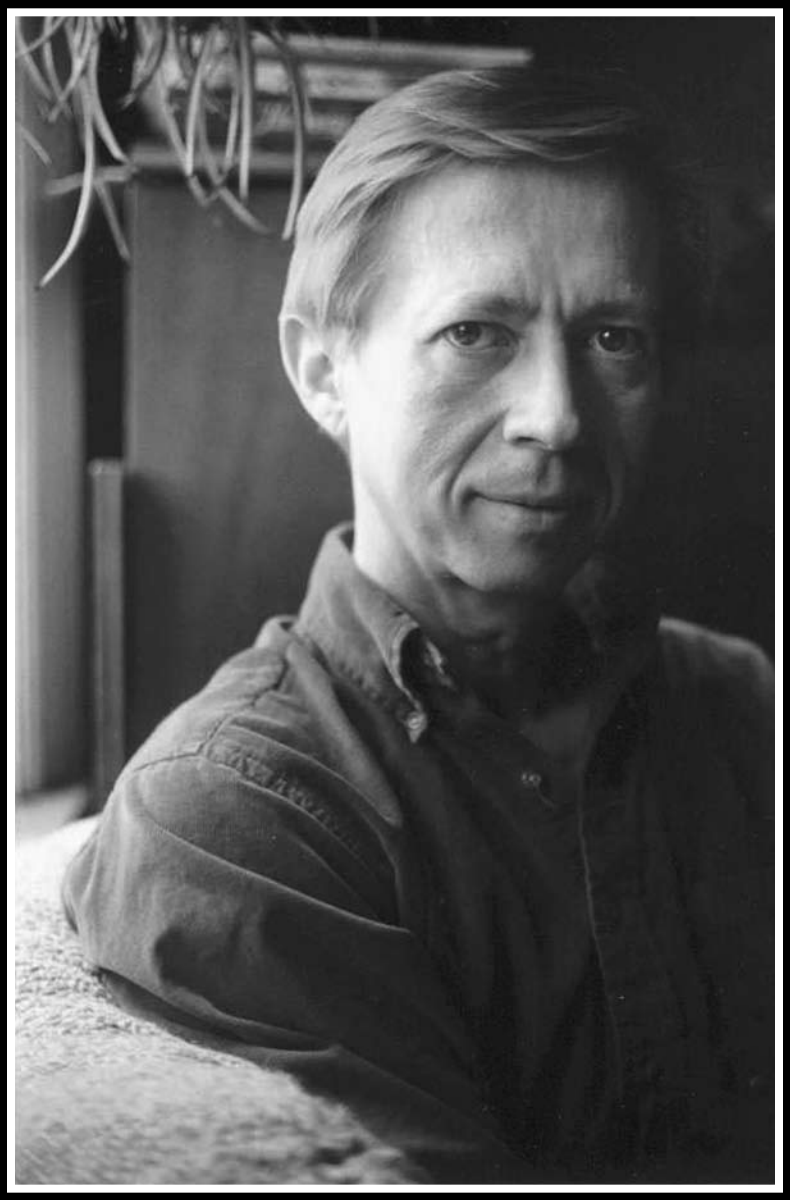
Percussive Notes

The journal of the Percussive Arts Society • Vol. 48, No. 2 • March 2010

David Maslanka's Works for Percussion Ensemble



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Society Update

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- Interactive Drumming Committee
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PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY

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David Maslanka's Works for Percussion Ensemble

By Molly Cryderman-Weber

At the 2004 National Conference on Percussion Pedagogy, five percussion educators—Paul Buyer, Scott Harris, Todd Johnson, Lisa Rogers, and Susan Martin Tariq—each presented a "top ten" list of percussion ensemble pieces.[1] Selection criteria varied between presenters; Harris and Rogers created their lists from survey results, while Buyer, Johnson, and Tariq based their lists on personal, qualitative analysis. Five pieces made the "top ten" list of two presenters, but only one piece, "Crown of Thorns" (1991) by David Maslanka (b. 1943) appeared on three lists. Additionally, "Crown of Thorns" topped Harris' list, receiving a total of nine nominations from the twelve educators Harris surveyed.[2]

