playback.

Finally, there are the questions of data and equipment storage. Depending on your rig, your initial recording will be written to a hard drive, SD card, or other medium. The more important your project is, the more important it is for you to back up your data. Simple options include cloud storage or a dedicated hard drive. Ideally, your storage media will reside in multiple locations to mitigate against accident, loss, or damage to any one source. As for your gear, protect your investment by getting cases or bags that are adequately robust. Wrap and store your cables with care, and keep your electronic equipment in a controlled climate whenever possible.

Like percussion performance, fine audio recording demands a technical command and an artist's ear. As your rig and your level of experience grow, your desire to experiment with different equipment and recording styles should grow as well. And with good field recordings, you'll be able to capture the energy and beauty of musical moments, wherever they may be found.

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The Positive Effects of Drumming on Children with Autism

By Robert Damm, PhD, and Dr. Stephen Workman

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD or autism) most commonly affects a person's ability to communicate clearly and relate to others. It can present itself in many different ways and depths. Some with autism lack the ability to communicate beyond a few words at a time in short choppy phrases, while less severe forms allow others to participate in normal daily activities with only subtle hints that they are actually autistic. The disorder hinders the communication occurring in different parts of the brain. Doctors are not completely sure what the exact causes of autism are, but there seems to be a genetic link that can be inherited within a family. Many people with autism also have other learning disabilities such as ADD, ADHD, or anger management issues. A lot of progress is being made towards understanding the causes of and effective treatment or management of autism.

Since autism is a disorder that occurs when the brain is forming and developing, most of the symptoms become obvious during the early stages of life when a child is learning to talk, play with other children, and learn different behaviors. Parents may notice that their children play alone, don't make eye contact or respond when spoken to, are having trouble communicating at their age level, or have lost some of their previous communication skills. Sometimes autistic individuals have high levels of anxiety or nervousness, or they develop repetitive movements such as high amounts of rocking. Other behavioral difficulties include anger and/or frustration, decreased patience, and difficulty following instructions and/or cooperating.

A variety of techniques are used to help people with autism. Since there are so many ways that autism can present itself, treatments are unique to each individual. Common methods include physical therapy, speech therapy, and medications. Recently, music therapy has shown great success, and has been added as a well-respected treatment option.

WHY DRUMMING?

While individuals with autism face many challenges including communication and repetitive "tick-like" behaviors, they often excel in music, math, art, and visual skills. The combination of math, music, hands-on stimulus, and repetition makes drumming a good fit. Experience has shown hand drums to be particularly effective with autistic students. The singularity of a hand drum reduces the possibility of overwhelming the student while allowing numerous playing options. Students are able to express themselves, be creative, and have a physical outlet.

WORKING WITH AUTISTIC STUDENTS

The authors have taught many autistic students and have noticed similarities in how these students have responded to drumming. In particular, Neal and Susie (whose names have been changed to protect their privacy) are examples of success.

Neal

Neal took hand drumming lessons. He is a highly verbal, creative, and imaginative boy who loves to tell stories. He learned to make a wide range of sounds on his djembe using a series of techniques (e.g., bass, open tone, muffled stroke, "swish" with fingertips, etc.), along with a number of rhythms/patterns. He was especially responsive to the integration of story-telling and drumming. For example, *Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb*, (Dr. Seuss), had a recurring text of "Dum ditty Dum ditty Dum dum dum," which was played as "Ta ti-ti ta ti-ti ta ta ta" or "1 &-uh 2 &-uh 3 & 4." In a similar way, Neal played rhythms from *Tanka Tanka Skunk*, inspired by the syllabication and rhythms of words and phrases consisting of animal names. For example, Neal interpreted "tiger zebra alligator fox" on the drum as "Ti-ti ti-ti ti-ri-ti-ri ta" or "1 & 2 & 3-e-&-uh 4." Soon, Neal was composing his own rhythms in association with characters he created.

In terms of strictly musical and drumming objectives, Neal worked on consistency of technique and sound production, and awareness of handing (right and left). His weekly djembe lessons included improvising, composing, and memorizing a variety of rhythms. He composed rhythms that represented many different styles and meters, each of which he named to correspond with a character in his story. Neal would tell his story, and with the introduction of each new character, he would play the associated rhythm. Every week he would review his list of rhythms, retell the story (with integrated drum rhythms) he had previously created, and then continue the expanding narrative by adding new characters (with drum rhythms) and developing the plot.

Each week Robert transcribed Neal's text and typed new pages for him to add to his book. He was always positive and excited to be playing, composing rhythms, and telling his stories. He always seemed to enjoy his hour-long lessons. Sometimes, when his mother dropped him off for a lesson, she would say, "He's had a bad day, so if he is unable to focus or if he causes you any trouble, please give me a call and I'll come and pick him up." Robert never had to call her; he was always excited to play.

Neal and his family moved to another state, so Robert is not teaching him anymore. Robert contacted Neal's mother to ask her to reflect on what she perceived as the benefits of having Neal in drum lessons and to have Neal recount his memories of taking drum lessons. Here is her response:

"My youngest son was born with a chromosome deletion that manifests in multiple disorders, but when he is drumming, he is just Neal. Neal with his drum. During drumming lessons, he can escape labels, while at the same time benefit from several different aspects of the drumming as therapy. First, drumming is an excellent creative outlet, but it is also an activity that provides proprioceptive input. For someone like Neal with sensory processing issues (part of his ASD diagnosis), the sensory feedback he gets from hitting the drum facilities self-awareness, orienting his body in the space he occupies. Although he does not hit the drum hard, he still experiences pressure through impact that gives his brain the necessary signals it needs to help him respond more appropriately to his environment. That same sensory input is calming as well as organizing, which in turn, can foster Neal's ability to quiet his otherwise often erratic behavior in order to process and respond to what he observes. In addition to sensory processing challenges, Neal copes with ADHD. Being able to focus on a given activity at specified time

and follow directions are all a challenge for Neal in most environments due to his high energy and impulsivity. However, when he is drumming, he is able to do all those things with much more consistency. Dr. Damm allows Neal to incorporate storytelling (a much prefered activity with the drumming lessons) using rhythm to identify characters and events, and because Neal is the one inventing the story, he is engaged with the lesson and attentive to the instruction. That's not to say that Neal doesn't sometimes get carried away with his storyline or that he doesn't still need prompts to call his attention to a particular concept, but with the drum as mediator, Dr. Damm can redirect Neal to interpreting the story into the rhythms they are learning."

According to Neal, "Making the story about animals with the drum is extremely fun. I like figuring out which tunes should be louder and which ones should be not louder." As even Neal recognizes, the drumming also helps him learn to regulate sound, particularly in terms of volume. He is in speech therapy to help him learn to modulate his own voice much like he is learning to control the drum's volume. With that correlation, we have a frame of reference to share with the speech therapist. Now she can give him prompts, such as, "Neal, talk like it's the quiet part of the story, so you don't scare the animals like a loud drum."

Due to a learning disability, Neal also has difficulty recognizing patterns. Drumming helps him improve by involving patterns through rhythm. Neal learns to recognize and repeat patterns with the positive reinforcement of making music and telling his story. Through drum lessons, Neal has not only received support for multiple daily issues, but he has also created an imaginative story interpreted through drum music. That is what motivates him to actively participate each week and thereby continue to receive that support.

Susie

Dr. Damm has also encountered children with autism in drum circles he facilitated. Susie has been a part of two drum circles offered for members of her church. She seemed to enjoy being with the group and playing various drums and percussion instruments. Her mother provided these comments about Susie's involvement with drum circles:

"Susie has fairly severe characteristics. She has very low receptive language skills. Her spoken language is limited to single words and a few rare, mostly scripted, sentences. She does not do well in loud, crowded spaces. She can read, but doesn't understand everything. She is good at math, but has trouble following the teacher's instructions. She gets frustrated and has serious anger-management problems. She has a photographic memory and draws with crayons as often as possible. Susie has perfect pitch. She does not sing often, but when she does it is quite lovely.

"Drum circles are one of the few group activities that she can actually participate in just like everyone else. She clearly enjoys participating and being just like everyone else. (I have watched her looking around at other people in the drum circle. She does not usually pay much attention to others.) She does well and clearly enjoys it, but usually has to stop a little before everyone else. The loud sound and all the people moving becomes overwhelming for her.

"Speech therapists who work with children with autism frequently incorporate musical elements. Susie's therapist has her mimic drum patterns. The idea is that the rhythm patterns are like sentences. The therapist uses a metronome system that requires Susie to clap in sync with the system and measures her accuracy. The therapist asks questions while Susie is clapping. The idea is to improve Susie's executive function by having two parts of her brain working at the same time. Susie also works with a music therapist who does all sorts of other things with her. Susie sings songs to learn words and has special CDs that teach math, days of the week, money, etc. The music therapist composes songs for Susie as needed."

Susie's mother gave a few more comments about the music benefits for children with autism: "I try to use music to calm her down. I think low drum rhythms are helpful, but there are definitely parts of some music that bother her. Susie loves horseback riding and has participated in therapeutic riding for about 10 years now. She likes the rhythm of the horses. One of the criteria for a horse to participate in therapy is a regular gait."

> The singularity of a hand drum reduces the possibility of overwhelming the student while allowing numerous playing options.

CONCLUSIONS

Drumming has been clinically proven to help those with ASD find a positive outlet for their energy and creativity while potentially having a calming effect. The patterns and rhythms students learn are not only used to help them musically, but these concepts are also applied to help them with speech development, focus, patience, and general self-control. The behavioral skills learned during drum lessons help them to more easily assimilate into everyday society.

Dr. Robert J. Damm is Professor of Music and Director of Music Education Partnerships at Mississippi State University, where he teaches African American Music, World Music, and Recreational Drum Circles. He directs Jembe Den, a community percussion ensemble specializing in the traditional dance rhythms of Mali and Guinea. He has studied music and culture in Cuba, Ghana, and Mali. He is a certified Orff-Schulwerk teacher and a Smithsonian Folkways certified teacher of world music. He is an active member of the PAS Interactive Drumming Committee and has served as President of the Mississippi PAS chapter.

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Adapting Reich's "Electric Counterpoint" for Marimba and Vibraphone

By James W. Doyle

The minimalist work "Electric Counterpoint" was commissioned by the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival and composed for guitarist Pat Metheny in 1987 by Steve Reich.[1] The piece followed "Vermont Counterpoint" (1982) for flute and "New York Counterpoint" (1985) for clarinet, completing a series of works for soloist performing with self-made prerecorded tracks.[2] Metheny's recording of the work was featured on the album *Different Trains.* Reich composed the work for either 12 pre-recorded parts and live performer, or soloist and guitar ensemble.

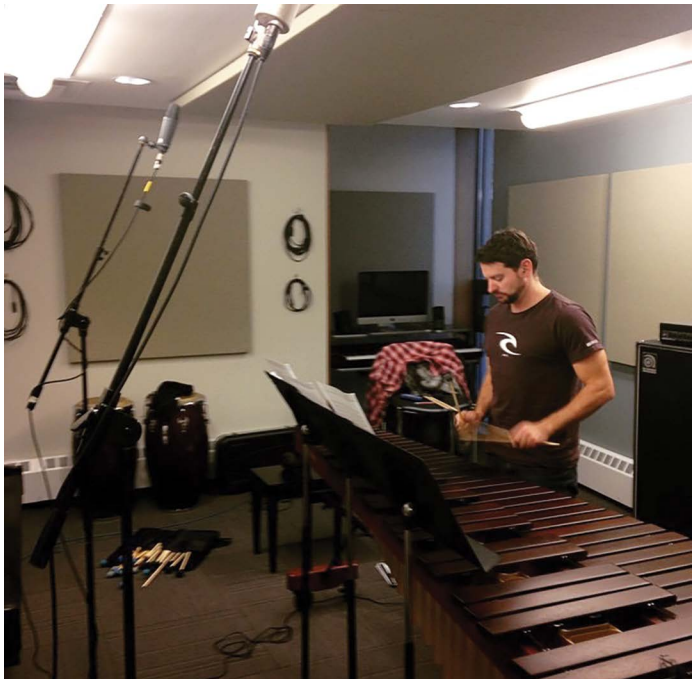
Percussionist Svet Stoyanov arranged and recorded "Electric Counterpoint" in 2008 for marimba and vibraphone, and percussionist Kuniko Kato arranged and recorded the composition in 2009–10 utilizing steel pans, marimba, and vibraphone. Jonny Greenwood, guitarist with the band Radiohead, also recorded the work, ultimately leading to Reich's discovery of Radiohead's music and his subsequent composition, "Radio Rewrite."[3] The three-movement work, Fast-Slow-Fast, each performed without pause, is a frequently-used form by Reich.

RECORDING

Following a similar recording adaptation as Stoyanov, I prepared and prerecorded the parts in January 2015 for live performance. The first movement, prerecorded and performed exclusively on marimba, begins with a gently-swelling introduction that transitions into developing constructs based on Reich's study of Central African horn music.[4] The second movement is a slow counterpoint primarily prerecorded and performed on vibraphone with swelling harmonies on prerecorded bass marimba. The final movement combines marimba and vibraphone and alternates between E minor and C minor, as well as 3/2 and 12/8 meters.

After contracting a recording engineer and booking studio time, the initial process of pre-recording the 12 tracks of marimba and vibraphone involved much more than score preparation. The process can be summarized as experimentation and recording keeping. But before recording, I provided recordings of Metheny, Greenwood, Kato, and Stoyanov to the recording engineer, as well as other marimba and vibraphone recordings to facilitate a discussion of preferred recorded results. To find an agreeable sound on all ranges of the instruments, it was necessary to experiment with microphone types and placement, mallets, and ultimately levels of effects within the digital audio workstation (DAW), such as reverb, delay, and compression. As the marimba and vibraphone is performed live to the prerecorded tracks, it was important to seek a recreated sound that has consistent articulation and resonance in live performance. Once a decision was made regarding all of these experimentations, writing down and/or photographing placement, mallet choices, and notating DAW levels was critical. Because the recording studio was a shared space, it was necessary to take photographs of microphone positioning, and the floor was spiked with tape to ensure consistent microphone stand, marimba, and vibraphone placement.

The recording engineer used Cubase 7.5 for the DAW operated on an iMac. The microphones were a Neumann TLM193 for the high end of the instruments and a Neumann U47 for the low end. The decision to use a reverse complementary



approach for the microphones with a brighter microphone for the low end and a warmer, fuller microphone for the high end was the recording engineer's preference. After much experimentation, the microphones were elevated five feet above and angled 20 degrees towards the instrument. This configuration provided a full presence of the instruments without an overly percussive attack. With the microphones positioned, it was possible to begin recording.

The engineer set up a click track at the marked tempos, and I wore in-ear monitors set to a low volume to avoid bleed-through. As the guitar parts for prerecording are in score form, I enlarged the score and used bright-colored Post-It notes to mark the part I would play for each recording pass. We chose to record all of the marimba parts to the three movements followed by recording the vibraphones in movements two and three. It is very important to note that guitars sound one octave lower than written. This should be considered at every step of the way to avoid recording in the wrong register.

"Electric Counterpoint" begins with a 109-measure introduction of undulating eighth notes in guitar parts 3–8 with the two bass guitar parts in octaves. After experimenting with mallets for each guitar part to achieve a full, articulate sound throughout the marimba's range, we recorded guitar 3 first, and added each part successively from the beginning to measure 109.[5] As each part was recorded, the click track was gradually reduced in the in-ear monitors so I could perform with my own playing. This process was continued until the click track was completely eliminated by the time we recorded the bass parts.

At measure 102, guitar 1 enters with a four-bar ostinato that repeats 37 times. To guarantee consistent and even repetitions, we recorded the ostinato's crescendo and then four repetitions (four measures of crescendo and 16 measures of ostinato). After listening to playback and ensuring the ostinato was perfectly aligned with the click track, we began the process of layering each guitar entrance by recording the crescendo and then four repetitions of the new ostinato. Guitars 1, 3, 5, and 7 were recorded first, as they share the same rhythm, and guitars 2, 4, and 6 were recorded next as they also shared a rhythm. Guitar 8 was recorded next as it has a figure that is played by the live guitar part, but a perfect fifth below. This four-bar pattern is repeated twice before developing into the same rhythmic pattern as guitars 1, 3, and 5. After two repetitions at a *forte* dynamic, the part decrescendos for four measures into the texture while guitar 7 crescendos with the same rhythm but a perfect fifth above. Guitar 7 was then recorded in the same fashion.

The ostinato patterns now established in guitars 1–8 were all placed together and checked for vertical rhythmic and dynamic consistency. The key change at measure 250 was recorded in a similar fashion, with guitars 1, 3, 5, and 7 recorded in succession, followed by guitars 2, 4, 6, and 8. When the original key returns at measure 290, the recording engineer copied the previous eight parts until measure 326. From measure 326–329, each part has a diminuendo. Each part's diminuendo was recorded separately to provide an organic sound, as opposed to lowering the dynamic within the DAW.

Guitars 9–10 and the two bass guitar parts have undulating eighth notes intermittently from measure 214 to measure 324. Each part was recorded continuously while listening to guitars 1–8 without a click track. Because guitar 9 has a three-note chord and guitar 10 has a two-note chord, each note of the chord was recorded individually, resulting in 15 individual tracks for the first movement.

Movement two is primarily comprised of a canon in guitars 1–9, a technique typical of Reich's compositions.[6] This canon, as on the Stoyanov and Kato recordings, was recorded on vibraphone. We chose to record guitars 10–12 and the bass guitars on marimba, and did so before moving to vibraphone in order to keep the microphone and marimba placements. The second movement is multi-metered with a repeating three-measure motive in 3/4, 5/8, and 4/4. Once the engineer set up a click track, we recorded the marimba parts—intermittent repeated sixteenth-note chords that crescendo and decrescendo in and out of the canonic texture. Guitars 11–12 had two-note chords and were recorded separately.

Movement three begins in e-minor with a one-measure ostinato in guitar 1 that repeats until measure 73. Sixteen measures of this part were recorded and then repeated by the recording engineer. Guitars 2 and 4 were recorded similarly to guitar 1. Guitar 3 has a brief five-measure construct before the ostinato is completed and repeated until measure 73. The first key change to c-minor takes place at measure 74, and guitars 1–4 were recorded in the new key. The key changes 14 times with decreasing repetitions of the ostinato until the end of the work. The engineer copied each part through each key change. It is important to note a rest in guitar 2 on beat one of the first measure, which reoccurs at each key change. It was necessary to double check that this rest was represented with each copy of the ostinato. Additionally, guitar 2 at measures 117–128 has new material that was recorded separately. From measure 134 to the end (measure 140), each part was recorded in succession, as the parts were also different from the previous ostinato.

After completing the recording process for guitars 1–4, we recorded the two bass guitar parts, which create the prominent collective bass line that is most recognizable in this movement. This begins with an eight-measure construct before the overlapping bass guitar parts are fully realized. These parts were recorded continuously without editing, as the dynamics and meter changes back and forth from 3/2 to 12/8. After recording the bass parts, we positioned the vibraphone for the final portion of the prerecording process.

We made minor changes to the microphone positioning for the vibraphone but made significant equalizer (EQ) changes from the marimba in the DAW settings. The high frequencies were reduced significantly and we chose to boost the middle-range frequencies to create an EQ level that reduced the heavy vibraphone resonance created in the recording space. Once these settings were made and the mallets selected, we recorded guitars 1–9 in movement two and Guitars 5–7 in movement three.[7]

Movement two consists of a three-measure canon that begins in guitar 1. This mournful slow movement, remaining in c-sharp-minor throughout, transfers nicely from electric guitar to the vibraphone. The canon is intermittently interrupted by guitars 10–12 and the two bass guitar parts before fading to the *attaca* of movement three. This movement serves as contrast to the fast first and third movements.

Setting up the multi-meter click track proved very useful, as the nine parts of the canon become dense with each addition. We chose to record each part in its entirety in order to capture the crescendo entrance and decrescendo at the conclusion of the movement. As the three-measure motive repeats numerous times in each part, the engineer used the talkback microphone heard only in my in-ear monitors to assist me with keeping track of the number of repetitions for the recording.

As the majority of movement three was recorded on marimba, all that remained was guitars 5–7, which I recorded on vibraphone. These guitar parts are both chordal and sustained and were well suited for vibraphone. However, because guitar sounds one octave lower than written and the E at the bottom of the guitar range is below the standard three-octave low-F vibraphone, this section needs to either be transposed to written pitch or prerecorded on a low-C vibraphone. Because I did not have a low-C vibraphone, nor would the majority of venues at which I would perform the work, I recorded these chords at written pitch. The live part establishes each of the three chordal vibraphone parts at measure 36. Finding a blend between the recorded marimba and vibraphone required the engineer to spend time with a variety of EQ techniques at the end of the recording process.