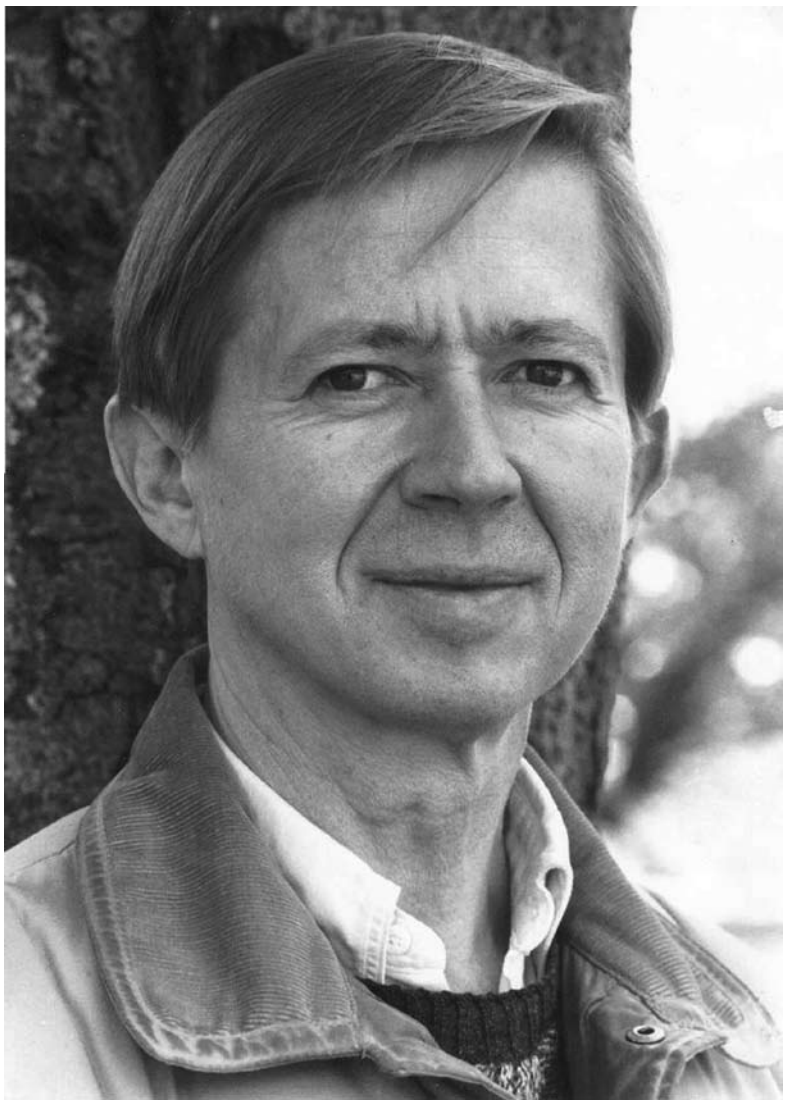


PHOTO BY STEPHEN MASLANKA

Clearly, percussion pedagogues are familiar with "Crown of Thorns" and find it a valuable teaching and performance piece. "Crown of Thorns" has enjoyed continued popularity since its 1991 premiere by the University of Oklahoma Percussion Ensemble. But what is it about "Crown of Thorns" that earns the piece its popularity? The instrumentation of four marimbas, bass marimba, two vibraphones, and glockenspiel is not itself unusual. John Wyre's "Marubatoo" (1988), for example, is an earlier piece using similar orchestration.[3] "Crown of Thorns" is in sonata form—again, not a unique structure. One can find sonata form in any number of percussion works, from George Antheil's "Ballet Mécanique" (1927, revised 1953) to Robert J. Damm's "World Beat Sonata" (2002). Maslanka's harmonic language is mainly triadic and the individual parts, while challenging, do not require extended techniques or unusual manipulations of the instruments. From this cursory glance, "Crown of Thorns" may even appear simplistic within the larger body of percussion literature, a paradoxical repertoire in which unconventional is the norm.

Perhaps it is Maslanka's particular treatment of seemingly straightforward elements and personal philosophy of composition in "Crown of Thorns" that creates such a positive affect among so many performers, listeners, and educators. Jerome Rosen explains Maslanka's unique harmonic language as follows: "Just under the surface the language is based largely on triadic tonality camouflaged in various ways, such as dissonant overlays and rhythmic offsets."[4] Although Rosen was writing about "Three Pieces" (1975), a work for clarinet and piano, his description is equally relevant to "Crown of Thorns" and many of Maslanka's other works.

In his keynote address to the 1998 Society of Composers Incorporated Region VIII Conference, Maslanka reflected on his compositional choice of "working within the framework of received language"[5]:

> I have tried, and continue to try, to absorb our musical language. The result in my music has been the evolution to sometimes radically simplify elements. This is in response to the huge proliferation of musical procedures in the 20th century. My personal thought here, which you are free to accept or reject, is that the enormous and powerful diversity generated in the 20th century has prompted an equally powerful need in some creative people to grasp and pull together this great tangle of force lines into a unified and human mode of expression. This means finding central issues and digesting them slowly until they make soul sense, rather than skittering over the surface of a thousand different styles. For me this means a daily patient retracing of the Bach Chorales, and also the writing of my own four-part chorales in that highly restricted style. The result of my contemplating these highly restricted, yet timeless, sets of tonal relationships is a tremendous sense of groundedness and liberation in my own work.[6]

Robert Hohner conducting a performance of "Crown of Thorns" at Central Michigan University, 1996

Maslanka believes that restrictions lead to great creativity, as in Johann Sebastian Bach's "Goldberg Variations" (1741) or "The Art of the Fugue" (1750), but that "when possibilities are limitless, the mind boggles and shuts down."[7] Maslanka's formal structure, triadic harmonies, and standard instrumentation in many of his works are founded in this ethic of restraint and may further account for the appeal of these compositions.

In addition to "Crown of Thorns," Maslanka is well known for his six symphonies and dozens of pieces written for a variety of ensembles and solo instruments. He has received three National Endowment for the Arts Composer Fellowships (1974, 1975, and 1989), annual ASCAP Composer Awards since 1980, and numerous other compositional awards. During his undergraduate career at the Oberlin College Conservatory (1961–65), Maslanka studied composition with Joseph Wood and spent a year at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria (1963–64). Maslanka earned his Master of Music and Doctor of Philosophy (1971) degrees in Music Theory and Composition from Michigan State University, where he studied composition with H. Owen Reed,[8] theory with Paul Harder, and clarinet with Elsa Ludwig-Verdehr. In 1990, after twenty years of university teaching in New York, Maslanka became a free-lance composer, working exclusively by commission. He currently lives in Missoula, Montana, but travels regularly to serve as a guest composer at universities, music festivals, and conferences.[9]

In a collection of letters to young composers, Maslanka offers this advice on finding a unique voice:

> How can a person be original? You have 12 half steps of the equal-tempered system; you have the fundamental concepts of pulse and rhythm, the concepts of melody, counterpoint and accompaniment, the sounds of the common instru-

ments and voices. What's new? YOU are. You have not existed before in your current form. If you persist in your craft, your way of using the received materials of language will be unique. When I was 28 I discovered very surprisingly and suddenly that the C-major chord was MINE. Its presence in *my* context made it express something uniquely mine. I have since discovered my unique voice fully within the terms of what must be described as received language. How do you find your own unique voice? By finding whatever musical idea intrigues you, holds your attention, gives you a strong feeling; by being absorbed in the moment as you compose.[10]

One can hear the prominent position of the C-major chord in "Crown of Thorns." The first theme is based in C major, with broken arpeggiated figures in the marimbas providing harmonic foundation (see Figure 1), while the accompaniment to the second theme oscillates between e-minor and C-major tonalities.

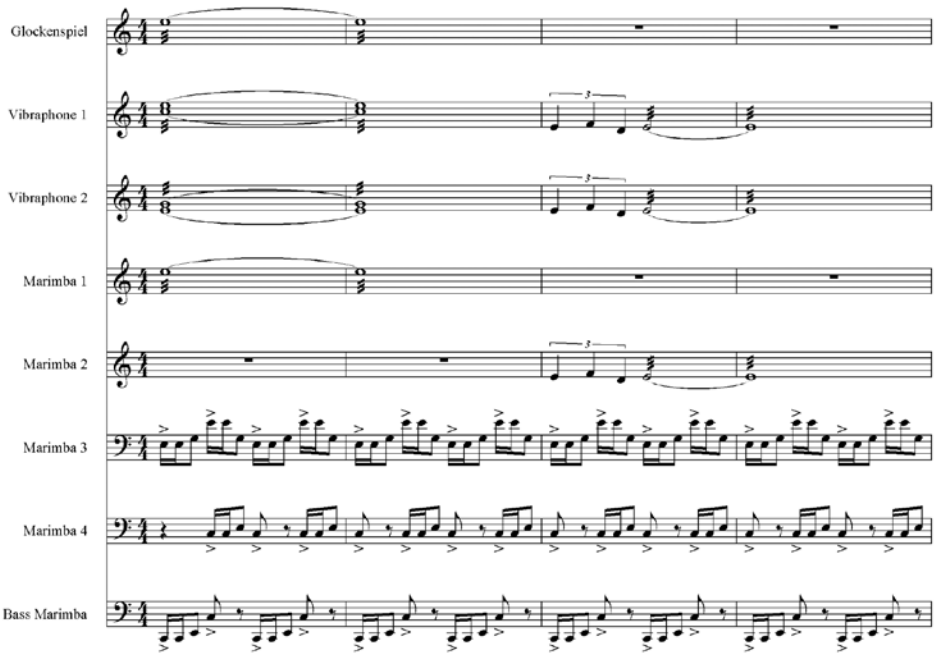
The triadic figures in the marimba parts and the first theme's C-major foundation, however, are not entirely representative of Maslanka's harmonic language. Dissonance plays an important structural role as the piece moves from an opening d-minor ninth chord, with the dissonant notes voiced as seconds (see Figure 2), to the eventual consonant close in D major.