After the final tracks were recorded, we listened to the completed recording to make adjustments in EQ. Compression was added in places to bring out melodic entrances. Reverb was added with limited pre-delay to preserve the attack of the mallets on the marimba and vibraphone. This gave a concert hall-like resonance to the recording. Additionally, we used the post-production plugins Precision Enhancer[8] and Precision Limiter,[9] which gave more overall presence by adding high-frequency boosts. The final adjustment was to pan the odd-numbered guitar parts to the left speaker and the even-numbered guitar parts to the right speaker. The end result was clarity of each guitar entrance and an overall stereo effect that would leave the solo part center stage with the entrances on either side of the performer.

PERFORMING LIVE

In performance, I play with in-ear monitors set to a moderate volume, allowing me to hear the live marimba and vibraphone sound against the prerecorded parts in the in-ear monitors. An audio engineer starts the track and balances the levels during a soundcheck. I focus on equating mallet heights to the necessary dynamic, and should there be balance issues in performance, I discuss with the audio engineer in advance where the solo part should indeed be solo and when it's part of the

texture. Although there is a certain degree of EQ in the prerecording, the live audio engineer is encouraged to balance natural reverb with the live instruments and the prerecorded track. As the piece was composed for electric guitar, a more ideal live performance setting would be to place microphones on the marimba and vibraphone and mix the live instruments with the prerecording. I've performed the work in four different venues but have played acoustically with no live instrument amplification.

Realizing "Electric Counterpoint" for marimba and vibraphone required approximately six hours of recording time and three additional hours of post-production. The recording engineer ultimately provided three different mixes of the recording with different settings and levels to choose from in different live music settings. Additionally, I asked for mixes of the work dividing the movements into individual tracks and another mix with the click track added for rehearsal purposes.

To date, Steve Reich hasn't written for solo percussion, but adapting his "Counterpoints" serves as a viable option for percussionists to perform his compositions in a solo setting.

ENDNOTES

1. Steve Reich, "Electric Counterpoint" (London: Boosey & Hawkes, 1987).
2. Steve Reich, *Writings on Music, 1965–2000*, ed. Paul Hillier (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 145–146.
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James W. Doyle serves as Associate Professor of Music at Adams State University, where he teaches percussion, world music, and directs the Brazilian, steel pan, and percussion ensembles. James has performed and presented clinics throughout the U.S., Australia, Japan, Southwest Asia, Africa, and at PASIC. James served as principal percussionist with the USAF Band of the Golden West and was a member of the Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra. He performs with the Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra, San Juan Symphony, and as a commercial artist throughout the Rocky Mountain region. James earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and serves on the PAS University Pedagogy Committee. PN

Vibraphone Pedaling Technique

By Giovanni Perin

The vibraphone is, together with the tubular bells, the only percussion instrument equipped with a damper pedal. The mechanics, although much more rudimentary, are very similar to that of the piano: a bar covered in felt, silicone, or gel, operated by a pedal that, when pressed, detaches the felt from the keyboard, allowing the bars to vibrate freely. Unlike the piano, on the vibraphone the height of the pedal from the ground can be adjusted with the telescopic rod beneath it, and the resistance of the spring to foot pressure can be tightened or loosened. This also allows control of the distance between the keyboard and the damper. In modern models, the position of the damper to the bars can also be adjusted.

Often, especially in orchestras or ensembles, the score does not annotate the pedaling; therefore, its use will be at the discretion of the performer, who chooses according to his or her own aesthetic sense and musical ear. It is important to know how to effectively use the pedal to obtain clear melodic lines and avoid unpleasant and confused clusters.

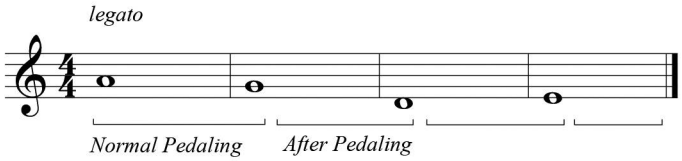
Early vibraphonists, such as Lionel Hampton and Red Norvo, used the pedal primarily to lengthen the sound of notes, but it can also be used, as pianists are wont to do, to improve the phrasing (e.g., to tie the notes together) and articulate melodic lines to obtain logical and balanced harmonic phrases. Where there is no annotation, remember to pedal the melody, not the accompaniment, and pay attention to second intervals, especially minor seconds, because they can create unpleasant clashes of sound—especially with high notes.

One of the most common errors made by beginners is pressing the pedal all the way to the ground, which is a huge waste of energy. Moving the damper a few millimeters, so that it detaches from the bars, is enough. The pedal can be adjusted in height; the distance of a centimeter and a half between the base and the floor is more than sufficient for optimal sound control.

In order for the bar to resonate, the pedal should be lowered immediately before striking it: the movement of the pedal is thus coordinated with the lowering of the mallet.

There is also a technique called *half pedaling*, which consists in lowering the pedal a little bit, but keeping the damper lightly on the bars, producing a slight sustain of the note struck. Half pedaling, applied repeatedly, especially in fast passages, produces a good legato phrase because the slight prolongation of the sound creates the glue between one note and another. Because of the constant movement of the damper, half pedaling is also known as *flutter pedaling*. Flutter pedaling allows one to get singable and expressive phrasing like a wind instrument or a singer.

Finally, there is *after pedaling*, when the pedal is pressed immediately after striking the note with the mallet, producing a slight "mechanical" crescendo. The technique can be used to connect two or more notes together. In fact, the traditional way of using the pedal to prolong the sound of two long notes produces a gap between the two sounds; it is equivalent to the moment in which the pedal is raised at the end of the first note and then lowered while the next is hit. If, after you hit the first note and lower the pedal, you raise the pedal while striking the next note and then apply after pedaling, two notes will be legato. In fact, the bar has a slight sustain, even when muted, which will be similar with the prolonged sound of after pedaling.



Usually, scores do not specify which pedal technique to use. So let your experience, the musical context, and your ears guide you in selecting the most effective technique and style for the music to be performed.

Giovanni Perin graduated with honors with David Friedman at the University of Arts (Berlin); he also received a bachelor's and master's degrees from the Italian Conservatory of Classical Music. As a vibes player he has won many prestigious international jazz competitions and has played extensively in festivals, radio programs, and TV shows in Europe, India, the U.S., and Australia with many important musicians such as Dave Samuels, Gert Mortensen, Fabrizio Bosso, Federico Malaman, Ric Fierabracci, and others. He is Professor of Percussion at the Musical High School of Padova and has been invited to give classes on improvisation and vibes/marimba in many conservatories and universities. His vibes scores are published by Norsk Musikforlag. **PN**

A Discussion with Dr. Jon Weber, Michigan State University Drumline Instructor

By Brad Halls

If you've had the opportunity to view the Michigan State University Drumline over the past 20 years, either in person or online, you've seen the work of Jon Weber. Judging by any of the videos from the past five years or so, it is doubtful you would get much disagreement if you said they were one of the top college drumlines in the country. Intricate parts, refined technique, large numbers, and clean—they are always well-prepared and enjoyable to watch.

In addition to his work with the drumline, Jon Weber also teaches applied percussion lessons, percussion ensemble, and salsa band. He has presented clinics at the Collegiate Band Directors National Association Symposium, Yamaha Sounds of Summer Program, and served as a panel clinician at PASIC multiple times. Weber received his DMA in percussion performance from Michigan State in 2008.

I recently had an opportunity to sit down with Jon and discuss his background, influences, and his career at Michigan State University.

Brad Halls: *Tell us a little about yourself, your early influences, and how you came to choose music education as a career.*

Jon Weber: I started playing percussion in 8th grade. I went to my first drum camp as a freshman in high school in 1986. I was the first student to arrive, and I found a bunch of people sleeping in the band room. These people turned out to be Suncoast Sound; they were staying and rehearsing at my high school. In 1986, they were one of DCI's great drum corps. I was amazed watching them and the other corps perform that night. I got some VHS and audio tapes of DCI, and I loved it. I started watching, transcribing, and practicing a lot from that day on! I joined a small drum corps in Oklahoma, Black Gold, in 1987, and I eventually marched with the Santa Clara Vanguard in 1992. I came to Michigan State University in 1996 as a teaching assistant for the drumline. The position became full-time in 2001; I have now been teaching the MSU Drumline for 21 years.

Initially, I didn't choose music education as a career or as a major at Oklahoma State University. I was a business major, but I was participating in concert bands, percussion ensemble, college drumline, and drum corps. After a year in college, I realized I loved everything I was doing in music, but I didn't love what I was doing in business. It really was an easy switch for me; I just followed what I loved to do.

BH: *Who have some of your biggest teaching, performing, and writing influences been, and why?*

JW: As a high school student, I loved a lot of the top drum corps, but I really gravitated towards the Blue Devils and Santa Clara Vanguard. Of course, we didn't have as many resources as are available today; it really wasn't possible for me to get sheet music of the different groups, so I transcribed the best I could. I did this a lot for the music of Tom Float and Ralph Hardimon. Transcribing is an incredibly valuable exercise and allowed me to get a handle on what different writers were doing. Today we have some great apps that can assist with transcription. Apps such as Audacity, Adobe Audition, Transcribe, and many more, slow down audio files and video without the sound distorting much.

I still love Hardimon's and Float's writing. Hardimon's ability to create colors, lyricism, style, expression, and groove with a percussion section is amazing; it still motivates me! There are many great composers/arrangers today; I am inspired by the musicianship and creativity of many in DCI, college, and WGI, including Tom Aungst, Bret Kuhn, Tom Rarick, Thom Hannum, Mike Jackson, and more. Some of my teachers who have influenced me in the drumline world, listed chronologically, are Larry Anderson, Wayne Bovenschen, Scott Johnson, Kevin Murray, Walter Powell, and many more.

I listen to and perform a wide variety of music, which adds to the palette, and I have written pieces influenced by prog metal to guaguancó to chamber percussion music. I should make clear that people should not plagiarize; I am stating that simply listening to a wider variety of music can give a broader spectrum of ideas that inspire.

Photo by Kurt Stepnitz

BH: *You just celebrated your 20th anniversary of teaching at Michigan State. Could you share some strategies for long-term success at a university program?*

JW: I love MSU. It is a great place, and the marching band has been wonderful. I have had so much support from John Madden, the marching band director, from day one. Support from the band's leaders and a unified vision from all staff members is, of course, paramount. John Madden is a talented musician and director. Whether he writes the horn charts or drill or has a member of our team do it, the MSU Drumline is given every chance to be successful.

Our alumni have been vital to what we

achieve. I regularly see people come back who played in each decade since the 1960s. And so many of them give back and support the drumline by coming to football games and performances, helping financially in a number of ways, serving as mentors, and being friends with current drumline members. Giving back is important, and we are all indebted to each other and MSU for giving us the opportunity to perform together as a drumline. This relationship is especially meaningful.

Probably the most important aspects are that I ask the students to work hard to achieve excellence, enjoy our time together, and treat each other with respect. I expect the same from my teaching assistants and myself. If we commit to these things, we have a chance to succeed.

BH: *Could you share some of your career highlights with the MSU Drumline?*

JW: It always begins and ends with the students in the drumline and the marching band. These are great people who do great things in and out of the world of music. Every game day is a great experience. We have played for Bands of America, PASIC, Days of Percussion, clinics across the Midwest, the Rose Bowl and many other bowl games, and the College Football Playoff. I love our alumni band weekend, when many alumni come back and share a weekend with the current drumline. The groups play for each other every year, and some alumni join back in for some of the pieces we have played for years, like "Ditty" and "Martian Mambo."

BH: *Do you make a conscious effort to give the MSU drumline a unique look and sound? How important is it for a college percussion section to have its own identity?*

JW: Good question! One of our goals is to create something unique. Our identity is in the way we look, the way we sound, the pieces we play, our instrumentation, how we tune, how we perform, etc. We do our best to keep the tradition of our alumni; for example, we have drums with Mylar heads for our pregame show, and we play, in general, the same parts that have been played for more than 50 years. We also play pieces written for the drumline in the 1960s, pieces written for DCI lines in the last 20 years, and a lot of music written for the current drumline. We embrace the music and visual elements handed down from our alumni, and we build on it with new works that are technically demanding and entertaining.

We do play some pieces that were premiered by DCI drumlines. I chose to play these pieces because I think they are really good works for drumline: "Martian Mambo" by Murray Gusseck and "Ditty" by Kevin Murray are pieces we play. Just like an interpretation of an orchestra or chamber work might vary from one group to another, we play "Martian Mambo" differently than the Santa Clara Vanguard did years ago. How we perform it is part of our identity. I have also written many pieces for the MSU Drumline, such as "X" and our annual "3rd Quarter Cheer." For us, this combination of tradition and new works is significant.

Photo by Lisa Nelson

"Sparty" joins the drumline for the third-quarter cheer, where the drumline performs for the student section between the third and fourth quarters of home football games.

Tap to play Video

BH: *You regularly teach music majors in a concert setting and both majors and non-majors in a marching band setting. Could you share some strategies for achieving success in both worlds? Are there any synergies between the two?*

JW: First, music is music; I believe that there are connections with all of us across the world who sing or play music. All musicians are trying to connect with an audience; this could be emotion, imagery, dance, character, thoughtfulness, or so many other things. Of course, different settings of music require different skills. The basic strategy I employ is this: if a person is going to seriously perform or write music, that person should study, listen, and research that style of music to find historical trends, performance practices, and approaches to that genre.

Marching percussion, when done well, teaches great rhythm, listening skills, and physical dexterity. The touch and approach for marching percussion does differ from many other percussive styles for many reasons, including the performance venue (typically in large outdoor stadiums) and trying to achieve a very articulate sound for clarity. I believe that marching percussion can be a great foundation for developing a well-rounded percussionist; I know people who play professionally on drumset, hand drums, orchestral percussion, Broadway, keyboard percussion, and more who gained valuable experience playing marching percussion. Students should realize that every genre of percussion requires time and dedication to achieve excellence.

Dr. Weber warms up the drumline on Adams field prior to marching to the stadium for a home football game. This pre-game warmup is a fan favorite, and the bleachers surrounding the field are always packed.

Tap to play Video

Band Beat Day 2016

BH: *Could you describe your approach to writing?*

JW: Composing can be a difficult and painstaking process, and I have taken many different approaches. Sometimes I start with a unifying concept or style, other times I begin with a lick or motive and develop outward. Since most of the arrangements I do for the marching band have completed wind parts, I consider the following:

1. I find it can be helpful to write a map of the basic form and orchestration, dynamics, style, etc. A simple version might look like Example 1. This helps organize before you start writing. I have found that creating a chart like this generally helps create longer phrases and more holistic writing. This is analogous to creating an outline before writing a paper.

2. Try to give the performers something that they are excited to play. This could be phrases that are rhythmically interesting, have a great groove, employ some nice colors, dynamics, techniques, etc. Many times, beginning writers will try to make music interesting by inserting too many technical demands; this often gets in the way of other elements of the music. By establishing the musical goal of a section of music, you can think of how every instrument contributes towards that goal.

3. Writing takes time, and if I have any advice to people starting to write, it is to take time with it and be willing to make changes. Even if I have worked for a long time on a section, if that part of the piece is not working, I am willing to throw it out and start over. It is rare that all of my first ideas are my best ideas. Being able to let go of a section that isn't quite working has made me a much better composer/arranger!

BH: *MSU, like many college bands, learns an entirely new show for every home game. Could you share some strategies for arranging percussion parts that are interesting and challenging for the performers, but can also be learned and memorized quickly?*

JW: Patterns, repetition, and layering! Like many college bands, we have one or two weeks to learn most shows. Study the form of the piece first; create a chart like the one in Example 1 if you can. If the A section or chorus comes back, the drumline could repeat that section. Or, if it is louder, just add a lower bass drum or cymbals while the other sections repeat. Layering is a good way to create variety in the music while making it easier to memorize. Ostinatos can be very effective musically and simple to memorize.

BH: *How have the evolving worlds of DCI and WGI affected college drumlines, and MSU in particular?*

JW: We have certainly been influenced by groups in DCI, WGI, and other universities. We have played pieces composed by Murray Gusseck

Example 1

Measure #	Counts	Dynamic	Orch – Winds	Orch – Perc	Notes
42–45	16	mp	Flutes/clarinets/alto sax	Tenor	Tenor colors / shapes, misterioso
46–49	16	mp <	" " "	Snare	Consequent phrase – snare response, cresc. into next phrase
50–53	16	mf	Add low brass / tenor sax	Tenor / bass	Bass 8th note ostinato support low brass
54–57	16	mf <	Growing – high brass	Add snare	Snares layer in from p
58–59	8	f < ff	Tutti	tutti cresc	Unison writing
60–61	8	ff > f	Tutti	Dim	Diminuendo roll, bottom bass keeps time

PHOTO BY LESA NELSON

2016 MSU snare line rehearsing.

and Kevin Murray for years. I attend DCI Finals in Indianapolis every year and enjoy seeing the performances, creativity, and trends. It is exciting to see great drumlines in different venues. I loved watching the North Carolina A&T State University Cold Steel Drumline at PASIC this past year.

We generally have about 10 members each year who participate in DCI/WGI groups. Since more students in Michigan are participating in WGI with good instruction, there are more strong players coming in to audition.

Two of our alumni, Merritt Lutz and Joel Leach, wrote our street cadence called "The Series" in the early to mid-1960s. Aptly named, it is a series of cadences, at a little over four minutes long, that we use for parades and the march to the stadium. Some of the cadences are original, but some of them were based off of drum corps from that time: the Skokie Indians, the Cavaliers, and others. Of course, this predates DCI and WGI.

BH: *Talk about the audition process you use at MSU for both marching band and concert percussion.*

JW: I have been using the same basic process for some time now. I have the following goals for our auditions: (1) Find the most qualified people for the drumline in a fair, transparent process. (2) Give everyone auditioning a good and educational experience. The second goal can be difficult, considering that the people who audition unsuccessfully to make the drumline are not going to enjoy the experience as much.

We have two audition days, usually two weeks apart, in late April and early May. The first audition day is strictly about feedback and trying to help everyone. Sections play all day; teaching assistants, section leaders, and I listen to individual auditions where each person plays exercises, a performance piece, and some sight reading. After we listen to all of the people audition on an instrument, we talk to each individual, letting him or her know exactly where he or she stands, and areas where they can improve. Each person can ask questions. We do not make any cuts on that first day, but I will tell individuals if they do not have a good shot to make an instrument.

The second day is much more about the first goal; we are just trying to make sure that we have the right people for each instrument. This is more ensemble—playing within subsections and the full line. We play pieces that the section plays in the fall; this helps with learning the large amount of music we need to learn each year. I talk to the teaching assistants, section leaders, and band directors about the people auditioning, making sure that we agree on decisions. At the end of the day, I talk to each person auditioning about the results. This is time-consuming and at times difficult—some of the students have worked very hard and are upset if they don't make it—but I think it is worth it to be clear, fair, transparent, and, most importantly, to let them know that we care about them and the work that they put in. Due to this entire process, students are not surprised at results, understand our decisions, and many times re-audition the following year if they did not make it this year.

BH: *Could you talk about the rehearsal process you use at MSU with the drumline?*

JW: We have to learn so much music quickly; I depend a lot on the students to do a lot on their own. If possible, we begin with sub-sectional time and build up to the full drumline, and then the full band. I will often give them a couple of minutes to individually hack through a new section of music. Repetition is incredibly important to memorization. I count on the students to do a lot of musical evaluation on their own; they are focused on rhythmic accuracy, dynamics, quality of sound, balance and blend, etc. As a teaching staff, we guide them and give them tools to become more self-sufficient.