Just before the climax of the development section in A-flat major, a string of dissonant chords in parallel motion adds harmonic tension to the tension created by the section's sudden irregular meter (see Figure 3). Along with creative uses of dissonances, Maslanka departs from convention by avoiding predictable harmonic movements. For instance, after the first theme in C major, one might expect the second theme to be in either the dominant (G major) or the relative minor (a minor). Instead, Maslanka surprises the listener with e minor for the second theme.

Besides "Crown of Thorns," Maslanka has written four other percussion ensemble pieces[11]: "Arcadia II – Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble" (1982), "Montana Music – Three Dances for Percussion" (1992), "In Lonely Fields" (1997), and "Hohner" (2001). All four were premiered by the Robert Hohner Percussion Ensemble from Central Michigan University. From their first encounter in 1987 until Hohner's death in 2000, Maslanka and Bob Hohner were close friends and advocates of one another's work. Maslanka recalled how he came to know Hohner after a chance meeting:

> Bob and I [met] at the premiere of "Symphony No. 2." This was in 1987 at the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) national conference at Northwestern University. I don't know why Bob was there, but he introduced himself to me in the lobby of the concert hall, and said that he had heard that I had written "Arcadia II – Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble." At that time I considered the concerto a failed piece. Maybe three attempts had been made by percussion ensembles to read the piece, and nobody could make it sound. I was told that it didn't work, and that maybe the third movement could be recomposed into something useful. Bob asked if he could see the music. I gave him the warnings about it, and eventually sent it to him. I then forgot about it until several months later when a rehearsal recording came in the mail. By that time I had not thought about the piece in several years. Bob had started his exploration of the music and had begun to make the sounds. I think it was the following spring that I went to Michigan to work with him on performance and recording. He did a brilliant job, and I have to say that there has not yet been a better performance of this music.[12]

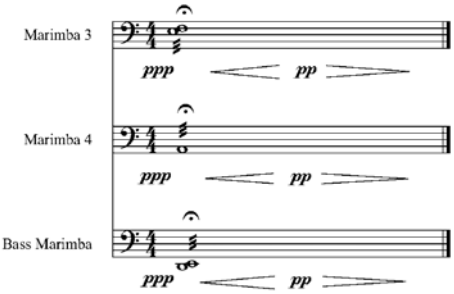
Figure 1: "Crown of Thorns" mm. 47–50; entrance of Theme 1 and accompanying C-major material