Chunking is an important process. Chunking, a term coined in the 1956 paper by George Miller titled *The Magical Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two: Some Limits on our Capacity for Processing Information,* is the concept of breaking down a larger amount of information into smaller bits, combining those bits into a larger single bit of information, and then combining those until you have one whole. A rudiment is an example of chunking. As suggested in the title of his paper, most humans can retrieve up to around seven, plus or minus two, bits of information before cognitive tasks begin to be compromised. To a beginner, a pata-flafla is a lot of information—certainly more than seven items. Grace notes, multiple bounces, sticking, approach are all individual elements to consider. After time practicing/assimilating these elements and combining

Tap to play Video

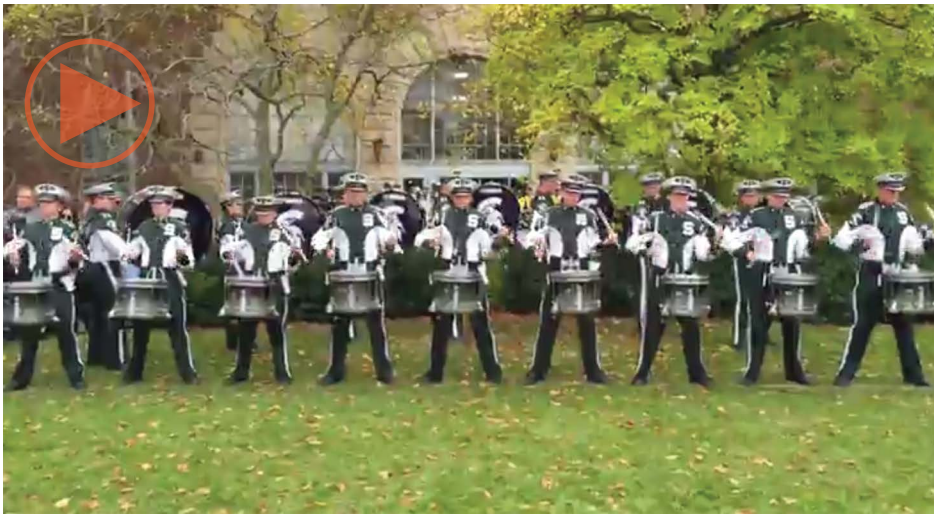


Photo by Jim Barry

MSU drumline performing in the Disney parade at the 2013 Rose Bowl.

these elements into one concept, it becomes one bit of information. To an experienced percussionist, a pata-flafla is a singular concept that can easily be added to any longer phrase. Chunking is a fantastic way to construct a piece for memorization and definition.

BH: *MSU is known for maintaining a healthy "pipeline" of incoming percussion talent. Could you talk about how you manage and maintain that pipeline?*

JW: I recognized early that we didn't have enough time to work on developing fundamentals in technique, sound quality, etc., as we had to learn seven shows each fall. I also saw that every year at auditions we had hard-working, dedicated people who didn't really have an opportunity to make the drumline because they just didn't have the resources. As a result, I created our help sessions. These are two-hour sessions, once a week, where high school students, MSU students, or anyone can come in and drum with the current MSU drummers. This is great for developing drummers in the area and developing teaching and leadership skills for MSU students. Since most of the returning members attend, we can work on basics that we don't have time to address in the fall. And, of course, it helps people who are interested in becoming better drummers. It is great to see many other college lines have started these, too.

We also have Rudimental Days of Percussion with guest artist instructors from DCI/WGI. We have high school percussion sections play for comments, and then play with the MSU Drumline in sectionals. We have a variety of clinics throughout the event. The MSU Drumline plays at the end of the day for all the students.

We also started the percussion portion of our Performing Arts Camp around six years ago. The camp was founded as a drum major camp more than 30 years ago, but we have added a three-day drumline camp as well. We had over 100 high school percussionists in 2016. We create different drumlines for the different skill levels, and we write custom music for the different groups each year. The camp is another way to get percussionists on campus; we hope to give them three days of good instruction and, most importantly, inspire them to want to learn more!

We foster and maintain positive relationships with high school band directors and percussion instructors. MSU Drumline students teach high school band camps. I teach some private lessons to younger students as my schedule allows, and the students go to schools to teach lessons as well. I also do clinics/summer camps through, among others, the Phantom Regiment and the Yamaha Sounds of Summer program.

BH: *What advice would you give to a high school percussionist in terms of how to prepare for being a music/percussion major in college?*

JW: My first advice is to work hard and to love what you do! I believe most people who truly love what they do and work hard for it will be successful.

Students interested in a college/university music program or drumline should find out as much information as possible about the program they are interested in. You should determine if that university is a good fit for you and what you would like to do. Contact the university to see if it is possible to get a lesson with the professor. While the colleges are evaluating you as a student, you can also evaluate the university, the program, and the professor. There are many great places to study; some teaching styles may be a better fit for you.

Prepare meticulously for your audition. Take lessons with someone that you know will prepare you well, and take notes in the lessons—or record them if it is okay with your teacher. Record yourself! Watch the video, and then just listen while you watch the score. There are some good articles in the *Percussive Notes* archive about preparing for college auditions by Scott Harris (http://publications.pas.org/Archive/dec04/articles/0412.34-39.pdf) and Eric Hollenbeck (http://publications.pas.org/Archive/feb02/articles/0202.40-44.pdf).

Brad Halls performed in the snare lines of the Blue Devils and Phantom Regiment Drum and Bugle Corps and the Michigan State University Marching Band. He was on the percussion staff of the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps from 1988¬–92, winning the DCI high percussion award in 1991 and 1992. Since then, he has been teaching high school drumlines and private students in Michigan. Halls is a member of the PAS Marching Committee, and is a software development manager with Siemens PLM Software in Troy, Michigan. **PN**

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Advice for Your First Drumline Teaching Gig

By Jason Baker

While our careers often comprise a variety of things—teaching, performing, business, or administration—our first professional experiences in music often involve being asked to teach percussion on a part-time basis. This often occurs while in college, or shortly after graduation, and can serve as a source of pocket money, resume building experience, the foundation of a long- term freelance career, or often a combination of these.

My telephone rings frequently during the summer months as I am contacted by local high school band directors looking for college percussionists to teach their summer band camps, fall sectionals, and private lessons. This also occurs late in the fall semester as help is sought with indoor drumlines, solo and ensemble festivals, and state band evaluations. Although a student must possess musical ability, professionalism, and overall maturity to receive a recommendation for these positions, many often have questions about what constitutes best practices in these teaching situations. Not amateurs, but not seasoned professionals, there is still much to consider before their first day with the students.

This article will provide a series of ideas to help college percussion students who are about to begin their career with one of the most common "hired gun" opportunities in our field: the high school drumline.

BEFORE THE GIG

1. Do you have the time?

Let's face it, college percussion students are busy. In addition to academic classes (both music and general education) and practicing a variety of instruments, we often wind up playing in every ensemble in the music department. It might be tempting to say "yes" right away when asked to help with a camp or fall rehearsals, but you must take an honest assessment of your schedule. How far away is the school? Will you still have time to practice at the level you need to for school obligations? Will you be expected to attend weekend performances with the high school and, if so, do any of these conflict with university ensemble performances? Will your academic work suffer?

While it might be exciting to receive a phone call for your first teaching job, I must reiterate what every professor and parent has always said: school (*your* school) comes first. Even though the extra money would be helpful and the experience will look good on your resume, your long-term success will come from finishing your degree with strong grades and maintaining good relationships with your university teachers and ensemble directors so they won't hesitate to write glowing recommendations for fulltime work further down the road. Don't be distracted by the short term; your career is a marathon, not a 5K.

2. What's your role?

In order to be successful, you will need to know exactly what is expected of you. Is this a small school without a permanent percussion teacher where you will be running everything, or will you be working as a "tech" under a percussion director in a larger setting? If the latter, communicate with the percussion director ahead of time to find out exactly what his or her expectations are. Is there a specific style or approach to which they adhere? Will you be responsible for a specific subsection of instruments (snare drums, pit, etc.)? Know your part and play it well.

If it's someone else's program, your job is to amplify that person's vision, instill it with the students through your interactions with them, and stay out of the way when the director is running the show. If it's a smaller program where you have more leadership, it's still a good idea to run everything past the band directors first. Even if they are okay with everything, they will still respect that you asked them.

3. Will you have to write?

While most first-time "tech" positions will not require any writing or arranging, it is always best to ask ahead of time. In addition to show music, this might include cadences or (most likely) warm-up exercises. While this topic would warrant a whole other article, two things are more important than anything else: timeliness and appropriateness. Nothing will lose you a gig faster than students not having the music on time. In fact, find out when the writing is due and manage your time so it arrives to the director *before* it is due. This will automatically set you apart from many other arrangers, and the students can start working on the music before camp starts.

Writing also needs to be appropriate in two ways: the ability of the percussion students and to the needs of the overall band. Especially with younger bands, the ability to write parts that work well musically, and that can be learned quickly, is worth its weight in gold. When writing show music, keep in mind the size of the band versus the percussion section, and that the role of the percussion writing is to help the wind musicians play their parts more confidently.

4. How will you be paid?

Money can be a delicate subject, especially when you are first starting out. It is important to find out up front if you are being paid for your work and, if so, how much and by what method. While money is certainly nice, most of our first experiences in teaching (or performing) are done without pay. If you have never taught before, and are not losing too much money on gas, unpaid work should not be out of the question. It will only get you more (and paying) work—plus, the only way to get better at teaching is by teaching.

If you *are* being paid, find out if there are any specific things that you need to do. Will you need to submit an invoice? If so, to whom and by what date? Will you need to submit a W-9? If so, you can print one at https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf. Be sure to find out exactly what is needed and send it in when (or better yet, *before*) it is due. Creating headaches for a school secretary or running afoul of the band-booster treasurer is a good way to not be asked back the following year—even if you are the next Colin McNutt.

While we're on the subject of paperwork, some school systems will require you to complete a background check before working with students. This could be as simple as filling out a form at the school office or might involve going to the local police department to be fingerprinted. Either way, just add it to the list of questions to ask when you first speak to the director, and make sure that it is taken care of.

AT THE GIG

1. Be professional

Even if you are less than confident going into your first teaching gig, keep yourself on the straight and narrow and you'll land enough work to learn your craft along the way. First and foremost, show up early

> The ability to write parts that work well musically, and that can be learned quickly, is worth its weight in gold.

(not on time, but early) and ask if the band director needs help with anything before rehearsal. Be sure to dress appropriately. If you're going to be outside in the summer months with the drumline, you'll need to wear weather-appropriate clothing. However, leave the T-shirts with the sarcastic phrases and questionable pop culture references at home. Gentlemen, even if it's 110 degrees outside, leave your shirts on. Ladies, keep it conservative as well. Offensive language will get you fired way faster than having a dirty snareline. This isn't your college drumline or drum corps. Think before you say anything—obscenities (intentional or otherwise), how you address the students, and topics relating to politics, religion, or social issues. Just stick with drumming and you'll be fine.

I also recommend not interacting with the students on social media or socializing with them outside of rehearsal. They will probably want to look up to you as a kind of older brother or sister figure. While you certainly want to be a friendly person, under no circumstances are you their friend. Again, just stick to the drumming. Friend requests on Facebook and hanging out with the students after rehearsal won't make the drumline any better, but it could make proving your credibility to the band director difficult down the road. In addition, many schools forbid social-media contact between students and anyone in a teaching position.

2. Know what is expected

Before any camp or rehearsal, check to see what the band director would like the drumline to accomplish. Most of the time, this will relate to what music the band is rehearsing. For example, if the band plans to play the first half of the opener at the end of the first day of band camp at a specific tempo, that should be the central goal during drumline rehearsals that day. Be sure to look at the parts ahead of time and determine any potential problem areas that need to be addressed, and plan *more* time than you need to accomplish the ensemble music goal for the day. Write out a plan for each day, based on how much rehearsal time you will have, and budget how it will be allocated for your various goals—warm-up exercises, show music, and other music (stands tunes, cadences, etc.). Email or show it to the band director and ask for feedback. That way, you will establish strong channels of communication to help the band sound its best and develop a reputation as being an organized team player.

3. It's not all about the drumming

Successful teaching of younger players in any situation often involves getting them to do simple things well. This can relate directly to the music—such as marking time, maintaining accurate stick heights, and control of tempo—but will also involve non-drumming issues that can often be overlooked. For example, make sure the members of the drumline properly care for their instruments, know how to tune their drums, put them in their proper places after rehearsal, and keep the rehearsal space clean. Set proper expectations by always starting rehearsals on time and report any attendance issues to the band director. Establish rehearsal etiquette, such as standing at a set position until instructed otherwise and raising hands in the event of questions.

In addition to establishing a more productive rehearsal environment, such practices will greatly enhance the image of the percussion section and serve as a role model for students in other sections of the band. Student leaders should help in maintaining these standards, as well. You don't have to be a drill sergeant; just be consistent in your expectations.

GENERAL ADVICE

1. Ask for feedback

Asking for feedback from the band director at the end of each rehearsal will help you perfect your craft, and it is another way to build a rapport and demonstrate that you are a team player with an interest in helping the overall band—not just the drumline. Write down any suggestions or goals that are given and work them into your plan for the following rehearsal. Even if some of them go against your best "percussionist instincts," it's best to remember that you are a guest in their house and the band director is usually looking at things from a global perspective that you do not have.

At the end of each band camp or marching season make a list of things that worked well and those that did not—keeping in mind that while each teaching scenario will differ, mindful reflection on past experiences will afford you more options in your next teaching opportunity.

2. Stay in Touch

You want to make sure that your name is the first that comes to the band director's mind when he or she is thinking about future percussion teaching opportunities (or giving recommendations to their colleagues). Provided everything went well during band camp, the fall season, or whatever period of time you worked with the program, maintaining communication can only lead to positive things.

At the end of the fall marching season, be sure to ask about teaching private lessons, coaching the concert band percussion section, or starting a percussion ensemble. Offering non-teaching services like tuning the drums or doing maintenance on any of the gear before a concert or solo and ensemble evaluation is also a good move (being able to fix a faulty timpani pedal will elevate you to sainthood!). Even if you are not being paid (or at least as much as you'd like), you are acquiring the most valuable currency in any business: a good reputation. And all selfishness aside, you'll be doing something to help young people have the best experience possible and helping a band director who is probably overworked and has donated more of his or her own free time to the program than most people will ever know.

Jason Baker is Associate Professor of Music at Mississippi State University, Associate Editor for *Percussive Notes*, and chair of the PAS University Pedagogy Committee. He serves as timpanist with the North Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and is an active soloist, clinician, and freelance musician across the United States. PN

An Alternate Path to Graduate Studies

Going back to school at an older age

By Chris Nelsen

The path from point A to point B typically seems to be a straight, well-defined line. College students who desire a graduate education usually finish their undergraduate studies and immediately go on to graduate school. After graduate school, some students begin work in their chosen fields while others pursue post-graduate opportunities. The vast majority of graduate students are under 30 years of age.

My path from A to B—the pursuit of a master's degree—is far from the norm. The trials, tribulations, victories, and defeats required me to pursue a master's degree in music at the age of 57. In the hope of encouraging other people whose paths also diverge from the typical, I wish to share my story and offer perspectives on being an atypical college student.

In 1982 I graduated from the University of Colorado, earning bachelor's degrees in Music Education and Percussion Performance. I was fortunate enough to start playing percussion in the Colorado Springs Symphony (now the Colorado Springs Philharmonic) before I graduated, and immediately after graduation I opened a very lucrative private teaching studio. Life was good; I had a job in an orchestra, I was making great money teaching privately, and things were about to get even better. The symphony at that time had a policy of paying for half the cost of its members' private lessons. Through an amazingly beneficial turn of events, Cloyd Duff (retired timpanist of the Cleveland Orchestra) relocated to Northern Colorado, and I began studying with Mr. Duff. Despite the fact that each lesson required a three-hour drive, the rich experience was worth every mile, and I continued to study timpani and percussion with him for about three years.

In 1984 I decided to pursue a graduate degree and began the process of applying and auditioning. I had only one school and one teacher in mind: Temple University and the legendary Alan Abel. My audition with Mr. Abel went well, but not quite well enough. Heartbroken, I had no plan B. I continued to study with Mr. Duff, and eventually he suggested that I apply to the Cleveland Institute of Music. In the spring of 1985, I auditioned at CIM and was accepted. The year I spent there was absolutely incredible—the most valuable lesson being what practicing 12 hours a day did for my playing. Unfortunately, for a combination of personal, professional, and financial reasons, I was unable to return for the second year of the program to complete my degree. Back to Colorado Springs I went. I rejoined the symphony and my private teaching studio soon filled.

> It became apparent that I would need to go back to school and get a graduate degree or face the very real possibility of losing my job.

Mr. Duff's schedule of clinics and master classes became very busy by this point, which left little time for me to continue lessons with him. I started studying with Bill Hill, the principal timpanist of the Colorado Philharmonic (the Denver Symphony at that time). Bill is an amazing musician and the most gifted teacher I ever encountered, and it was great to work with him for two years. Along with my private studio, I found an adjunct position, teaching percussion at Colorado College. I now had a small college job, an orchestra job, and a solid private teaching studio. It was also at this time that I met my future wife. Yes, life was good and still getting better.

I soon found out that Opryland USA was producing a Christmas Show in Colorado Springs. The show required a percussionist, and during November and December for the next four years, I earned a small fortune working that show. In 1991, Opryland USA offered me a full-time position in Nashville. This presented a major opportunity for me but required a difficult decision. Should I stay in Colorado and continue with my various endeavors, or should I move my family, which now included a baby boy, to Nashville? After much discussion, my wife and I decided to make the move to Tennessee.

I spent the next two years playing six or seven nights a week. Along the way I picked up a few private students and some freelance gigs, and in December of 1994 we had our second son. Unfortunately, less than a month later management informed me I was being cut back to very part-time work with Opryland USA. I continued to teach and freelance as best I could, but was not making nearly enough money. I resorted to waiting tables to earn enough to continue supporting my family. Sadly, my wife and I grew further and further apart until we divorced in 2003. I continued working as a waiter because I had to; I was facing eight years of child-support, but I made every payment on time.

In 2003 I started playing as a substitute percussionist and timpanist with the Nashville Symphony. I continued my freelance playing and performed in smaller regional orchestras as well. One of the band directors I had played for contacted me about an adjunct position, teaching percussion at a small private university in Nashville: Lipscomb University, where I teach to this day. Life was starting to improve once again. I was playing, teaching, and had a fair amount of stability. In 2014, Lipscomb University added a Commercial Music degree to its curriculum. This provided a tremendous influx of students and new faculty members. As the university faced accreditation, all faculty members who did not have at least a master's degree were flagged. It became apparent that

> One thing that will not hold me back is the fear of being an older student.

I would need to go back to school and get a graduate degree or face the very real possibility of losing my job. In 2016, at the age of 57, I auditioned for Austin Peay State University's master's program.

I had many questions and concerns when I decided to go back to school: Where would I go to school? How would I pay for it? Could I still be an effective student 35 years after being in college? Could I still earn a living and attend school at the same time? How would the students and faculty receive a student my age and, most importantly, would the investment of time, effort, and money pay off in the long run?

Nonetheless, I decided to attend Austin Peay and earn my degree. The campus was less than an hour's drive from my house, and the Professor of Percussion was David Steinquest. Professor Steinquest is one of the finest mallet percussionists in the world, and mallet playing was an area in which I definitely needed work. At 57 years old, I still wanted to improve my playing, not just earn a degree. I was also attracted to the smaller school size where the instructors were more likely to be flexible with scheduling. I was fortunate to have all my classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, allowing me to still teach and freelance. I also can take classes in the summer and will earn my degree in less than 18 months.

Clearly, funding caused some concern. I did not seek a graduate assistantship to pay for school because I couldn't be tied down to the extra work that assistantships require, but being in school only two days per week allowed me to work and teach almost full time and earn enough to pay tuition.

The most frequently asked question I get is, "What is it like to go back to school at your age?" I can honestly say that school is fun. I am a much better student now than I ever was during my younger days. Indeed, I am on a mission to get this graduate degree, something that forces me to be a better student. My life experiences also provide a certain perspective. Subjects that I found boring as an undergraduate and spent little to no time studying are now interesting and relevant. I've found that I am also able to budget my time better between work, school, and practice. The best part of going back to school is the support I have received from the staff, students, and faculty at APSU. I've heard nothing but positive comments, useful feedback, and encouragement, all of which have been crucial to my success. I am still extremely self-conscious about being a student at my age—two generations older than most of the other students and older even than most of the faculty members—but again, the motivation is stronger than the hurdles.

The path from point A to point B for me has been far from a straight line, and that is okay. I take pride in the fact that I have been able to succeed in a very difficult business despite the twists and turns. Of course, I am not sure what the future holds for me. Who does? If I am 60 years old and find I need to get a doctorate, I will cross that bridge then.

The one thing that will not hold me back is the fear of being an older student. I cannot afford to worry about what people think of me, but rather I choose to focus on the many good years I have left in my career.

If you are "older" and thinking about going back to school, go for it! Education is something that cannot be taken from you, and we are never too old to learn something new.

Chris Nelsen is a freelance percussionist and timpanist in Nashville, Tennessee. He performs with many orchestras throughout the Southeast. In addition to his busy performance schedule, he is an active teacher and is currently on the faculty of Lipscomb University. Nelsen holds Bachelor of Music Education and Bachelor of Music in Percussion Performance degrees from the University of Colorado. He has also done graduate study at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Nelsen is currently pursuing a master's degree in Percussion Performance from Austin Peay State University. **PN**

Solo Snare Drum Repertoire: A Survey of the Literature

By Jason Kihle

One of the most challenging aspects of being a university professor of percussion is finding and assessing quality literature in all genres for one's students. Often, though a professor may have substantial knowledge in literature for one or more areas, he or she realizes that a more thorough knowledge of a specific area's literature has to be developed. Though many ways of ascertaining just exactly what literature might be available for any given instrument, such as word of mouth, a review of the PAS recital data base, or random viewings of YouTube videos, a more vetted means of identifying representative, quality solos does exist.

For this study of solo literature for the snare drum, four state-prescribed music lists, each compiled by a team of evaluators, were used to compile a list of quality solos. Due to their subjective nature, none of the lists should be considered the definitive one, nor should any be considered superior to another. Nonetheless, each list can be a potentially useful tool for deepening one's knowledge of the repertoire, for observing trends in new compositions, and for discovering pieces that appear in multiple lists. The lists chosen were those used by the states of Texas[i], Indiana[ii], Florida[iii] and Missouri.[iv] After compiling and comparing the state lists, the information was cross-referenced with the top 20 pieces purchased from Steve Weiss Music.

Pieces that appeared on three or more state lists, as well as in the top 20 purchased, served as the starting point for an investigation of the repertoire. The resulting list was also limited to those pieces graded at the most difficult level, but as Indiana does not assign levels, all of that state's pieces were included. Works that are part of a collection were included if only the title of the book was listed, as one can assume that every etude or solo is recommended in such books. Hopefully, the following compilation of data can be utilized as a starting point for one's exploration of solo snare drum literature, as there are undoubtedly pieces excluded that some would consider essential repertoire.

The following works appeared in all four state lists:

1. *Lonely City Suite* by Jason Baker
2. *Colonial Capers* by John Beck
3. *Three Dances* by Warren Benson
4. *Three Etudes for Snare Drum* by Rupert Kettle
5. *Tornado* by Mitch Markovich
6. *Stamina* by Mitch Markovich
7. *The Winner* by Mitch Markovich
8. *Flamacue Quickstep* by John S. Pratt
9. *Gladstone Cadets* by John S. Pratt

Works found on three of the four state lists:

1. *2040's Sortie* by Alan Abel
2. *The Peach Grove Drummer* by Alan Abel
3. *Igidibick* by Lee Beddis
4. *Six Unaccompanied Solos for Snare Drum* by Michael Colgrass
5. *Douze Etudes* by Jacques Delécluse
6. *Five for Joe* by Dennis DeLucia
7. *American Suite* by Guy Gauthreaux
8. *Style Suite* by Murray Houllif
9. *Phantom Phrenzy* by Marty Hurley
10. *The Phancy Phantom* by Marty Hurley
11. *Crash Landing* by Marty Hurley
12. *The Clave King* by Marty Hurley
13. *Odyssey II* by Mike Lynch
14. *Rhythmic Incantation* by Jeff Moore
15. *Attaching the 4-stroke Ruff* by John S. Pratt
16. *Boston's Drumming Crusader* by John S. Pratt
17. *Buttermilk and Crackers* by John S. Pratt
18. *Coordination* by John S. Pratt
19. *Drum Corps on Parade* by John S. Pratt
20. *Emperor Justinian at Constantinople* by John S. Pratt
21. *Hodge-Podge* by John S. Pratt
22. *My Friend Norman* by John S. Pratt
23. *Swinging the Swiss Pataflafla* by John S. Pratt
24. *Connecticut Halftime*/Traditional
25. *Synco-stix (17+1 Percussion Pieces)* by William Schinstine
26. *4th of July* by Jay Wanamaker
27. *Main Street Strut* by Jay Wanamaker
28. *Spirit of Sanchez* by Jay Wanamaker
29. *Drum Corps on the March* by Jay Wanamaker
30. *Hurricane* by Jay Wanamaker
31. *Crazy Army* by Jay Wanamaker
32. *Bridgemen* by Jay Wanamaker
33. *Bolero for Ed* by Chip Webster
34. *In-Pulse* by Jon Whitlock
35. *Shalá* by Jon Whitlock
36. *Africa Hot* by John Wooton
37. *Rudimental Clave* by John Wooten
38. *Ten Etudes* by Nebojsa Zivkovic

Works ranked as "most popular" at steveweissmusic.com:

While sorting by popularity does not necessarily correlate to performance frequency, the following list of 20 pieces is useful nonetheless as evidence of teacher-performer interest. (It should be noted that Casey Cangelosi's *Sleight of And Evil Hand*, thirteenth in popularity on Steve Weiss, is technically an accompanied piece, as the snare drum is played with metronome, and therefore not included below.)

1. *Tornado* by Mitch Markovich
2. *Three Dances for Solo Snare Drum* by Warren Benson
3. *Prim* by Askell Masson
4. *Pezzo da Concerto* by Nebojsa Jovan Zivkovic
5. *2040's Sortie* by Alan Abel
6. *Six Unaccompanied Solos for Snare Drum* by Michael Colgrass
7. *Composed Improvisation for Snare Drum* by John Cage
8. *Meditation No. 1* by Casey Cangelosi
9. *Kim* by Askell Masson
10. *American Suite for Unaccompanied Snare Drum* by Guy Gauthreaux
11. *Stamina* by Mitch Markovich
12. *Test Claire* by Jacques Delecluse
13. *Two Dances for Snare Drum* by Kevin Bobo
14. *Lonely City Suite* by Jason Baker
15. *The Winner* by Mitch Markovich
16. *Four Southern Sketches* by Jason Baker
17. *Snare and Rim* by John H. Beck
18. *Africa Hot* by John Wooton
19. *Tchik* by Nicolas Martynciow
20. *Walkin' Down Coolidge* by Joseph Tompkins

Works from at least three state lists that were also in the top 20 most purchased at steveweissmusic.com:

1. *2040's Sortie* by Alan Abel
2. *Lonely City Suite* by Jason Baker
3. *Three Dances for Solo Snare Drum* by Warren Benson
4. *Six Unaccompanied Solos for Snare Drum* by Michael Colgrass
5. *American Suite for Unaccompanied Snare Drum* by Guy Gauthreaux
6. *Tornado* by Mitch Markovich
7. *Stamina* by Mitch Markovich
8. *The Winner* by Mitch Markovich
9. *Africa Hot* by John Wooton

Only five of the most popular purchased pieces on

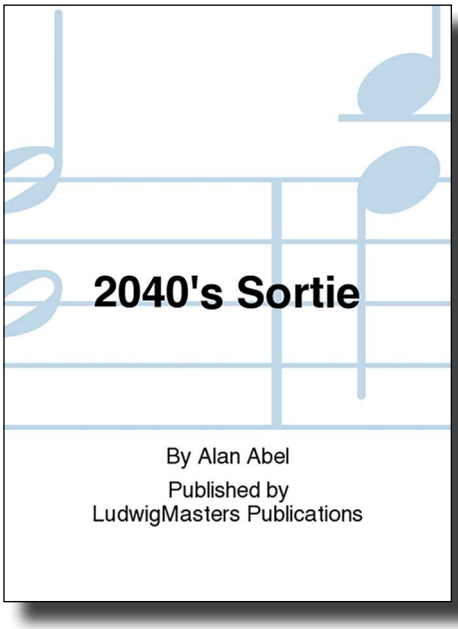
Steve Weiss appear in all four state lists: *Lonely City Suite* (number 14), *Three Dances* (number 2), and *Tornado, Stamina*, and *The Winner* (numbers 1, 11 and 15).

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE TOP NINE SOLOS

The following descriptive summaries of the final list of nine compositions are intended to aid those who are not familiar with these works.

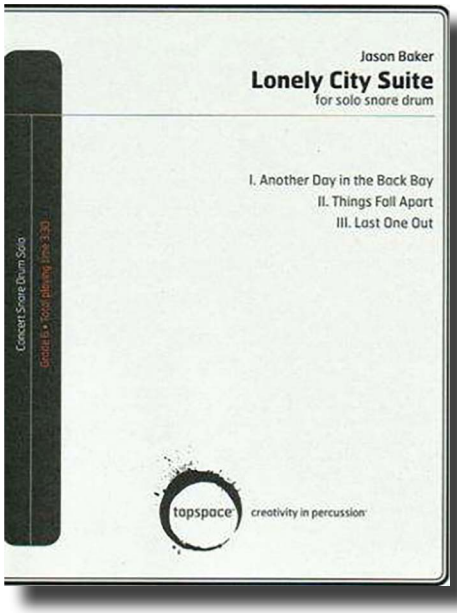
2040's Sortie
Alan Abel, 1950
Ludwig Masters Publications

Dedicated to VFW Post 2040, Coshocton, Ohio, this rudimental *tour de force* is copyrighted 1950 but was the piece played by Abel when he was the National V.F.W. Champion in 1946 and 1947. Various challenges abound, including abrupt changes in dynamics, from *ff* to *pp* and then building back again, and rapid thirty-second-note passages at quarter = 110.



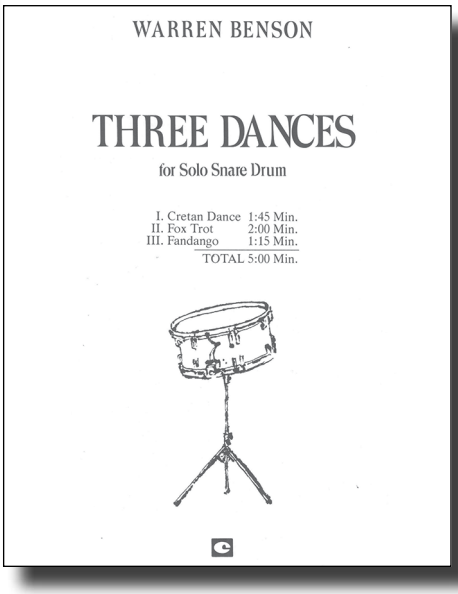
Lonely City Suite
Jason Baker, 2006
Tapspace Publications

Written from fragments of snare drum phrases compiled when the author was "desk ridden," this three-movement suite is timed at three-and-a-half minutes, is primarily orchestral in style, and requires mastery of extreme dynamics and a sensitive touch. The first movement, "Another Day in the Back Bay," contains mixed meters and broken micro rhythms throughout. Rapid changes in dynamics require a virtuosic touch. The title of the second movement, "Things Fall Apart," is taken from a book by African author Chinua Achebe. It is a mixed-meter funeral march that begins at *ff* and ends at *ppp*. The third movement, "Last One Out," is written at a fast tempo and is intense, building to a *ff* conclusion.[v]



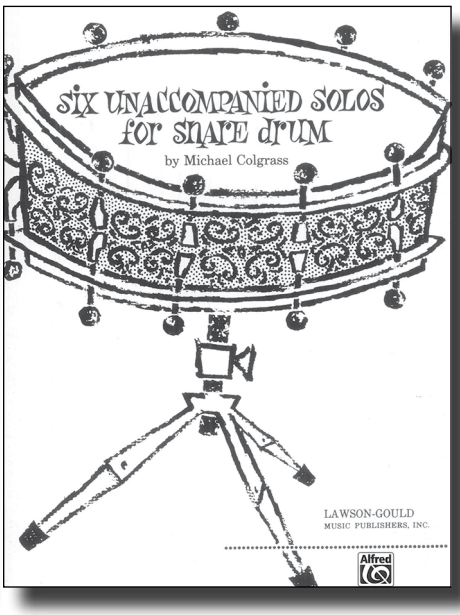
Three Dances for Solo Snare Drum
Warren Benson, 1961
Chappell/Intersong Music Group/Hal Leonard

Being a percussionist early in his career ingrained in Warren Benson an awareness of the possibilities of creating different sounds on one percussion instrument.[vi] This versatility is exploited in full in *Three Dances for Solo Snare Drum,* a solo that is primarily orchestral. The first movement, "Cretan Dance," is in 5/4 and drives with a focus on different tones. The second movement, "Fox Trot," has a light and playful character by virtue of the style. The third, "Fandango," is an example of a technique where the first stick strikes the second while the second rests on the head and rebounds freely, creating two sounds on the second and one on the first.



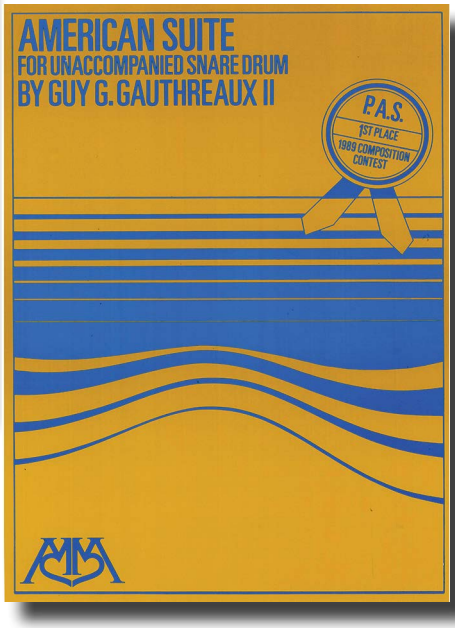
Six Unaccompanied Solos for Snare Drum
Michael Colgrass, 1957
Alfred Publishing Company

This work for orchestral snare drum was written at the request of the publisher. Colgrass says that he wanted to write for the snare drum in ways for which it had not yet been written. The example he gives is writing staccato and tenuto markings, which Colgrass says "is almost ridiculous, because you go tap and the drum goes tap." He says that in working with Paul Price, he worked a lot on creating a different tone production with the stick "by the way you think."[vii] He says it made a difference for the player because the different articulations changed the mood of how the drummer played. Each of the six movements of this piece reflect an attention to detail and markings to get the player to pay attention to phrase.



American Suite for Unaccompanied Snare Drum
Guy Gauthreaux II, 1990
Meredith Music Publications

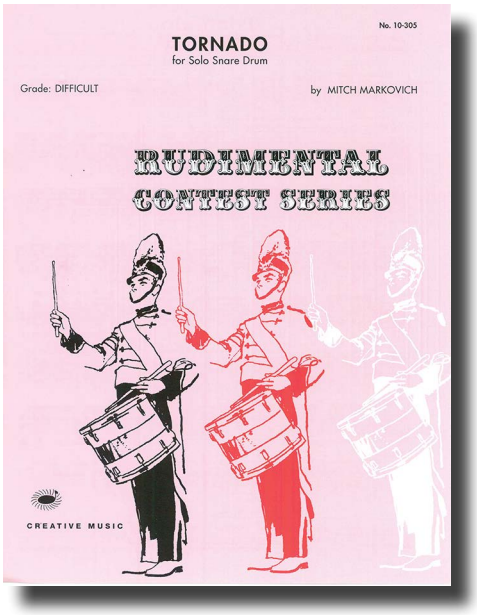
This work won the PAS Composition Contest in 1989 and is in five movements. The composer writes in the foreword, "Each movement offers unique challenges to the performer utilizing many aspects associated with snare drumming in America, includ-



ing jazz, rudimental, ethnic, orchestral, marching, contemporary, and so forth." This work uses a rhythmic motive presented in the first movement that is then developed in the subsequent four movements. All 40 Percussive Arts Society International Drum Rudiments appear in the second movement. Movement three calls for "brushes in a swing style" while continuing to develop the main motive. "Numerous playing areas and special techniques" are used in the fourth movement, which is written in a Latin style.

Tornado, Stamina,* and *The Winner
Mitch Markovich, 1966
Creative Music

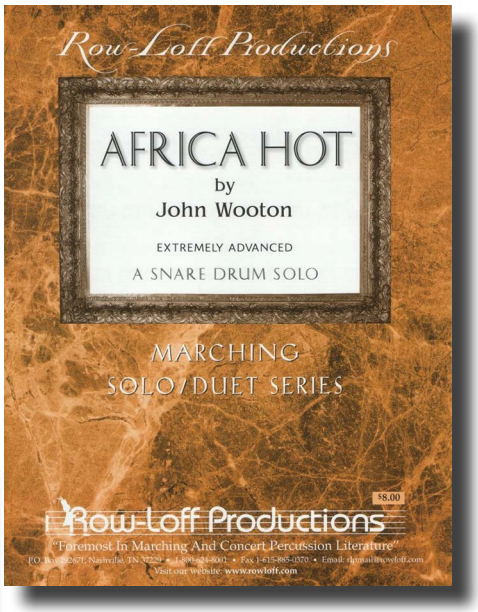
Tornado, Stamina, and *The Winner* are part of a set of ten pieces called *Rudimental Contest Series*. These three works are standard audition pieces for rudimental drumming and present huge technical challenges to the player. In particular, *Tornado* contains a back-sticking section on the last page that requires a high level of technical skill.



Africa Hot
John Wooton, 2000
Row-Loff Productions

An extremely difficult rudimental snare solo, this piece is approximately four minutes long and requires a command of various technical and visual elements. Throughout, this piece is a technical showcase, requiring backwards and fake flams, bouncing one stick with another, a section for optional visuals and various stick flips. The piece also has a playful side, calling for finger snaps, claps, and even striking the side of the open mouth with a hand. There are a variety of different tempos, some of them occurring in rapid succession. All of these elements present challenges in what is a very idiomatic rudimental snare solo. Wooton has a performance of the piece on line that can be used as a definitive reference.

Hopefully this research will serve as a resource for selecting snare drum solos and will spur similar investigations of the repertoire that draw upon information from sources such as those described. An increased awareness of the snare drum literature should allow percussionists to create programs for themselves and for their students that reflect a comprehensive view of the repertoire rather than one limited to those works most often played.



ENDNOTES

i. University Interscholastic League, "Prescribed Music List," http://wwwdev.uiltexas.org/pml (2015–2016), accessed July 21, 2016.

ii. Indiana State School Music Association, "Percussion Solo and Ensemble Manual," http://www.issma.net/downloads/percmanualgrp1.pdf (2013-14--2018-19), accessed July 21, 2016.

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Dr. Jason Kihle is Associate Professor of Percussion and Associate Director of Bands at Texas A&M University–Kingsville. He earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Percussion Performance with a secondary emphasis in Wind Conducting in 2008 from the University of Northern Colorado. Prior to completing his graduate degrees, Dr. Kihle taught elementary music and middle school band in Arizona and Colorado. He currently teaches applied percussion, percussion ensemble, and percussion methods in addition to directing The Pride of South Texas. PN

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New Percussion Literature and Recordings

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Difficulty Rating Scale

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

APPS

Percussion Brazil Vol. 1
Vina Lacerda
$9.99
Web: description

Percussion Brazil Vol. 1 is a smartphone and tablet app that aims to introduce players to traditional Brazilian instruments. It is a very useful app for iPhones and iPads that is available in English and Portuguese and is available in the Brazilian iTunes store: https://itunes.apple.com/br/app/percussion-brazil/id1102407537?mt=8

This volume focuses on instruments used in choro, maxixe, samba, samba de roda, partido alto, and batucada. The app presents the instruments used, the basic rhythmic patterns, and how they are applied to different styles and instruments. Instruments included are pandeiro, tamborim, agogô, ganzá, prato e faca, cuíca, rebolo, repque de anel, repique de mão, repenique, caixa, tantã, palmas, berimbau, surdo, reco-reco de mola, reco-reco de bamboo, atabaque, and frigideira. Each instrument is introduced within an individual and group setting. The app provides video, scores, historical information, technical training, and curiosities. It is essential for students and professionals alike.

—*Joe Millea*

GENERAL METHOD BOOKS

The Rhythm Encyclopedia **III**
Bill Woods
$22.99
Mel Bay
Instrumentation: flexible (e.g., hand drums, drumset)
Web: samples

This is a collection of 6,561 variations on eighth notes in common time. This is not a method of rhythmic study; rather, it's an exploration of sound production and control on your selected instrument.

This book works well with hand drums; the author also suggests using drumset, but I feel that it really shines with congas, djembe, etc. Each measure is made up entirely of eighth notes; the author assigns three "symbols" within each measure indicating bass, open, or slap tones. One might think of it as a "quasi *Stick Control*" book of hand drumming. One of the nicest things about this method is the ability to access online audio files, which the student can use for play-along purposes.

Don't be fooled by the title. You will not find rhythmic variation, but you will find plenty of opportunity to work on your hand-drumming control and sound quality.