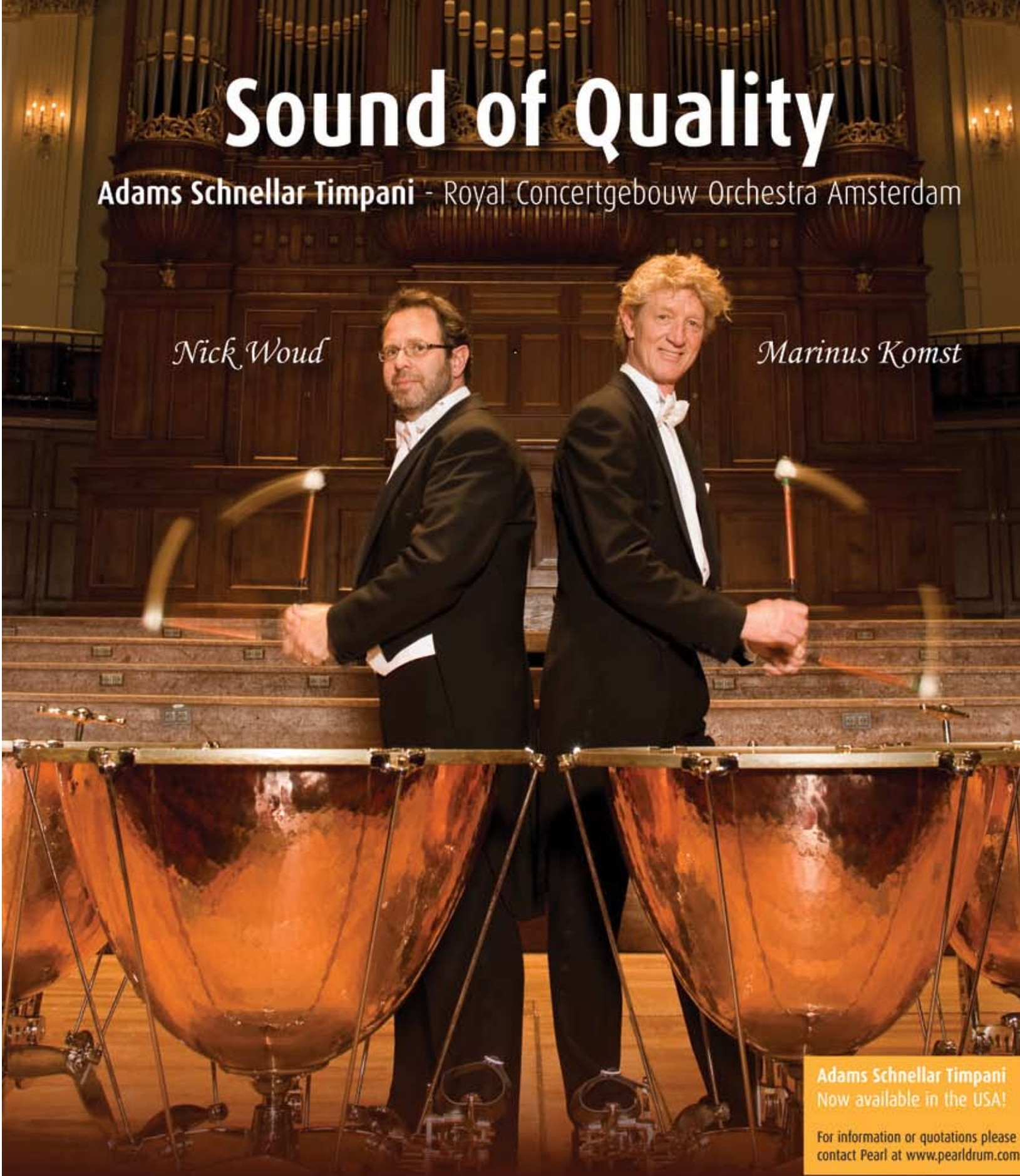


Along with premiering "Arcadia II" in January of 1988, Hohner premiered "Montana Music" and "In Lonely Fields." In 1996, Hohner and his ensemble released a compact disc titled *The Percussion Music of David Maslanka* on the Albany label. The disc features recordings of "Montana Music," "Arcadia II," and "Crown of Thorns."

The piece titled "Hohner" was commissioned and premiered by the Robert Hohner Percussion Ensemble as a memorial work after Hohner's death in 2000. Maslanka described how the piece derived from an earlier project he had discussed with Hohner:

Figure 2: "Crown of Thorns" m. 1; dissonant d-minor ninth chord





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A few years ago I had the idea to write a symphony for percussion. The central image of the idea was a stage full of percussion, with a section of vibraphones and a section of marimbas. Bob Hohner was very taken with the idea, and had started to work up a commission to support my writing. With his unexpected passing, the project went on hold. I was then asked to write a memorial piece for Bob, and the "stage full of percussion" idea was still in my head. "Hohner" is for three vibraphones, nine marimbas, two sets of timpani, a large collection of metal, wood, and skin percussion, piano, and double bass—a total of 21 players. It is not the projected symphony, but it is certainly a prototype for such a work.[13]

"Hohner" definitely requires more percussionists than any of Maslanka's other works, but one could argue that all of Maslanka's percussion ensemble pieces honor his concept of "a stage full of percussion."

Figure 3: "Crown of Thorns" mm. 198–201; dissonances prior to climax of development section