—*T. Adam Blackstock*

MARIMBA SOLO

Anthem: To Catch a Glimpse **V**
Gordon Stout
$15.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrument: 5-octave marimba
Web: score sample

Dedicated to Nancy Zeltsman and influenced by the music of Dan Levitan, "Anthem" is another beautiful work by Gordon Stout. This is going to be one of those pieces where a young student listens to the YouTube recordings and decides to play it, not realizing the chops required. The piece has a great groove and is delicate throughout, but it demands excellent interval control of sixths in both hands. There's quite a bit of elbow and arm work, as these intervals move all over the keyboard, but the resulting tonality leads to a beautiful melody.

The technique involved in this piece centers around the need for extreme accuracy. There are no rolls and no insane double lateral section, but it is through-composed, so there's not a lot of repetition. A couple of themes and motives return to connect the work, but not a lot of big sections that "you won't have to learn again." It's about five minutes long and would be great for a second keyboard piece on a recital or undergraduate jury. This one is definitely recommended for the four-mallet keyboard percussion library, but then, which of Stout's pieces aren't?

—*Julia Gaines*

Beija-Flor **VI**
Behn Gillece
$15.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba
Web: score sample

Jazz vibraphonist Behn Gillece brings us this new marimba work. "Beija-Flor," Portuguese for "hummingbird," incorporates lyrical themes and pleasant textures to create a piece that is gentle and playful. The composer does a good job of developing these themes using jazz harmonies, melodic expansion, and the different colors that the instrument is capable of, such as arpeggiated chords and deadstrokes. The piece ends with a restating of the original themes in reverse order.

The only critique that this reviewer has is with the first transitional section, after the opening themes are presented. Here, the performer plays a series of rapid gestures up or down the instrument while gradually accelerating, similar to a cadenza in a concerto. Many of these gestures are not related to material found earlier in the work, nor are they revisited later. This section does not fit the character of the rest of the piece and runs the risk of distracting the audience from the other beautiful melodies and textures.

In terms of technique, this piece is not for the faint of heart. Among other requirements, the performer must use large intervals with wide distances between hands as well as perform quadruple stops moving melodically, all while maintaining lyrical movement and playing at a *mezzo-piano* dynamic or quieter. It takes a high level of musical maturity and technical ability to accomplish what the composer wants.

Nevertheless, Gillece has presented a lovely marimba work that will challenge the technique and musical ability of any professional marimbist or graduate student. In a repertoire that commonly focuses on post-tonality, many audiences will enjoy listening to this.

—*Kyle Cherwinski*

Colorado Springs **IV**
Leander Kaiser
Keyboard Percussion Publications
$12.00
Instrumentation: 4.3-octave marimba
Web: score sample

Leander Kaiser has composed a lively 6/8, four-mallet solo for the intermediate-level marimbist. The a-minor melody is almost exclusively in the upper voice with occasional shifting to the lower voices. Conventional, tonal harmonies provide just the right amount of sophistication so that this solo would be suitable either for a festival, contest, or audition.

Most of the musical challenges are presented in the dynamic shifts—which range from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*—and are tastefully positioned to provide structural clarity. "Colorado Springs" is a solid marimba solo that provides a pedagogical transition from the elementary four-mallet repertoire to the intermediate level. This solo would be very appropriate for the second- or third-year four-mallet marimba student.

—*Jim Lambert*

Morphic Resonance V
Gordon Stout
$15.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba
Web: score sample

"Morphic resonance" is defined as "the idea that, through a telepathic effect or sympathetic vibration, an event or act can lead to similar events or acts in the future or an idea conceived in one mind can then arise in another." As I studied this piece, I found some structural elements that held it together and made it theoretically very interesting to analyze. Repeating elements in either hand, or a recurring motive that would fit the previously mentioned definition, were strategically placed throughout.

As is true with most of Gordon Stout's works, there is no real key center, but there is an element of tonality throughout the composition. Shifting time signatures give the piece a feeling of a tempo, but nothing you could tap your foot to. The one thing missing from this piece is the strong melodic "hook" so obvious in many of his other compositions.

Written for a 5-octave instrument, Stout delicately manipulates melodic material (fragments mostly) throughout the composition, but never really establishes a "main melody" from which he can draw further musical inspiration. The sections are clearly marked, and obvious mood changes give the piece a somewhat formal structure. Maybe this was his plan; however, at ten minutes in length, I kept wanting something to tie the fragments together.

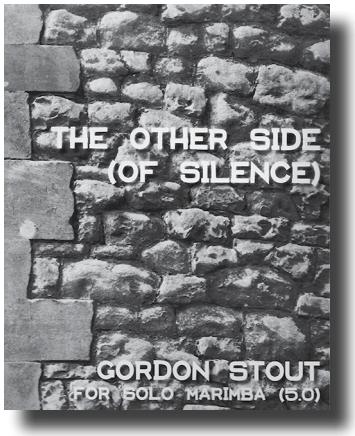
This piece is technically quite difficult and will take a mature marimbist to perform it adequately. Performance directions are extremely limited, so I would implore those performing the piece to work on expanding both their dynamic and interpretive envelopes.

—*Marcus D. Reddick*

The Other Side (of Silence) V–VI
Gordon Stout
$15.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba
Web: score sample

I am always happy to hear of a new work for marimba by Gordon Stout! "The Other Side (of Silence)," a large-scale work, was premiered this past April by Alice (Yun-Ju) Pan at Michigan State University. Clocking in at around eight minutes, "The Other Side" is a joyful, radiant work that will push advanced players' technical ability as well as their sense of pacing. The piece winds its way through several textures, using the entire range of the instruments and a variety of moods. Many playing techniques are used, although the piece remains mostly linear.

At times simple, "The Other Side"



uses the natural resonance of the marimba, employing open chords in a relaxed, spatial texture. At other times, thick, rhythmically complex linear lines are written, sounding rhapsodic and cadenza-like. Stout's signature sound is here, too, although it seems like he was consciously looking for a joyous harmonic palette for this work.

Suitable for advanced graduate degree recitals, the technical demands of this piece are considerable. In addition, the piece will require a mature *musician* to accurately navigate the emotional content of the work and sustain the listener's attention through the piece's twists and turns.

—*Justin Alexander*

Passacaglia VI
Raymond Helble
$18.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba
Web: score sample

Commissioned by Theodor Milkov for his performance at PASIC16, Raymond Helble's "Passacaglia" is a brilliant work that, at 15 minutes in length, would serve well as a cornerstone in a professional or advanced college recital.

"Passacaglia" is presented as a theme with 22 variations and a coda, most of which are 12 bars in length. While the harmonic content of each variation is based on that of the theme, each variation has its own rhythmic identity that is developed organically as the piece progresses. Like most passacaglias, the tempo is slow (marked at 60–66 bpm), but don't let that fool you: this is an exceedingly difficult piece to perform. Throughout the piece, there is a vast array of challenging music, such as extended thirty-second-note passages, meant to be played with one hand, layered atop an oft-changing modern realization of a traditional passacaglia ground-bass accompaniment in the other hand. Exceptional control and independence are required.

While this piece requires technical prowess, that alone is not enough for an effective performance; a great deal of musical maturity is also necessary. Phrases are marked in only three of the 22 variations; thus, it is up to the performer to determine appropriate, effective phrasings for the majority of the work. Very little of this piece lays across the instrument in a familiar manner, and there are no suggested stickings. These observations are not shortcomings, but rather opportunities for individual interpretation.

Although "Passacaglia" is difficult, it is not a flashy, pretentious piece. What Helble asks of the performer is asked in the interest of the music, which is beautiful and powerful. Those willing to put the time and effort into bringing this piece to life will be greatly rewarded.

—*Brian Elizondo*

Two Scarlatti Sonatas V
Domenico Scarlatti
Arr. Mario Gaetano
$10.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba
Web: score sample

Domenico Scarlatti was an Italian composer whose compositional style transitioned from the Baroque into the Classical period, and was best known for his 555 keyboard sonatas. Many of the works show the influence of Portuguese or Spanish folk music, and while he composed primarily for the harpsichord or early fortepiano, many of his musical figurations are suggestive of the guitar. It is no surprise that this music translates well to marimba, which has similar sonic properties (attack, decay, etc.) as the guitar. The solos arranged are "Sonata in G Major K.2 L.388" and "Sonata in E minor K.98 L.325."

For both of these four-mallet solos, performers should expect a workout in their single-alternating strokes, as Mario Gaetano did a good job of arranging notes that were originally written for nimble, quick-moving fingers across a keyboard. And, as is expected of most keyboard works of the late Baroque-early classical period, there is no break in the momentum from beginning to end. Each of the solos lasts around four minutes and packs the melodic and harmonic challenges found in the violin and cello works of J. S. Bach—which is to say, they will eat you for lunch if you don't have your head in the game. As with most music from this period where the music theory contained within is airtight, wrong notes stick out like a neon sign. Slow and patient practice, combined with a formal analysis of each phrase, will serve marimbists well as they prepare for performance.

—*Joshua D. Smith*

MARIMBA SOLO WITH ACCOMPANIMENT

The Russian Marimba Concerto V
Sergei Golovko
€30.00
Edition Svitzer
Instrumentation: 4.6-octave marimba and orchestra (piano reduction)
Web: sample recording

An ode to Russian culture, this 20-minute marimba concerto features many traditional folk songs and depicts historically significant persons and events.

The work is divided into three movements: "Untold Legends," "Stories of Old," and "The Fair Maslenitsa." All focus on traditional melodies and folk songs with a conventional, fast-slow-fast configuration. One of the featured folk songs is "Barynya," which can be heard in the compositions of many Russian composers, including Tchaikovsky, Glinka, and Pakhmutova.

One of the most appealing aspects of this concerto is its idiomatic style—both for the soloist and the piano accompanist. Don't get me wrong, there are plenty of notes; however, the composer has taken great care to ensure that this work may be performed by many, rather than geared towards the virtuoso. The performer must be comfortable with a variety of strokes, including octaves. The idiomatic nature of the writing makes this a "quick learn" and a joy to play.

I believe that this work fills a hole in the world of marimba concerti. There is plenty of challenge, but not at the expense of the performer's sanity. I have no doubt that this charming work will receive many performances.

—*T. Adam Blackstock*

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION DUET

Acquiescent Blues V
Gordon Stout
$36.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: 5-octave marimba and vibraphone
Web: score sample

Written for percussion duo Easthama, "Acquiescent Blues" is a charming and demanding work for marimba and vibes. Clocking in at around 7½ minutes, this piece will be a rewarding journey for performers and listeners.

This piece is a true duet in the sense that no part outshines the other. Some sections feature the vibraphone while others the marimba, and many sections place both instruments on equal footing. Many of these passages involve hocket-style writing between the players, requiring a mature sense of time and rhythmic interpretation from both mu-

sicians. The piece is through-composed, with various sections connected by Gordon Stout's unique harmonic language. Players will contend with a good amount of chromaticism and interesting chord structures throughout the work, but the identifiable themes help to ground the piece.

Mature musicians will be needed for this piece, not only for the number of notes and the advanced harmonic and rhythmic content, but also for the constantly shifting meters. While some sections stay anchored in a single meter, in other areas the meter is in constant flux. The first ten measures alone shift between 7/8, 6/8, 9/8, and 2/8.

Finally, players should note that mallet selection will be a challenge. Stout uses just about every ounce of each instrument, outside of the highest fifth or so of the marimba. Also, one of the main themes of the piece is a small thirty-second-note gesture. This means that mallets will need to be articulate enough to sound out this theme, and at the same time sound good throughout the entire range of the instrument.

With "Acquiescent Blues," Stout has provided percussionists with a wonderful contribution to the continuously growing repertoire of marimba and vibraphone duets. This piece would be at home on an advanced undergraduate recital or a concert with seasoned professionals. Listeners will be in for a harmonically colorful and engaging piece that will satisfy performers and audiences alike.

—Brian Nozny

Ameline **IV**
Eric Sammut
$32.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: vibraphone and 4.6-octave marimba
Web: score sample

Based on the composer's marimba solo of the same name, "Ameline" has been adapted for vibraphone and marimba. Even those unfamiliar with the original work will recognize Eric Sammut's trademark sound of groove-based rhythms and combination of classical and jazz harmonies. The piece comes with two spiral-bound scores, one with the vibraphone part (and smaller-print marimba part) and the other with the marimba part (and smaller-print vibraphone part). While this type of printing is a tremendous aid for the players, the fact that none of the parts stop long enough to facilitate page turning will necessitate either a creative "cut and paste" rearrangement of the score or memorization.

The vibraphone voice, despite carrying most of the melody, is the easier of the two parts and only requires two mallets. The marimba part requires four mallets and provides accompanying rhythms in the same hocket texture seen in the original piece. All the writing is idiomatic and fits well on the instruments. The right hand on the marimba part even doubles the rhythm of the vibraphone part for much of the piece, making ensemble playing (especially in 7/8 time) more intuitive. Not an exact transcription of the original, Sammut uses the additional resources of a second instrument to provide richer harmonies, and a middle section that features a three-note hemiola in the marimba (another carry-over from the original) is highlighted by counterpoint in the vibraphone.

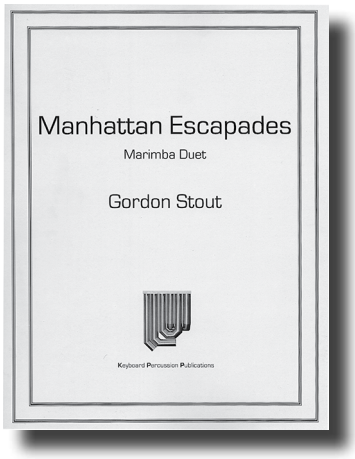
This duet would be appropriate for intermediate undergraduate students or even more advanced performers looking to program a piece with the signature audience-friendly quality for which Eric Sammut is known.

—Jason Baker

Manhattan Escapades **V**
Gordon Stout
$38.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: two 5-octave marimbas
Web: score sample

"Manhattan Escapades" by composer and marimbist Gordon Stout, was written in 2012 and premiered in 2014 by Stout and Kate Burns. Readers may be familiar with Stout's duo "Skylark Orange Circles," which has been become popular over the last decade. By broad comparison, this work is similar in scope and difficulty, though less angular and more perpetually flowing. "Escapades" is set to a more regular metric grid than "Skylark"—composed with city blocks in mind rather than the expanse overhead—yet retains the spontaneity that is Stout's trademark.

At tempo, duration is just under ten minutes. The "escapades" are more than a casual jaunt; they are both sprint and marathon. The eighth-note pulse hovers at 200 to 220 bpm, and with few bars rest (not appearing until the end) you'll be left breathless if not in great technical shape. The published parts are 14 and 16 pages respectively, so page turns are a problem. Both players will need four mallets that can service the entire range of the instrument.



Stout's rhapsodic nocturne is through-composed. Rehearsal letters delineate the larger sections in the score, and recurring motives and modalities give listeners something to latch onto, guiding them through the dense metropolis of notes. The opening begins in a rather light-hearted manner. It's rhythmically set in several compound triple meters with frolicking modulations and playful hemiolas. F-sharp is the most important pitch at the outset (F-sharp minor and A major are oft-utilized modes). The beginning also has the clearest registral separation; part one remains high and part two holds the bottom. These distinctions get blurred in subsequent sections.

Journeying onward, the colors get darker and the harmonies more brooding. After floating through F-sharp minor in the opening section, at rehearsal letter A we get new tonal material, alternating rapidly between half-diminished chords in F and E-flat, and then a sequence of dominant seventh chords that don't resolve traditionally but move down by whole steps. At rehearsal B, we first hear gestures in 5/8 and 7/8, and then an important motive in 5/4 that recurs throughout the piece on different augmented chords. The minor-sixth interval is prominently voiced in these augmented triads, which also appear horizontally in rapid arpeggiation. Sometimes the arpeggios move in contrary motion, other times together. These chord sonorities are unforgettable, and percussionists familiar with Bob Becker's music will instantly recognize that the same sounds appear in his raga-based compositions.

This music eventually finds its way back to F-sharp-minor pentatonic, and time goes from triple to duple feel. Both parts move in parallel motion at the interval of a major sixth. Linear, parallel writing at specific intervals occurs often. This technique, along with the augmented chords, define the mood of the entire piece. Intervallic relationships take precedence over vertical harmonic concerns. Material from the B and C sections alternate in almost rondo fashion for several minutes as if weaving through traffic. At rehearsal D, a starkly contrasting interlude arrives. Soft, vertically constructed, and fragmented, it reminds one of Stout's angular writing from his popular "Dances." It also reminds me of Daniel Levitan's music: structured, pointed, and rhythmically restless. Harmonic change occurs on *mezzo piano* or *mezzo forte* accents. Following the interlude is a rather episodic section, again using augmented chord intervals with brief solos, more interplay between parts, and more parallel gestures, this time a perfect fifth apart.

The last two sections (rehearsal letters F and G) can be characterized as "four-hand" music, where the players interlock their unique patterns to create one composite groove. The sound is convincing when done well, but requires strict rhythmic execution. Stout includes ossia passages, perhaps anticipating rehearsal difficulties. The coda settles into A-augmented (A, C-sharp, E, F) material, capitalizing on ambiguity by alternating rapidly between the E and F-natural to cloud the modality. It's also heavy and foggy here, as both players work their way to the very bottom of the instruments. The parts start to relax rhythmically and dynamically, with brief respites, and finally the pulse comes to rest in A.

In summary, "Manhattan Escapades" is a difficult, intriguing work. To ensure success it is best attempted by graduate-level students or professionals (perhaps by younger but more adventurous types). This is a duo for two advanced marimbists—performers who don't have to think about mechanics and are *very* comfortable on the instrument. Just like its namesake, "Manhattan Escapades" is hip, daunting, and never rests.

—Phillip O'Banion

Meteor **V**
Stephen Ridley
$36.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: two 5-octave marimbas
Web: score sample

"Meteor" is a wonderful piece for two marimbas that was commissioned by Escape X percussion duo. This piece attempts to create a kind of wavering sustain by tasking each marimba with a similar-but-different part in the same register. It is this type of sound that inspired the piece. Composer Stephen Ridley writes, "One key issue to be dealt with in any percussion piece is sustain. For "Meteor," I made a general rule that I would avoid rolls, and opt instead for tuplets, or for separate repeated notes, which I could place more precisely in time. This piece also attempts to create a kind of wavering sustain by tasking each marimba with a similar-but-different part in the same register."

This piece does not disappoint. With the parameters and limitations set by Ridley, he creates a unique sounding piece for marimba duo that is both complex and accessible. The rhythms are complicated but satisfying, and the harmonic content has a nice popular/minimalist quality. Melodically, Ridley fools the listener, implying the time signature to be duple when it is triple and vice-versa.

Technically, "Meteor" is very advanced. Because of the complex nature of the rhythms and feels, some score study will be required to perform this piece successfully. A good understanding

of two-over-three and five-over-three rhythms will be helpful. The piece requires some advanced four-mallet techniques including octaves, large interval changes, and a large dynamic range.

Overall, "Meteor" is a very well thought out piece that is accessible to performers and audiences. This piece would be perfect for an advanced undergraduate or graduate recital.

—Joe Millea

Tailoring for Two **V–VI**
Gordon Stout
$36.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: two 5-octave marimbas
Web: score sample

"Tailoring for Two" was written in 2013 for Taylor Katanick and was premiered by Katanick and Gordon Stout at Ithaca College in 2014. The piece is very indicative of Stout's compositional style, using beautiful harmonies that have a cyclical and purposeful quality, as well as well-thought-out rhythmic motives and memorable melodic content.

The 8½-minute piece is in three sections, and for roughly the first half could be described as a moto-perpetuo, with the first break not coming until the middle section. The middle section slowly builds in rhythmic intensity until the recapitulation in the final section. The piece stays true to the title and has both players playing off each other, often in canon. The effect is breathtaking, and the listener's interest is kept throughout.

Performers will need to have an excellent grasp of duple and triple rhythms and must be able to navigate between the two with ease. While the piece does not require any advanced four-mallet skills such as one-handed rolls, large interval changes, or extended techniques, it does require exceptional reading and/or memory skills, as well as very precise time and rhythm.

"Tailoring for Two" is well suited for performers who know their way around the entire marimba. This would make a great addition to an advanced undergraduate or graduate recital.

—Joe Millea

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Satisfraction **III–IV**
Erin Duke
$30.00
Tapspace
Instrumentation (3 players): 3 marimbas (two 4-octave, one 4.6-octave)
Web: score sample and audio recording

"Satisfraction" is a lovely little marimba trio that pairs intermediate four-mallet playing with a demand for listening and ensemble playing skills. According to the composer, "Each marimba plays a role that supports another, whether it be for harmonic support or for rhythmic reinforcement. 'Satisfraction' slowly introduces its theme and steadily develops the subtle call-and-response among players with a gradual increase in intensity."

Each part is hearty enough to require attention and practice time from the individual players without making the texture overly dense. Likewise, the length of the piece is long enough to allow room for different sections and development, but short enough to keep the audience's attention and leave them satisfied with what they have heard.

The changing eighth-note based time signatures, paired with syncopated rhythms and the occasional quintuplet, gives the players' ensemble-playing skills a workout and requires that they have decent rhythmic chops. The four-mallet technique called for would be a decent challenge for a beginner, but within the expectations of an intermediate player.

The score comes with a CD-ROM containing the individual parts and an mp3 recording of the piece. The instrumentation makes this piece doable for a music program without access to 5-octave marimbas, and would be an excellent addition to a high school program transitioning the students from marching to concert season, or a short addition to a college percussion ensemble concert for freshmen or sophomores.

—Marilyn K. Clark Silva

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Animals **II–III**
Brian Slawson
Tapspace
$34.00
Instrumentation (4 players): snare drum, triangle, guiro, xylophone, bongos, congas, claves, concert bass drum, 3 timpani, 2 tom-toms, 2 woodblocks, Vibraslap
Web: score sample and audio recording

"Animals" is a short, beginning percussion quartet in three movements. Each movement increases in length as well as size of instruments used. In the first movement, "Small," each player plays one or two small, high-pitched instruments (triangle, guiro, xylophone, claves, woodblocks) that represent the sound of their respective animals: frog, mouse, finch, and squirrel. In the second movement, "Medium," the players each play one or two medium-sized instruments (snare drum, bongos, congas, Vibraslap, toms) that mimic a hyena, cheetah, monkey, and kangaroo. In the third and longest movement, "Large," each player plays a large instrument (snare drum, xylophone, bass drum, timpani) that characterizes larger animals: lion, tiger, hippo, and elephant.

This piece is just different and programmatic enough to be interesting to a young high school ensemble, but straightforward enough to be within the reach of a middle-school ensemble that has a basic grasp of technique and sixteenth-note rhythms. All of the players have the opportunity to play more than one instrument over the course of the three movements, but they only have to tackle one or two at a time, making this piece an excellent way to introduce new instruments to young players in a structured ensemble setting. Additionally, the playing time for the entire piece is five minutes, making it doable in a single semester for any beginning ensemble, even those with limited rehearsal time.

The score comes with an instrument list, recommended setup map, and a CD-ROM with the individual parts and an mp3 recording of the piece. The notation is clear and concise, and the called-for technique straightforward enough to be teachable by a director without a percussion background. The parts are sufficiently syncopated to build ensemble playing skills, and the dynamics and articulation interesting enough to develop musicality. Overall, "Animals" would be a great addition to a middle school or early high school percussion ensemble program.

—Marilyn K. Clark Silva

Bingo-Bango-Bongo **II**
Carmen J. Gassi
$25.00
Eighth Note Publications
Instrumentation (6 players): vibraphone, maracas, 2 timpani, snare drum, 2 suspended cymbals, bongos, congas, shaker, bass drum, castanets
Web: score sample and audio recording

"Bingo-Bango-Bongo" is a percussion ensemble piece geared towards younger players and with a duration of just under four minutes. While the material is easily accessible by younger percussionists, a number of issues with the piece make it difficult to recommend.

If the goal of a piece is to be approachable by younger performers, good practices should be used to show the players the correct way to do things. A number of notational and scoring issues hinder that. One example occurs with the first timpani entrance. Two dotted-half notes are tied together, but a roll is indicated on the second one. To me, this seems contrary to the tie, and therefore can be confusing to students. One might argue that this is a slur, but given that there are no slurs written at any point in the piece and that there are ties written two bars later in the vibraphone part, it is safe to assume the composer wrote these as ties without thinking about the issue of writing a roll on the second note.

Another issue is the orchestration of the piece, with a single mallet part placed against five other percussion parts. This has the potential to cause the mallet player to overplay just to be heard, especially at the louder dynamic levels, and potentially create bad habits for the younger mallet player. This could have been avoided by making the vibraphone part a general mallet part and indicating that it can be doubled and performed on any mallet instrument, especially since there is nothing in the part that specifically requires the mechanics of a vibraphone.

There are some redeeming qualities in terms of sound pedagogical value. Examples of this include a wide dynamic range, players changing between instruments, and exploring multiple sounds on a single instrument (such as the snare drum, which is played with snares on and off, as well as rimshots). "Bingo-Bango-Bongo" would be an appropriate piece for a beginner percussion ensemble. However, given some of the notational and scoring issues with the piece, there are better pieces out there for younger players.

—Brian Nozny

Dots & Dashes **IV–V**
Dustin Schulze
Tapspace
$40.00
Instrumentation (4 players): 4 bass drums, 4 concert toms, snare drum, bongos, 4 splash cymbals, hi-hats, spiral cymbal, riveted China cymbal, cymbal stack
Web: score sample and audio recording

"Dots & Dashes" is a groovy percussion quartet that aims to "bridge the tribal drum and dance music feel popular in West Africa with the complex, odd-meter construction found in popular western classical music." Each player has a setup of a bass drum, various smaller drums, and several different cymbals. The changing time signatures—alternating between 5/16 + 7/16 and quarter-note based meters—and syncopation within the parts themselves makes this piece not only rhythmically challenging but an ensemble challenge as well.

The piece is short (under five minutes) and flashy. It includes a few extended techniques, such as stick clicks and playing on the rim of the drum, as well as the occasional visual cue. This piece would be a good project for students with strong marching percussion chops who want to transition to concert playing, or for introducing keyboard players with excellent rhythm fundamentals to drumming. "Dots & Dashes" does require the players to have good stick control, especially with accents.

The piece would be a good addition to a college percussion ensemble concert, and would be especially effective for outreach concerts and recruiting endeavors, as it will most likely appeal to younger audiences. Though the piece is short, it is challenging enough to be a good semester project for a high school ensemble—though some of the more specialized

cymbals might not be available in every program's instrument inventory.

—Marilyn K. Clark Silva

Encore raisonnables?... **IV**
Pascal Zavaro
$13.99
Gérard Billaudot
Instrumentation (4 players): body percussion

"Encore raissonnables ?..." which roughly translates to "Still Reasonable," was composed in 2016 for the Mikrokosmos Chamber Choir, based in France. Written for four people, "Encore Raissonnables ?..." uses only body percussion. Composer Pascal Zavaro employs a variety of sounds including foot stomps, thigh and chest slaps, clapping, finger snapping, tongue clicks, kissing sounds, panting, sighing, laughing, and whistling. Because of the instrumentation (or lack thereof), this piece can be performed with any musician, not just percussionists (though it is well suited for percussionists). The result is a very sophisticated but accessible piece of percussion/performance art that is sure to please audiences.

The piece is fun and could be described as whimsical. It is "derived from the spirit of 'Dada' and a bias of absurdity." As with any piece of this nature, a strong theatrical element is present. The stylistic marking at the start of the score is "Absurde et décontracté" (absurd and cool). Performers will need to be comfortable standing on stage using non-verbal gestures and have a grasp of basic theatrical facial expressions. In a nutshell, they need to be able to sell it.

"Encore raissonnables ?..." would be an excellent piece for the right group of performers at any level, high school and above. If you are looking to work on performance skills but you are not ready for Vinko Globokar or Mauricio Kagel, this might be a good place to start.

—Joe Millea

Indigo **VI**
Siegfried Kutterer
€29.80
Verlag Neue Musik Berlin
Instrumentation (10 players): 7 reyongs, one crotale (A), 2 vibraphones, 6 Cheng Cheng cymbals, 4 African bells, 4 small gongs (A, D, F, A), 3 large gongs (A, A-sharp, G-sharp), opera gong, piano, log drum, metal guiro on tom, 4 drums, Roto-tom, bass drum, large tambourine

"Indigo" is a fantastic combination of Carnatic influences, Balinese gamelan, and a touch of the European avant-garde. Composed by Siegfried Kutterer in 2008, this work is dedicated to Kutterer's primary mridangam and Carnatic music instructor, T.V. Gopalkrishnan. Parts are available for rental from the publisher's website. Not only does the piece require several non-traditional percussion instruments, but it requires an extremely mature ensemble to perform all parts.

You may need to spend a little time with Google Translate to understand some of the program notes and instrument specifications—all information is written in German—but Kutterer includes pictures of various instruments and a suggested setup for clarification. Although the instrumentation is very specific, the composer does suggest some alternatives—for example, the use of other small gongs in place of the reyongs, or almglocken in place of the African bells, as long as the tuning is identical. A conductor seems to be very helpful in performance, but not necessary, as Kutterer mentions the piece can be conducted and directed within the ensemble.

This 16-minute work is basically comprised of two very large sections, the first being a slow build-up with the addition of new instruments and rhythms within the structure of the first few bars. The entirety of the piece is composed around Adi Tala, the most common South Indian metric structure. The second section begins with a rhythmically exciting drum solo, thrice repeated to emphasize the Indian influences in the composition. After this moment, the rest of the piece is an exciting rollercoaster ride of rhythmic unisons and interplay between the higher metallic instruments and the lower drums. The piece constantly builds and adds onto itself through extended patterns and rhythmic diminution, finally culminating in the longest and most intense ensemble moment leading into the final three chords. A wonderful full version can be viewed on YouTube, performed live with the composer at Theater Basel in 2013.

—Matthew Geiger

Multum in Parvis **VI**
Raymond Helble
$78.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Web: score sample
Instrumentation (14 players): crotales, vibraphone, chimes, tam-tam, snare drum, bongos, timbales, high tom-toms, low tom-toms, xylophone, 4-octave marimba, 4.3-octave marimba, 4.6-octave marimba, 5-octave marimba, bass marimba (or MalletKat), 5 timpani, bass drum
Web: score sample

Commissioned by and dedicated to Michael Faris and the Ladue, Missouri, percussion program, this piece takes its title from the Latin phrase *multum in parvis* ("much from a little"), which insightfully provides the performers the impetus of composer Raymond Helble's compositional process (composing a large mosaic work from small musical motifs). Also notable is the fact that of the 14 performers for this ensemble, five are performing membranophones (timpani, two sets of tom-toms, bongos and timbales, and snare drum) while the remaining nine performers are assigned keyboard percussion instruments (including crotales, chimes, vibraphone, marimbas and bass marimba or MalletKat).

As with all of Helble's compositions, both the motivic craftsmanship and his creative rhythmic counterpoint weave his structural clarity and provide accessible tonal unity (composed in C minor). Also interesting is the fact that Helble starts this composition with the membraned percussion presenting his opening rhythmic motives and the keyboard percussion providing the sophisticated harmonic and melodic content.

This lengthy (262 measures) single-movement composition will certainly test the mature percussion ensemble. Every part is challenging in its own unique fashion (appropriate mallets will provide the tom-tom players with a melodic timpani sound). Obviously, ensemble balance and blend are integral keys to provide this outstanding composition with a worthy performance. Although this piece might be performed by a few outstanding high school ensembles, it is more appropriately suited for the mature college or university percussion ensemble.

—Jim Lambert

Percussion Sonata No. 3 "Maverick" **IV–V**
Peter Schickele
$24.99
Theodore Presser
Instrumentation (4 players): xylophone, glockenspiel, marimba, finger cymbals, vibraphone, crotales, 5-octave marimba
Web: score sample

Commissioned by Garry and Diane Kvistad, and the Woodstock Chimes Fund, "Maverick" provides 13 minutes of variety for the intermediate-advanced percussion quartet. The work is divided into three movements: "I. Toccata," "II. Romanza," and "III. Vaudeville." The first movement explores a mixture of time signatures, is driven by constant eighth notes, and is quite energetic. Only two-mallet technique is required on mallet instruments. The second movement is much slower and reflective; some four-mallet technique is required in the marimba parts (rolls). The third movement is highly entertaining and reminiscent of ragtime/rock and roll. I really enjoy the fact that limited instrumentation is used, which makes it more accessible to school programs and ensembles.

High school and collegiate ensembles alike should explore this quartet. It is sure to add a bit of lightheartedness to any program.

—T. Adam Blackstock

Rotation 1 **III–V**
Eric Sammut
Arr. Andrea Venet
Keyboard Percussion Publications
$48.00
Instrumentation: (10–14 Players): glockenspiel, crotales, 2 vibraphones, 4.3-octave marimba, 5-octave marimba, 5 timpani, snare drum, 3 toms, ride cymbal, suspended cymbal, hi-hat, China cymbal, sizzle cymbal, splash cymbal, bongos, 2 synthesizers (optional)

"Rotation 1" is wonderful large percussion ensemble arrangement of Eric Sammut's marimba solo of the same name. With additional harmonic elements, creative orchestration, and challenging ensemble playing, this arrangement pays homage to the original while offering a new way to hear this classic. Arranger Andrea Venet worked with the source material well, keeping it recognizable while adding whimsy.

The keyboard instruments do most of the heavy lifting here, with the marimbas playing in unison and trading on the original material. The vibraphones, glockenspiel, and crotales are primarily used for additional harmonic material and to color the marimba lines, although they are used effectively as the primary melodic line in the B section of the piece. All keyboard players, with exception of the glockenspiel/crotales, should be facile in four-mallet technique. Stickings are conveniently provided by the arranger.

The non-keyboard parts (percussion 1, percussion 2, and timpani) are well written and provide a pop-like backbeat to the tune. Kudos to the arranger for giving the timpani player an active and melodic part in the arrangement. The percussionists split up what is essentially a drumset part, and Venet recommends combing those parts into a drumset part if the number of players in limited.

The addition of two synthesizers in this arrangement could have prevented some groups from performing the piece; however, these parts are optional, and the synthesizer 1 part can be played on piano. Both synthesizer parts double material that is found in the keyboard percussion instruments, so they are not essential to a successful performance.

"Rotation 1" is a fun, relatively short work for large percussion ensemble that would fit well in any percussion ensemble concert and could be performed by advanced high school and college percussion programs.

—Justin Alexander

SNARE DRUM SOLO

Falling Leaves **V**
Timothy Adams, Jr.
$8.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Web: score sample

Tim Adams Jr. is no stranger to concert percussion and has written and performed much for this instrument category. However, I haven't seen a snare drum solo by him yet. "Falling Leaves" fills that gap as an advanced, short (91 measures) concert snare drum solo. This would be perfect for an audition, and with Adams' extensive orchestra history, this could be his intent. This solo includes all the necessary elements you'd want to hear in an audition: long rolls of all lengths and dynamics, including tied and untied rolls, drags and four-strokes that have time to prepare and that don't, two or three areas of fairly tricky rhythms involving 7's and 5's, congruent and non-congruent flams, and a ton of dynamics. If you've worked through the Delécluse books, you'll be ready for this solo. If you haven't, it could take you longer than necessary and be a bit frustrating. Don't let the tempo fool you. There's an awful lot of black on the page for quarter-note equals 64!

—Julia Gaines

Ten Melodies for Memory
Snare Drum Solos **V**
Doug Hammond
$11.95
Advance Music

There must be over a thousand instruction books and solos for snare drum. Here is a collection of ten solos that are unique in the way the materials are presented and in how the materials are to be prepared. The text opens with a paragraph of instructions that clearly present how to prepare the solos. Some of these are that the solos must be memorized, and all phrases, dynamics, and sticking patterns are to be followed from the beginning. The author believes that this approach is needed from the start,

instead of adding nuance materials in layers.

The approach for rolls is fresh, with the rolls notated on notes of value with the stems up, but also written out with each note of the roll written with the stems down. This creates a clear number of strokes and rebounds in each roll. Grace notes are notated with smaller noteheads, and sticking patterns are clearly presented when a nuance of sound or color is needed. Although the title of the collection says ten melodies or solos, seven are snare solos, and the remaining ones are for snare drum and bass drum, snare or hi-hat, and one duet.

There is nothing in the instructions that outlines whether the materials are to be performed in concert or marching style, but at the beginning of a few of them, a note says whether to play the rolls open or closed. The titles suggest how the music is to be directed; e.g., "Blue Snare," "A Swinging March," "Variations on a Groove," and "On the Edge." Meters and rhythmic materials will challenge advanced players, but with the clarity of materials, students of all levels of experience will find this to be of value.

—George Frock

TIMPANI SOLO

Five Timpani Solos: The Concert
Series No. 1 **III–IV**
Timothy Adams, Jr.
$15.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation: 4 or 5 timpani
Web: score sample

Finding quality timpani etudes and solos that do not sound cliché or predictable can be a challenge. Thankfully, this collection of pieces offers music that is challenging while remaining attainable for most timpani students. The music incorporates a variety of tuning schemes and rhythmic treatments, and approaches timpani from an idiomatic perspective, rather than music for four or five toms/surfaces.

Drawing on his orchestral performance experience, the composer has included many passages and themes that mimic those found in standard orchestral repertoire, such as rolls between drums, sixteenth-note passages, and tuning relationships of dominant-tonic. In addition to some "expected" musical ideas, Timothy Adams also incorporates more complex challenges for the performer, including quintuplets, tunings of augmented fourth relationships, and fast rhythmic passages that dance across all the drums in rapid succession. Where this collection falls short is that Adams offers no instruction with regards to tunings, number of drums, opening pitches, dampenings, or stickings. While this can be good (students will have to figure it out themselves), it could prove frustrating to young percussionists.

I appreciate that Adams gave each etude a title ("Arch," "Elegy," "Statement," "Like Water," and "Branches") that relate to the nature and character of the piece. Every musician enjoys performing music with a title, as opposed to "Etude 4 from so-and-so's book." These pieces, which range from three to five minutes, can be utilized effectively in private instruction, performing on a studio class, or compiled together for a suite to be performed in public. These aspects will serve students and audience members alike and are worth considering for your library.

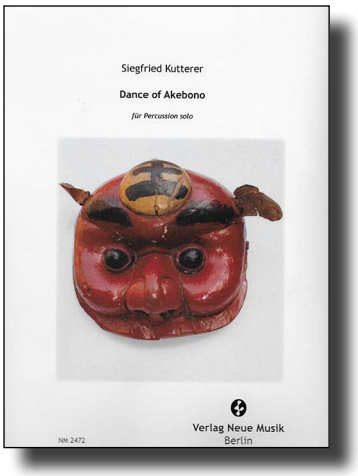
—Joshua D. Smith

MULTIPLE PERCUSSION SOLO

Dance of Akebono **V–VI**
Siegried Kutterer
€18.80
Verlag Neue Musik Berlin
Instrumentation: 2 bell cymbals, 2 temple bells, bell cymbal on a tom, 3 almglocken, 3 bars from a Balinese Jublag on a tom, alarm bell, 3 drums, 2 higher drums, 2 woodblocks, tam-tam on a kick drum.
Web: score sample

One of the most attractive aspects of percussion is the ability to create unexpected sounds, and Kutterer's multi solo "Dance of Akebono" mixes standard percussion with non-European instruments to create a completely unexpected collection of sounds—and it works. The composer's interest in non-European music and culture is evident in the instrumentation, musical choices, and even the title. "Akebono" refers to the Japanese word for dawn, a particular mode in Japanese music, a Hawaiian sumo wrestler by the name of Akebono Taro, and most importantly, the name of a hippo that mesmerized the composer with his dance-like motions. These dancing motions are often depicted musically through ostinatos with phrases constructed and embellished underneath. Written in 2016, the solo was dedicated to Jochen Schorer, whose performance on YouTube accurately portrays the elegance and intensity interspersed throughout this 15-minute work.

Similar to other works for percussion by Kutterer, program notes and instrument definitions are written in German, but the composer has kindly included photos of special instruments as well as an overall setup. One of the unique qualities of Kutterer's music is his willingness and ability to manipulate the sounds of standard and non-traditional percussion instruments into a new perspective of sounds. Kutterer's fascination with South Indian musical concepts can be seen in



many ways through rhythmic repetition and cadential moments occurring three times to signal the ends of phrases.

For professionals or graduate students looking for repertoire other than the great masterworks of the past, "Dance of Akebono" is worth a look. This solo presents many challenges to the willing, adventuresome percussionist. Beyond the instrumentation required, there are sections with challenging polyrhythms as well as extremely fast phrases. The resulting musical effect is one of extreme virtuosity and diversity. The piece seems to fly by and constantly move forward despite moments of abrupt disruption and change. Although the setup may seem daunting, the reward is much greater than the challenge, and I highly recommend checking out Kutterer's new solo.