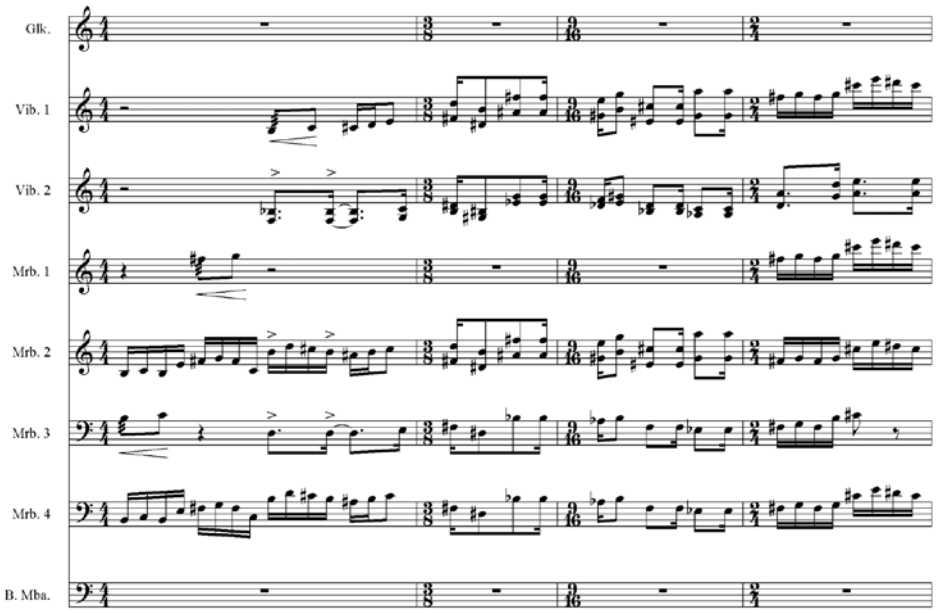
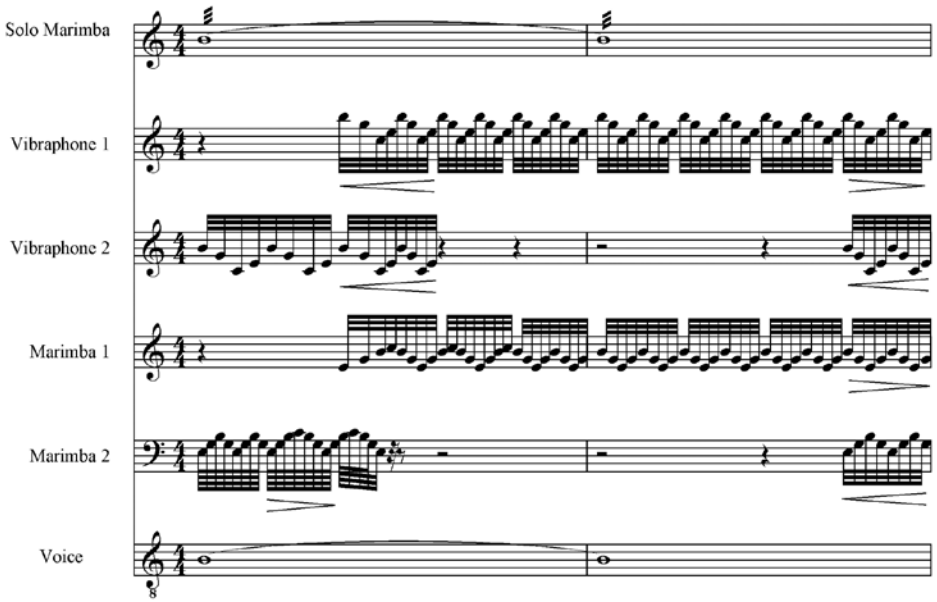


Figure 4: "Arcadia II" mm. 21–22 of first movement; interlocking, triadic keyboard arpeggios



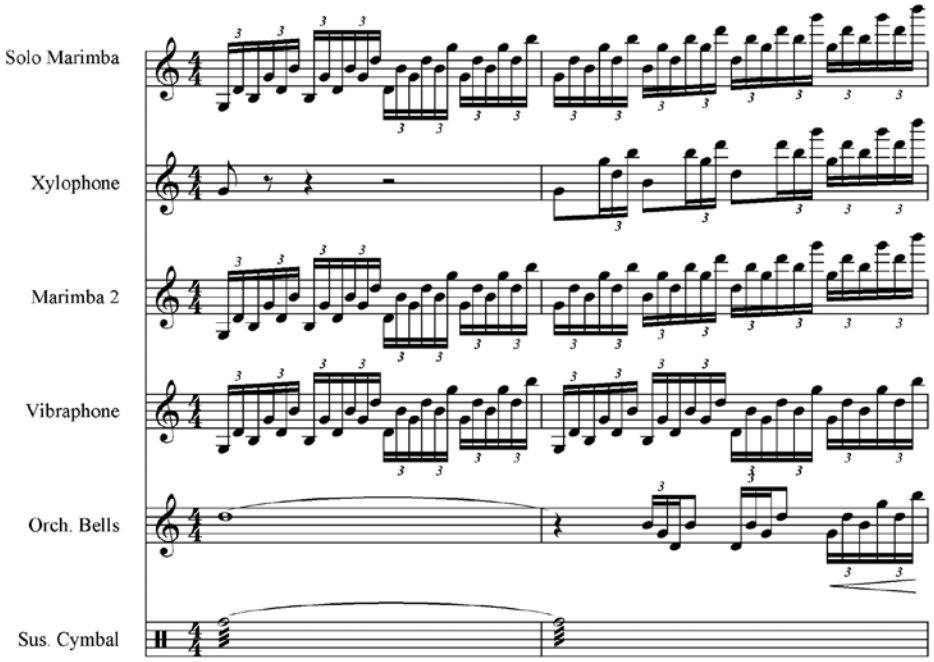
"Arcadia II" is a massive work by any estimation. The three-movement piece lasts approximately thirty-five minutes and calls for over 70 instruments[14] (see instrument list in Appendix). Unlike "Crown of Thorns," "Arcadia II" makes use of a few relatively unusual instruments including Indian bells, bull roar, two slide whistles, and bamboo sticks. Harvey Vogel commissioned the piece in 1982 for Leigh Howard Stevens to perform.[15] The first performers who attempted "Arcadia II" found the piece exceedingly difficult and considered its performance impossible. With Todd Johnson playing the solo marimba part, the Robert Hohner Percussion Ensemble recorded "Arcadia II" in 1988 and again in 1996. The University of Utah Percussion Ensemble, under the direction of Douglas J. Wolf, recorded the first movement in 1991.[16] Recently, Jeffrey A. White of Oklahoma City University has performed "Arcadia II" with various university percussion ensembles.[17]