—Matthew Geiger

MIXED INSTRUMENTATION

Crab Club **V**
Siegfried Kutterer
€56.00
Verlag Neue Musik Berlin
Instrumentation (6 players): piano, double bass, drumset, temple bell (in C), kalimba, vibraphone, glockenspiel, 2 bell plates, 4 African bells, various cymbals, tam-tam, bell cymbals, tuned gong (in C), 5 almglocken, 4 ethnic drums, opera gongs, 2 low wooden instruments, various small percussion
Web: score sample

"Crab Club" is all about worlds colliding. First, we have the instrumentation of the more classically grounded percussion trio combined with a jazz combo of piano, double bass, and drumset. Then we have the intermingling of precise classical notation with numerous sections of improvisation. Finally, we have the cultural influence of South Indian music intermixed with the more traditional notions of Western art music. In many ways, there's something for everyone in

this piece, but it is not for the faint of heart for many reasons.

The demands of this piece are numerous—including the need of six mature musicians who can handle the various musical influences here as well as improvise. Let's not forget to mention the stamina that is involved with a piece that's roughly 25 minutes long! There is also the large amount of equipment required, combined with the fact that the piano, double bass, and vibraphone need to be amplified.

Musicians will also need to be technically proficient to handle the musical challenges thrown at them by this piece. As mentioned, all players will have moments where they need to improvise. Not all improvisations will be soloistic in nature, though there are some. The composer does a good job of differentiating between different types of improvisation by indicating if they are accompanimental or soloistic in nature.

The third section of the work will be particularly challenging as the harmonic material is based on a particular raga while the rhythmic material is drawn from intricate ideas of South Indian rhythmic phrases. Much of the notation during this section is written in odd groupings with over-the-bar writing permeating much of the section.

Musically, the South Indian influence is always at the forefront. The interesting interaction of this with the more traditional Western ensemble and jazz combo works quite well, and the piece is always orchestrated in such a way that nothing is ever covered. The composer has also been quite diligent in creating interesting colors and textures, both in the orchestration as well as the way some instruments are prepared. A good example of this is the African bells that require small cymbals to be placed between them so that a rattle-like sound occurs when each bell is hit. These indications are all clearly notated and include pictures so the colors can be accurately achieved. A DVD with a well-produced and executed performance of the work is included, which will be of great assistance to anyone thinking about programing the piece.

The uniqueness of "Crab Club" makes it a potentially tough sell given the forces and duration of the work. However, I can see many areas where this piece would be perfect. For example, universities with strong classical percussion programs and jazz programs could benefit greatly from this piece. It would fit well as an entire half of a graduate recital or a percussion ensemble concert. Anyone who takes the plunge into this epic work will be rewarded with a worthwhile musical experience that will impress audiences of all types.

—Brian Nozny

Danse of the Wooden Toys **III**
Josh Gottry
$12.00
Gottry Percussion Publications
Instrumentation (2 players; one percussionist, one clarinetist): kick drum, snare drum, 2 bongos, woodblock, splash cymbal, B-flat clarinet
Web: audio recording

"Danse of the Wooden Toys," a three-minute duet for clarinet and percussion, was written in 2016 for the composer's high school-aged daughter and one of his percussion students. This piece is fun and dance-like, as the title implies, and features equally challenging parts with complementary melodic lines written for both the percussionist and the clarinetist. Set primarily in 7/8 (with a few other meters in the second half), the piece begins with each instrument stating its initial motives in solo passages, then together. The piece quickly transitions into more developed materials in contrasting A and B sections. During the C section the players exchange short fragments of the melody before returning to the primary A section material to end the piece.

In addition to being an appropriate pedagogical piece to introduce students to chamber ensemble playing, "Danse for Wooden Toys" would also be a nice addition to a high school band concert to show off two talented players. An instrument setup diagram, mallet suggestions, and a notation key for the percussionist are included in the composer's notes.

—Julie Licata

Earth Tones **IV**
Gary D. Ziek
$32.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instruments (2 players): 4.3-octave marimba, alto/soprano saxophone
Web: score sample

In the April 2017 *Percussive Notes*, I had the pleasure of reviewing the Rosewood Duo recording that included this piece. One thing I liked about the variety of the recording was the different performance levels represented, and "Earth Tones" represents one of the intermediate-level pieces. This would be great piece for a young duo. It is programmatic and easy on the ears for the players and the audience. It includes seven short movements that all sound like their earthy titles.

The four-mallet technique is moderately challenging, although I wish there was more consistency throughout the movements. For example, the third movement, "Grasslands," includes an ostinato in the left hand centered around fifths. The right hand also has a fairly easy ostinato with sixths, but in the middle, there are four bars of thirty-seconds that lay fairly idiomatically but, of course, are twice as fast as the rest of the movement. That may be a pretty big jump in technique for a younger student.

My favorite movement is VI, "Rain Forest," where the soprano saxophone gets to play bird calls and other rainforest-like sounds. The marimba has a nice groove with consistent technique throughout. Any of the movements could be played independently, and they range in duration from two to four minutes each. This work could teach a young duo a lot about balance and chamber music, while filling a space on a sophomore or junior recital.

I have to shout out to the composer and publisher for the beautiful score. It has a black spiral binding, and both copies (one for the sax with smaller marimba print, and one for the marimba with smaller sax print) are very clear and easy to read. Thanks for making it easier on the performers to play the work!

—Julia Gaines

Four Rotations for Marimba with String Quintet (Mvt. IV) **IV**
Eric Sammut
$48.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation (6 players): 4.3-octave marimba, string quintet (2 violins, viola, cello, double bass)
Web: score sample

Is it wise to alter an original? I believe there are dangers in doing so. Eric Sammut's "Four Rotations" has quickly become part of the standard recital repertoire for marimba. This piece has literally flown off the shelves of every major literature distributor. It's easy-going, catchy style works well for a soloist and gives the performer myriad opportunities for expression. Would adding a string quintet to the mix distract from the beauty of the solo version?

Unfortunately, I think that is absolutely the case with this piece, for a number of reasons. First, by adding the string quintet to the mix, the element of expression is severely compromised. Part of the charm of the solo version is that tempo can be adjusted as the performer sees fit. It sounds almost sterile with the addition of the strings, because it's no longer a solo; it is a six-piece ensemble with many moving parts that must gel together, so the charm is lost.

Secondly, there isn't much to make the string version truly special. The marimba part is virtually identical, and the strings do little to embellish it. The orchestration itself is…average. It reminded me more of a college orchestration project than an arrangement of a piece that's a staple in the marimba literature.

Lastly, the price tag of $48.00 is exorbitant, considering that the solo version of the same piece lists for $6.00. With the length of the piece being just over two minutes, this price tag is in definite need of reconsideration. If all four of the rotations were scored with the string quintet, $48.00 would be a much more reasonable price.

—Marcus D. Reddick

Mirages **IV**
Eric Sammut
$48.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation (5 players): vibraphone, 5-octave marimba, double bass, drumset, clarinet/bass clarinet
Web: score sample and audio recording

This collection of four tunes by Eric Sammut strings together an unlikely cadre of instruments, creating a contemporary jazz combo. Its movements are short impressions—musical vignettes, if you will. The complete suite is no more than 12 to 15 minutes in length. The bassist and drummer appear most often in supportive roles, but do get brief moments to stretch out and "blow" themselves. The marimbist serves as the pianist of the rhythm section, but also gets some notable solos. The most prominent lines go to the vibraphonist and clarinetist, who also have the most extensive, exposed solos.

The drumset part is composed, but Sammut liberates the player with instructions to ad lib as appropriate. Instrumentation is for standard four-piece jazz kit plus triangle, woodblock, and cowbell. The score also gives the bass player a similar freedom. Nothing in the vibe or marimba parts is out of the ordinary. In fact, the keyboard parts are easier than many of Sammut's compositions and arrangements.

"Mirages" was recorded by Sammut and friends on an album by the same name, available on Resonator Records. In the liner notes, he describes his effort to express four different personalities in one composition. The first movement is a foray into "cool jazz." It's not quite Miles Davis, but it is relaxed, with straight-ahead changes and melodic unisons between the clarinet and vibes. The second movement is a very short chorale for vibes and marimba alone—simple and beautiful. While too brief to stand alone, it could serve as an interlude on a percussion recital. This movement has an experimental sound due to digitally processed sounds on the studio recording.

The third movement apparently draws inspiration from a Gary Thomas composition. I'm not sure which specific tune is quoted, considering the Baltimore saxophonist's extensive discography, but it reminds me of a Bob Mintzer track on a Yellowjackets album. The point of comparison is the predominance of the bass clarinet lines and the driving, funky nature of the rhythm section parts as they weave through shifting meters. The final movement pays homage to the "bluesy" sound of the flat third, and Bernard Hermann's scoring to the Scorsese film *Taxi Driver*.

Though inspired by radically different source material, these four short movements create a cohesive listening experience. I can imagine "Mirages" performed for a wide variety of audiences, but more likely programmed on an eclectic "legit" recital than on a heavy jazz program (though Sammut is a talented improviser). Like much of Sammut's oeuvre, this piece is creative, accessible, and likely appealing to musicians from many different backgrounds.

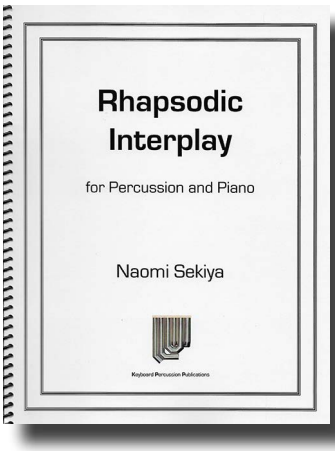
—Phillip O'Banion

Rhapsodic Interplay **V**
Naomi Sekiya
$38.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation (2 players): vibraphone, glockenspiel, almglocken, glass wind chimes, bass drum, 4 tom-toms, bongos, large tam tam, small tam tam, 4 temple blocks, piano
Web: score sample

An exciting addition to the multi-percussion repertoire, Naomi Sekiya beautifully blends the piano in with the multiple percussion in this tour-de-force. The two instruments coexist throughout the composition in a very delicate balance that truly embodies the title of the work. The piano acts as more of a multi-percussion instrument than a melodic one, and, much like John Serry's "Duet for Percussion and Keyboards," expands the palette of what is possible from a piano. There are moments of absolute beauty and moments of sheer power and aggression that perpetuate the piece ever forward.

This piece definitely requires two strong performers with advanced abilities to accurately depict "Interplay." In fact, many times throughout the work the piano part surpasses the demands of the percussion part, so a strong pianist is a must. With shifting time signatures, tone clusters, and tricky tutti rhythmic passages, this piece will work incredibly well for an advanced degree recital or professional performance. At 18 minutes in length, it is sure to entertain a variety of audiences.

—Marcus D. Reddick



Serenade **IV**
Gary D. Ziek
$68.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation (7 players): flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, trumpet, 4.5-octave marimba
Web: score sample

Gary Ziek, Professor of Trumpet and Director of Bands at Emporia State University in Kansas, has composed multiple works featuring trumpet in various settings, as well as compositions for other brass instruments and for band. "Serenade" is a septet scored for woodwind quintet, trumpet, and marimba, but is not a marimba "feature." Parts are distributed equitably across the ensemble, and the instruments take turns in the foreground and background of the texture. Percussionists purchasing the work should be prepared to read from a traditional (non-transposed) score.

With only cursory research, I've concluded that Ziek's compositional language is remarkably tonal and neoclassical in nature. "Serenade" is no exception. Scored in six movements, each is written in contrasting style. The first, "Fanfare," is lively and uses a series of four-note motives as its departing point. It requires a quick tongue for the wind players, and Ziek's experience seems favorably suited to this kind of writing. The second movement, a march, is in 6/8 and in G minor, and contains some of the quicker marimba runs of the piece. The third, "Intermezzo," requires the oboist to play English horn. This *cor anglaise* melody is first heard over a bassoon ostinato, leading to a welcome developmental section before a recapitulation. In similar fashion the "Caccia" movement also uses an arch form. The outer sections feature a spirited romp between the instruments in 12/8. The middle of the form has clarinet, bassoon, and horn playing a harmonized melody over a marimba pedal point. Movement five, "Lullaby," is underpinned by marimba with a I, III, ii, V7 progression in E-flat major. There are fragmentary melodic ideas in the horn and other winds, but nothing ever steps across a barline or out of the chord progression. The finale, "Presto," is a five-part rondo and features more demanding passages for the winds. The marimbist misses out on the fun though, and doesn't get the virtuosic lines handed to the rest of the ensemble.

The instrumental writing is moderately difficult and a tad repetitious. The trumpeter would need sensitivity to balance, given the orchestration. A college-level marimbist will find the part executable. Unfortunately, the marimba writing is not incredibly inventive regarding chordal structure and voicing. The wind parts would benefit by being liberated from a certain rigidity to the melodic and metric form, especially in the slow movements. For this reason, my impression is that expressively the music feels "contained," perhaps held back by a lack of compositional sophistication. The finale might be the exception with longer, sweeping lines, more oblique motion, and fewer unisons. Some chromaticism here and a little risk-taking go a long way in a piece otherwise fraught with "safe" instrumental writing.

Intermediate marimbists searching for a piece of chamber repertoire that is not too taxing with nice stylistic caricatures might look to "Serenade." Lines are lyrically playful and easy to digest; dissonances are conservative. Big drawbacks include a lack of narrative development and harmonic tension/resolution, meaning it's not a game-changing addition to the repertoire. However, it's nice to see attention given to the marimba in a chamber setting as an equal partner and not novelty instrument.

—Phillip O'Banion

Whatever's More 2 **IV+**
Gordon Stout
$40.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Instrumentation (5 players): 5-octave marimba, two violins, viola, cello
Web: score sample

This five-minute piece is an adaptation of a marimba solo Gordon Stout composed for a friend who was in a car accident. I had the pleasure of reviewing Stout's original solo in the November 2011 issue of *Percussive Notes*. For the most part, the string parts consist of either a duplication of the upper marimba melody or an elongated version of harmonic lines from within the marimba texture. Stout's harmonic writing on the original solo contains depth and maturity, so it is no surprise that the end result is an enhanced sonic experience that melds sensitive marimba writing with effective string undertones.

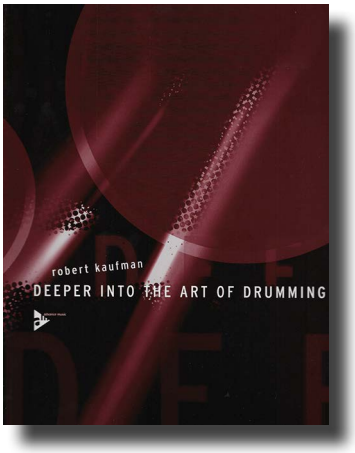
The character, mood, and technical challenges in the marimba part are exactly the same as stated in my first review, since the marimba solo was not changed. This is simply the same solo with added string parts, which gives marimba players more performance options. Players and audience members alike will enjoy this patient and lyrical piece from a trusted percussion composer.

—Joshua D. Smith

DRUMSET

Deeper Into the Art of Drumming **III–V**
Robert Kaufman
$23.95
Alfred
Web: sample pages

This book is the follow up to *The Art of Drumming*. As in Robert Kaufman's previous work, the reader is encouraged to focus on the physical actions that create the sound. He recommends examining concepts such as relaxation, touch, momentum, posture, and (appropriate) tension. Practicing at a slow tempo is also encouraged to solidify the coordination. He refers to these independence exercises as "slow-motion exercises."



The slow-motion exercises are first presented in 3/4, implying the 4/4 jazz ride cymbal ostinato. In other words, the dotted-eighth note in 3/4 is equal (in feel) to the quarter note in common time. Eighth notes are then interspersed amongst the other limbs, generating numerous musical possibilities. These exercises help the reader delve into the nuances of jazz coordination. They also allow the drummer to gain a feel for implied (over-the-bar) phrasings. The author then introduces 6/4 exercises with brushes, again using the implied phrasing. Jazz ride patterns in 4/4 are also addressed, played against dotted-quarter-note (or three eighth-note) phrases on the snare and bass drum. Additional comping patterns are explored within the jazz-waltz style.

Solo concepts are addressed through triplet combinations between hands and feet. While eighth-note triplets are the foundation of these exercises, the triplet subdivisions are occasionally doubled to form sixteenth-note triplets. Kaufman then applies these triplet concepts to larger phrases, spanning three and five beats. Other solo concepts include phrases of five eighth notes spanning the barlines in 4/4. Kaufmann adds his own 12-bar solos as well as transcriptions of solos by Elvin Jones and Paul Motion.

The book also includes some smaller sections, focusing on shifting subdivisions, displaced double strokes, accented triplets, New Orleans-style grooves, and paradiddle-inspired coordination patterns. Those who like the offerings from John Riley and John Ramsay should find this to be a valuable addition to their library.

—Jeff W. Johnson

Exploring Your Creativity on the Drumset **IV–VI**
Mark Guliliana
$29.99
Hudson Music

What makes a really great drumset book? It should be open-ended, presenting concepts and ideas that open doors for the student rather than rehashing a catalogue of written-out beats and licks to learn by rote. A great drumset book will lead the student into new areas and approaches that will result in a wider improvisational vocabulary and personal style. It won't produce clones, but will help students find their own voice.

Mark Guliliana's *Exploring Your Creativity on the Drumset* is such a book. To begin to work out of this book is to embark on a lifelong adventure of practice and development that literally will never end. And yet, it is very practical and accessible to any student with musical ability and the drive to work hard. The accompanying DVD is both instructional and inspirational. Guliliana demonstrates all the concepts in the book and performs several compositions with his own trio.

The book is organized around four musical concepts: dynamics, rate, orchestration, and phrasing. It ultimately deals with the combination of those four elements into complete musical ideas. There are no exercises specific to dynamics, but practicing all the material at a wide variety of dynamics is encouraged.

Guliliana defines rate as "the speed at which something happens over a particular period of time." This section of the book deals with eighth notes, triplets, and sixteenth notes. There are exercises dealing with moving smoothly and accurately between the three subdivisions and leaving space by leaving out notes in the various rhythms. Loops are created that move between the subdivisions—for example, eighth notes, triplets, sixteenth notes, and back to eighth notes in varying lengths. All the way through, space is provided for students to write their own exercises. Once students become fluid moving between these subdivisions, groups of five, six, seven, and eight are introduced.

The section on orchestration, "The arrangement of a musical composition (or improvisation)," is possibly the most unique aspect of the book. Guliliana identifies 30 different paths of movement between the instruments in his set, which consists of a snare drum, small tom, floor tom, ride cymbal, crash cymbal, and hi-hat. Students are to practice moving between the components of the set using groups ranging from one to eight notes. Guliliana then adds the bass drum by placing one bass drum note between each of the groups. Then two bass drum notes are placed between each note grouping. The next step is to begin moving the different note groupings around the set with the bass drum added. The result is almost endless possibilities. Next, ornaments, like flams, and combinations of two and three drums are added to the note groups, and the whole process repeats itself. All the material is well organized so that students can practice one concept at a time and also see where the sequence of exercise will take them in the future.

Phrasing, "the act of grouping notes together in a particular way," begins with a recommendation for the student to listen to Tony Williams' performance of "Nefertiti" on the Miles Davis album of the same name. This is an amazing performance of phrasing around a given melodic idea that sets up this section well. The exercises help students learn to move different rhythmic figures around to be able to play them on any beat. The section on "Paradiddle Phrasing" is particularly interesting, and Guliliana uses this system to create some astounding effects.

This is just a little bit of the exciting material contained in this book. *Exploring Your Creativity on the Drumset* is destined to join the dozen or so classic books that will last for years to come. It is for serious, motivated, and disciplined students who are willing to put in the time it takes to master the drumset. This organized and inspiring material is one approach that will, with time and work, produce the kind of results that serious students are looking for.

—Tom Morgan

Funk Grooves: Workshop for Drums **III–IV**
Fernando Martinez
$29.95
Alfred
Web: sample pages and audio recording

This book and CD set features 12 play-along tracks, designed to allow the drummer to lock in with both the bass player and full band. Some charts are straight funk while others are combinations of funk and another style, such as second-line. Samba, reggae, and hip-hop are also blended into some of the tunes. The charts have little to no ensemble hits, allowing the drummer to fully concentrate on the groove. The drum and bass guitar transcriptions are included, allowing the reader to see the relationship between the parts. Each tune is presented four separate ways: full track with band, band minus drums, drums only, and bass guitar only. The reader may find it beneficial to lock in with the bassist before attempting the full band play-along. The musicianship and the audio quality of the recordings are both excellent.

There is also a wealth of information within the text of the book. Martinez discusses concepts such as groove, dynamics, and placement of the beat. He addresses practice concepts such as playing with a click, practicing at slow tempos, and recording practice sessions. Stylistic variations are also examined, including ghost notes, hi-hat variations, and sticking variations. This package would work well for drummers who want to focus heavily on groove. It can also be a great introduction to some of the subgenres of funk.

—Jeff W. Johnson

RECORDINGS

Classics on Marimba
Fumito Nunoya
Oehms Classics

This recording features incredible performances by Japanese marimbist Funito Nunoya. As the title implies, this CD includes Nunoya's arrangements of "classical" pieces not originally written for marimba. The end result is phenomenal as Nunoya displays immense artistry throughout this album.

First and foremost, Nunoya's recording of the Bach "Chaconne" from "Partida Nr. 2" and "Andante" from "Sonata Nr. 2" are simply amazing. He exhibits an extraordinary sense of line and musicality when tackling these two challenging standards. Another highlight is an arrangement of Chopin's "Barcarolle" for two marimbas. Here, Nunoya is joined by Hiroya Honda for an outstanding result. Castelnuovo-Tedeco's "Toccata" features some beautiful piano accompaniment by Momoko Shano.

Overall, this is an incredible presentation of musicianship and maturity. In the recording's program notes, Nunoya writes, "This CD contains the classical music with which I searched my way to sing on marimba." I can honestly say that he has done exactly what he has set out to do. I highly recommend this recording.

—Brett Dietz

Duals
Simone Beneventi and Andrea Rebaudengo
Self-released

On this compact disc, Simone Beneventi and Andrea Rebaudengo offer three works for percussion and piano: "Duals" by Ivan Fedele, "Étude d'interprétation n. 12" by Maurice Ohana, and "Quatre Pièces Fébriles" by George Aperghis.

Although the three pieces are all from different decades, they fall under the heading of new music. They are spacious in nature and tend to explore the sounds available to the performers. The piano utilizes prepared strings in a few of the selections, making it more of a percussive duo. The overall quality of the recording is very good and allows the listener to hear everything clearly between the two performers.

This recording would be a great addition to the library of anyone interested in new music. Beneventi and Rebaudengo execute each work with the sensitive musicality this style demands.

—Josh Armstrong

Zarabande
El Toro
Self-released

This wonderful CD features some great playing on marimba and MalletKat by "El Toro" (Alfred Flores), vibes and percussion by Joe Caploe, and drumming by Dean Macomber. Also in the band are Mark Little on piano and Pete Ojeda on bass. The style is Afro-Cuban influenced but also is very funky.

The music is a great mixture of excellent compositions and wonderful improvisation by all the musicians. Some of the highlights include "Ogun" and "Zarabande," which offer great marimba, MalletKat, vibes, and drumset solos. Both tunes are in an Afro-Cuban style. A mellower vibe solo by Caploe answers El Toro's adventurous marimba solo on "The Painful Truth." This is followed by Ojeda's bass solo, which is both funky and melodic.

"Judah Memphis" shows a strong jazz influence with a piano solo that breaks into a swing feel. The musical vocabulary exhibited by El Toro and Caploe is clearly influenced by some of the great jazz keyboard percussionists of the past, such as Bobby Hutcherson. The CD ends with "Bebe," which is the most complex tune in this set. Again, the solos are all compelling and the rhythm sections lays down a great funk groove. This is a thoroughly enjoyable CD that will be of special interest to those who like to hear marimba, vibes, and MalletKat played well in a Latin/jazz style.

—Tom Morgan

Estrellita
Wei-Chen Lin
Self-released

This album contains a fresh and unique collection of songs from Brazil, Cuba, Spain, Mexico, and Taiwan, all adapted for marimba and performed by Wei-Chen Lin. The original compositions are works by Heitor Villa-Lobos, Jascha Heifetz/Manuel Ponce, Leo Brouwer, Thomas Oboe Lee, Francisco Tárrega, and Yu-Hsien Teng/Ahim Tan. Though mostly solo arrangements, the title track is a duet for two marimbas, with both parts played by Lin. This is my favorite track on the album; it is so much fun to listen to him play against himself!

Lin's playing is at times soothing and sensitive, at others joyful and virtuosic, but always full of breath. As a whole, this album is a great resource for marimbists

seeking new music to play, or skilled interpretations presented with personality. If you are listening simply for pleasure, I suggest you listen as you start your day with a soothing cup of tea.

The recording quality is very intimate, allowing you to feel like you are sitting in a small hall with the performer. Sometimes, however, the extreme ends of the marimba get somewhat inarticulate and muddy; I don't think this is a fault with Lin's playing, but rather due to the miking of the instrument.

The program notes are printed in both Chinese and English. Sheet music for "Estrellita" and "Fantasia on Themes from La Traviata" are available from Edition Svitzer.

—*Julie Licata*

Golfi d'ombra
Simone Beneventi
Self-released

This album consists of solo percussion works. The central work, "Golfi d'ombra" by Fausto Romitelli, encases the performer in a cage of percussion instruments as Simone Beneventi explores different pitched and non-pitched metallic sounds. Benevento then commissioned composers to explore this same setup, which resulted in "Figurazione della freccia" by Stefano Trevisi, "In Circle" by Andrea Agostini, and "Primal-Hypnagogical Extended Space" by Raffaele Grimaldi.

The pieces in the album seem to explore the divide between that which is noise and that which is music. The vibraphone parts offer a glimpse of tonality throughout the majority of the works, but the pieces delve into non-pitched percussion rather quickly. The pieces contained are definitely 20th century, or new music.

The overall production is fantastic without being too loud or too soft. Every sound and intention is heard. This album would be a great addition to the library of new-music lovers and anyone interested in the sonic possibilities of metallic percussion.

—*Josh Armstrong*

Mares/António Chagas Rosa
Drumming Grupo De Percussão
Self-released

With *Mares/António Chagas Rosa*, Drumming Grupo De Percussão (founded in 1999 and directed by Miquel Bernat) has released another high-quality compilation of diverse music for percussion. The compositions, all written by António Chagas Rosa, take the listener on a ride from dark to humorous, transparent to complex, and aggressive to soothing, with wonderfully unique percussion textures. One of the most enchanting moments on the album is a melody/countermelody played on what sounds like a flexatone and steel drum in the middle of the second movement of the first piece. The quality of the recording provides a sonic atmosphere in which all instruments are distinctly articulated, well balanced, and dynamic.

The album's *tour de force*, "Mares" (2008–09), is a multi-movement soundscape for six players that evokes maritime images and aquatic scenes of Portugal with rumbling drums and a plethora of bowed metal instruments. The simple rhythms and transparent melodies in "Yemaya's Song" (2013) for toy piano, two kalimbas, and bongos, provide a much-needed respite from mercurial nature of the first piece. "Deep Water Music," commissioned by Drumming in 2002 for four players, presents pointillistic variations of the Beatles' "Yellow Submarine" played on timpani and low toms, with metallic accents and interludes, and even a musical toy that sings the original Beatles' tune. The final track, "Four Cartoons" (1999), includes four short improvisational vignettes for prepared marimba, each highlighting a different characteristic of the instrument. Program notes are written in Portuguese and English.

—*Julie Licata*

Piazzolla on Marimba
Fumito Nunoya
Oehms Classics

Fumito Nunoy does it again with another outstanding recording! This time he is undertaking the music of Astor Piazzolla and does so with great ease and artistry, showing his skill as a consummate arranger for marimba throughout the recording.

The biggest highlight of the CD is "Libertango." Both Nunuyo and pianist Momoko Shano display immense energy and virtuosity. Another track of note is Piazzolla's "Tango Suite." Originally for two guitars, Nunuyo and Hiroya Honda perform the work on marimbas with incredible expertise. "Escualo" is also worthy of mention, with a great performance by Yula Sato on violin.

Nunoya's presentation of the music of Piazzolla is truly magnificent. I have been really blown away by both of Nunoya's recordings, which are true masterpieces that every percussionist should own.

—*Brett Dietz*

Primes
Simone Beneventi and Flavio Virzì
Self-released

This album contains music for percussion and electric guitar. Most of the works were written for this duo, and all of them are from the past decade. Two of the tracks include a prerecorded track along with the performers.

The percussion instruments utilized are numerous, including wooden, metallic, and skin sounds. Simone Beneventi utilizes the percussion cage he has used in past albums to obtain these sounds. The music is contemporary in nature and produces a sound that is new. Electric guitar used in the contemporary ensemble is new and interesting in and of itself, and when added with percussion it becomes a fascinating combination.

This album will be exiting for many percussionists and guitar players. The performers' interactions allow for wonderful music to be made. The dichotomy of electric guitar with percussion in this new-music setting should hold audience attention well. Bravo to Beneventi and Virzì for creating an excellent recording and for adding to our contemporary chamber repertoire!

—*Josh Armstrong*

Rivers
Shawn Mativetsky
Self-released
Web: audio recording

The first time I saw Shawn Mativetsky perform live at PASIC a few years back, I was blown away with his abilities and musicality. A disciple of the Benares style of tabla playing and Guru Sharda Sahai, Mativetsky has been displaying and advocating the art of tabla for years in Canada and around the world.

Mativetsky's solo performance in Teentaal (16-beat cycle) can be enjoyed by all listeners, not just by hardcore North Indian music fans. The recording is accessible for those who may not know much of the deep-rooted Hindustani musical traditions, although it may help to have some basic knowledge for structural focal points. The choice of several ragas instead of the traditional singular raga allows listeners to take some breaks within the long track, creating several moments of tension and appropriate releases.

Mativetsky's traditional treatment of theme and variation is evident throughout the Vilambit Laya (slower tempo), while still providing a fresh perspective. The second track, "Madhya Laya" (medium tempo) effectively incorporates traditional vocalizations. My favorite aspect of Mativetsky's playing is his rhythmic variety. His constantly shifting rhythmic subdivisions and effectively implemented spaces create a fascinating journey throughout the hour-long solo full of great tones and virtuosic displays of technical and musical mastery.

Mativetsky is joined on this recording by George Koller, performing the various lehra, or melody, choices on the bowed dilruba. The recording quality is superb, with a great balance of Mativetsky's tabla—especially the depth of tone on the bayan (the larger of the two drums)—mixed with the dilruba's ever-present melodies in the background. Throughout the solo, in both the theme-and-variation section as well as the fixed compositions, Mativetsky not only kept my attention with his artistry, but his playing demanded it.

—*Matthew Geiger*

A Table of Noises
Simon Holt
Colin Currie, percussion
NMC Recordings

Simon Holt's *A Table of Noises* is a fascinating and unique work for solo percussionist and orchestra. This recording features the amazing Colin Currie and has quickly become one of my favorite works in the concerto repertoire! The performances are top-notch, and the recording quality allows for delicate, subtle nuances to be coaxed from each of the instruments.

Inspired by the composer's uncle, Ashworth, a taxidermist, *A Table of Noises* eschews convention and is comprised of ten movements, five of which feature solo percussion and are linked together through orchestral interludes called "ghosts." The composer's instruction is that, "The percussionist will, for the most part, be seated on a cajon. At other times he will play the xylophone and finally the glockenspiel, but all the other instruments will be laid out on a table in front of the soloist; hence the title." The percussion writing is anything but "noisy," and in fact leans on quiet, subtle, and delicate writing for most of the piece.

Each movement tends to operate around a central instrument (cajon, xylophone, glockenspiel), although various instruments are utilized in single movements. Additionally, the orchestra writing is primarily chamber textures, allowing the percussionist to play quietly and delicately. Very little of this work is loud or forceful, although it is highly virtuosic.

Currie sounds suberb; all his playing, on both melodic and non-melodic percussion instruments, is finely tuned to the needs of the movement: lyrical and groovy on the cajon and accessory instruments, pointillistic and sharp on the xylophone, and legato on the glockenspiel. He also brings a quirky, whimsical energy to the work that underscores a sensitivity to the source material.

Initially, I wasn't sure what to expect, but I found myself really diving into this piece and appreciating the unique percussion writing, sharply musical effects, and other-worldly soundscape.

—*Justin Alexander*

Unstatic
Manu Katche
Anteprima

Manu Katche, a veteran drummer who has played with the likes of Peter Gabriel (*So*, 1986), Sting, Tracy Chapman, Jeff Beck, Dire Straits, Jan Garbarek,

and many others, has come out with this CD of his own compositions. The band consists of Ellen Andrea Wang (upright bass, vocals), Jim Watson (acoustic piano, keyboards), Tore Brunborg (saxophones), and Luca Aquino (trumpets), along with guests Nils Landgren (trombone), and Abraham Rodriguez Mansfarroll, Joel Heirrezuelo Balart, and Inor Esteban Sotolongo Zapata on percussion.

There is nothing monumental about this music. It is just solid, groove music clearly performed by consummate professionals. Katche's drumming is always perfect for each musical landscape. It is balanced, controlled, and inventive at times. But there is always the sense that he is a much better drummer than the music requires. There is nothing flashy or "in your face" here. It isn't until the title track, "Unstatic," that we hear a shuffle funk groove that gives us some sense of Katche's skill.

And yet, if one goes back for a second listen, it is evident that Katche is constantly adding subtleties that enhance everything that is going on in the music. This is why he has been hired to play with so many important artists over the years. He plays what is needed, when it is needed. For example, listen to "Rolling" and notice how Katche almost imperceptibly builds the intensity behind each soloist. Here is a master at work.

Some might say this is some of the best background music ever produced. But while it might well work in the background, there is substance here that demands our attention if we are willing to pay close enough attention.

—Tom Morgan

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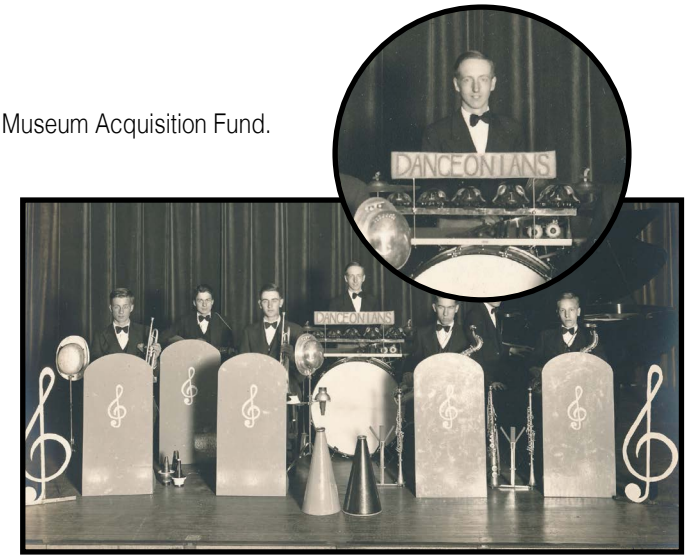
Gerald C. Godfrey's Ludwig Drum Outfit

Gift of Gerald C. Godfrey; additional funds provided by the Ralph Pace Museum Acquisition Fund. 2016.11.1



The Danceonians, ca. 1935, with Godfrey behind his set, prior to the arrival of his custom painted bass drum head.

Purchased on January 18, 1934, Gerald C. Godfrey, of Auburn, N.Y., used his Ludwig Professional Drum Outfit for many years as a member of the Danceonians, as well as with his high school band and the local American Legion Band.

Godfrey's drum outfit is centered on a 14 x 28 Separate Tension Bass Drum, which utilized Ludwig's "Aero-Kraft" cross-grained, plywood construction for the mahogany shell and maple counterhoops finished in a black "ebonized" enamel. Introduced by Ludwig ca. 1928, the Ludwig Trap Table and Holder encases the bass drum and provides secure mounting for the custom-painted Ludwig Korean Temple Blocks, two thin K Zildjian cymbals measuring 12.5 and 13 inches, a 12-inch Avedis Zildjian cymbal, and the two tunable Ludwig tom-toms with tacked bottom heads. It also provides a large shelf for small trap instruments and sticks or mallets, and also has a small shelf onto which many small traps and effects can be attached.

Introduced by Ludwig in its 1932 catalog, Godfrey's tunable toms measure 9 x 13, 12 x 14, and 16 x 16. They have a black enamel finish to match the bass drum and utilize low-profile T-rods to quickly tune the calf heads on the batter side of the drums. The largest tom is held in a nickel-plated, folding tripod tom-tom stand that sits on the floor.

Godfrey's custom-painted bass drum head is a design offered by Ludwig, but painted with a slight alteration in order to incorporate an obvious "D" for Danceonians with Godfrey's initials inside that letter. A Ludwig High-Hat Sock pedal, mounted with two 10-inch Ludwig Nickel Silver deep-cup cymbals and an engraved Ludwig 5 x 14 Ludwig Standard Black Beauty Snare Drum, with stand, complete his outfit. (See the May 2017 issue of *Percussive Notes* for a detailed description of his Black Beauty Snare Drum.)

—James A. Strain, PAS Historian

PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY

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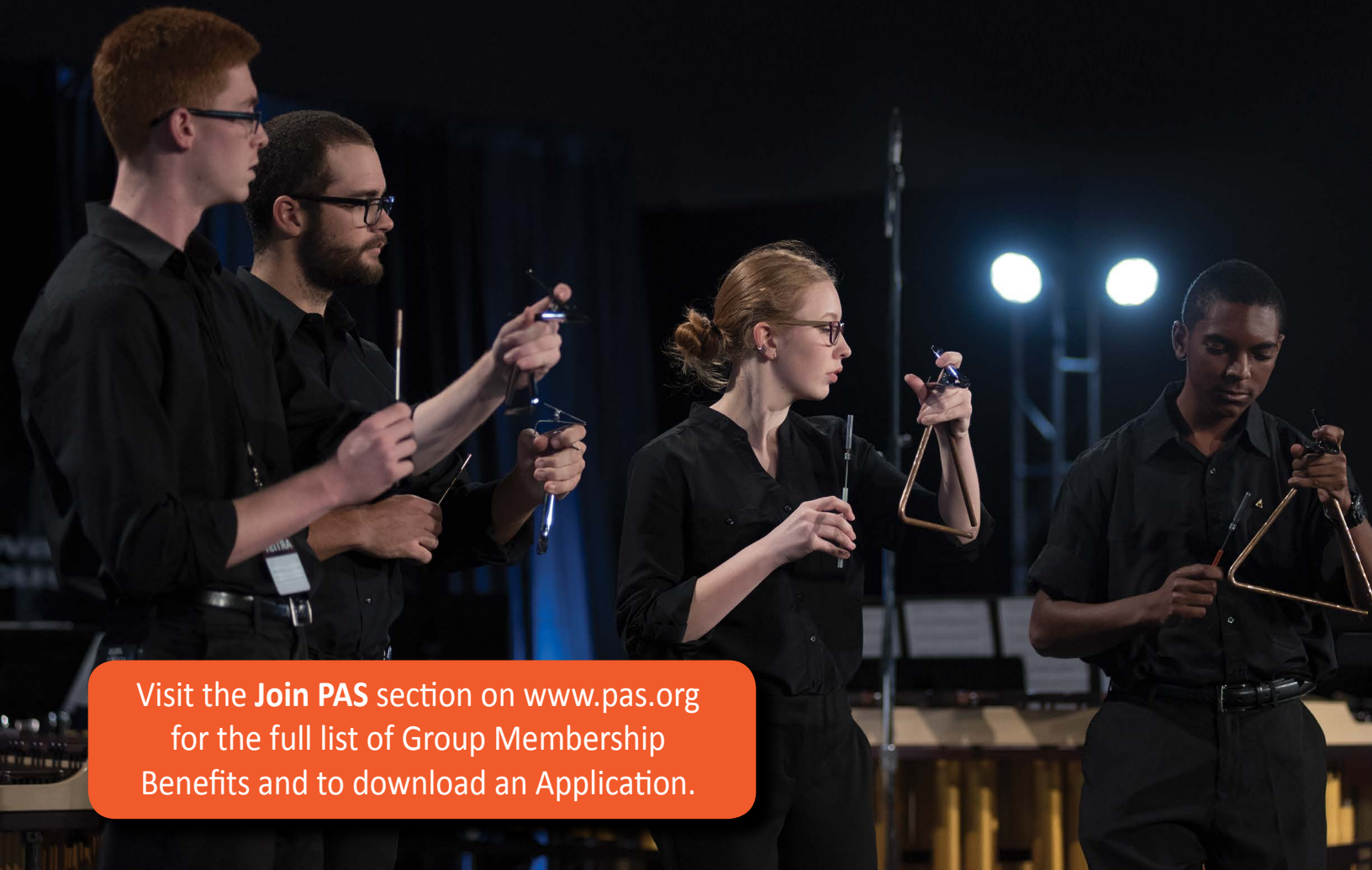

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