Like "Crown of Thorns," "Arcadia II" is written in clear formal structures with primarily triadic harmonies and recurring themes. The first and third movements are in sonata form and the second is a through-composed song. The first and third movements both contain the interlocking, triadic keyboard arpeggios characteristic of Maslanka's keyboard style (see Figures 4 and 5).

In his dissertation "An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti," Michael L. Varner traces nine themes throughout the work. An example is the "rollicking" theme of triadic sextuplets in the third movement (see Figure 6). Varner writes: "Melodic gestures are perhaps one of the most prevalent feature of Maslanka's music [sic]. "Arcadia II" takes small motivic cells…and develops them in different ways throughout all three movements. Long melodies are rarely heard."[18] Though long melodies are infrequent, the returning melodic gestures provide a sense of cohesion throughout the piece.

"Arcadia II" contains several programmatic elements that reflect Maslanka's engagement with the physical world. According to Maslanka's program notes, the title "Arcadia" means "a pastoral district of ancient Greece, or any place of rural peace and simplicity. It refers as well to the mythic land of human origin… ["Arcadia II"] is a musical prayer for the well-being of earth and for a return to ancient

Figure 5: "Arcadia II" mm. 106–107 of third movement; interlocking, triadic keyboard arpeggios



reverence for earth."[19]

Each movement contains specific references to natural sounds. The Indian bell sounds with which the first movement begins represent fireflies that Maslanka saw in New Hampshire. The directions in the score read as follows: "The bell sounds emerge gradually and settle to a fairly constant level of activity: like fireflies in a field at nightfall: one is seen and then another and another until the field is alive."[20]

The non-conducted xylophone part in the second movement (see Figure 7) mimics Maslanka's favorite bird, a thrush. In the third movement, Maslanka calls for one player to strike bamboo sticks against one another. His instructions in the score

Figure 6: "Arcadia II" m. 22 of third movement; "rollicking" theme

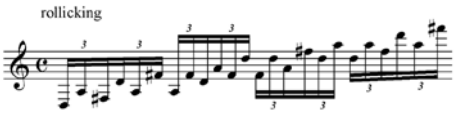
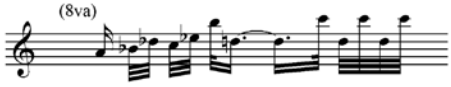


Figure 7: "Arcadia II" m. 16 of second movement; excerpt of xylophone "birdsong"



describe the sound: "An ominous, clacking sound like dead tree branches in the wind."[21]

In an interview with Russell Peterson, Maslanka said that he begins composing a piece "by taking long walks and opening my mind up and receiving pictures. It's a process that I can only explain as dreaming while awake."[22] The programmatic elements in "Arcadia II" suggest that the physical space of Maslanka's walks affects what the composer calls his "active imagining."

"Montana Music" shares several features with "Arcadia II." Like "Arcadia II," this piece was written with the natural world in mind. Maslanka writes that the movements are "nocturnal, lunar, inward pieces, dedicated to the spirit of the earth, which speaks through them. Through this music I have a very personal vision of the slow dance of creation, transformation and rebirth."[23]

"Montana Music – Three Dances for Percussion" is the first of four pieces titled "Montana Music" that Maslanka wrote in 1992 and 1993.[24] Maslanka writes that the "Montana Music" pieces contain:

> No musical crossover, yet they all spring from a single root point which I feel to be the powerful spirit of life emanating from the Montana land. This spirit as I perceive it is a rich and complex thing: it is the vibrant life force with all its earth manifestations, yet along with it there is a sharp element of pain and urgency. My response to this force has been a deepened sense of the quality of the moment, a better understanding of the need to experience the moment fully, and then to release it without regret, and a deeper sense of the timeless as perceived through the shifting patterns of sound in time.[25]

The "Montana Music" for percussion is in three movements and lasts approximately twenty-five minutes. Seven percussionists, along with piano and double bass, perform on a variety of keyboards, drums, shakers, and metal instruments similar to that of "Arcadia II" (see instrument list in Appendix). Each of the three movements is in ABA form. In the program notes, Maslanka writes "This allusion to Classical form gives an objective frame and feel to a music which is otherwise intensely personal and impassioned."[26] As in Maslanka's other works for percussion ensemble, melodic themes unite each movement.

Several features characteristic of Maslanka's writing distinguish "Montana Music" from "Arcadia II." Maslanka's penchant for the Bach chorales appears in the third movement of "Montana Music" with an original chorale. The marimbas and piano first play the melody, with vibraphone and chimes adding in at measure 81 (see Figure 8). Measure 81 begins the climax of the piece with a difficult passage for the Percussion 5 part on two bongos, a set of six congas, tenor drum, bass drum, snare drum, and anvil (see Figure 9). This peak is also marked by an offstage siren, which reaches its highest point at measure 98.

Besides the siren, Maslanka calls for other non-conventional instruments and sounds such as bamboo rain tree, bowed idiophones (including cymbals, gongs, crotales, marimba, and vibes), crotale on timpani head, anvil, and bull roar. The pianist must strike the piano strings, strike the soundboard with a mallet, play clusters with the palms, and "press edge of coin firmly into low string, push to create single 'blip'"[27] in addition to playing the piano normally. Maslanka's distinctive interlocking keyboard arpeggios appear in the "B" section of the first movement (see Figure 10). In all three movements, the vibraphone acts as the central sonic focus.

Maslanka's next piece for percussion,

Figure 8: "Montana Music" mm. 81–90 of third movement; chorale in piano part

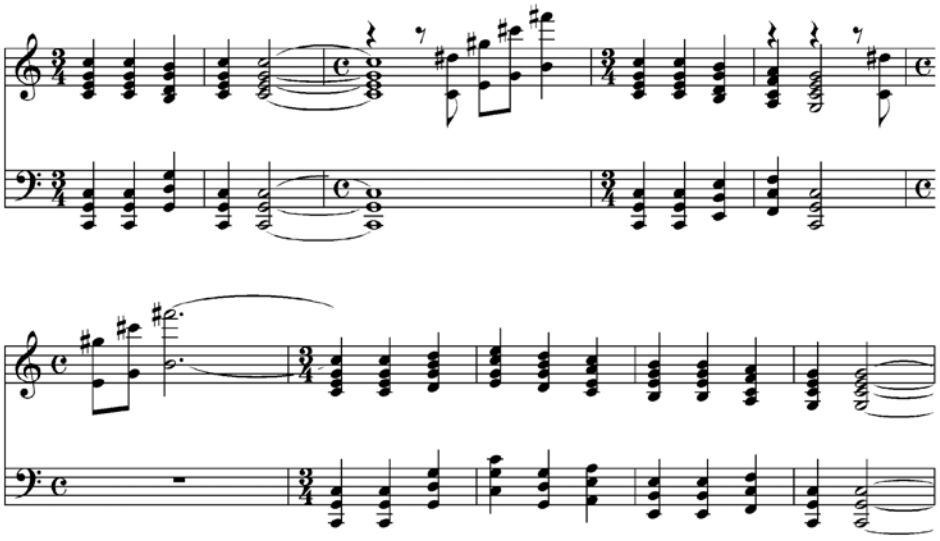


Figure 9: "Montana Music," mm. 81–83 of third movement; excerpt of Percussion 5 part

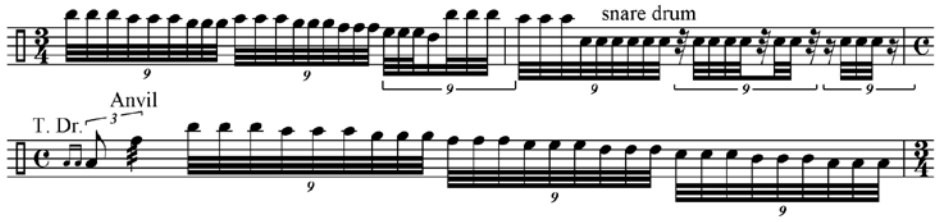
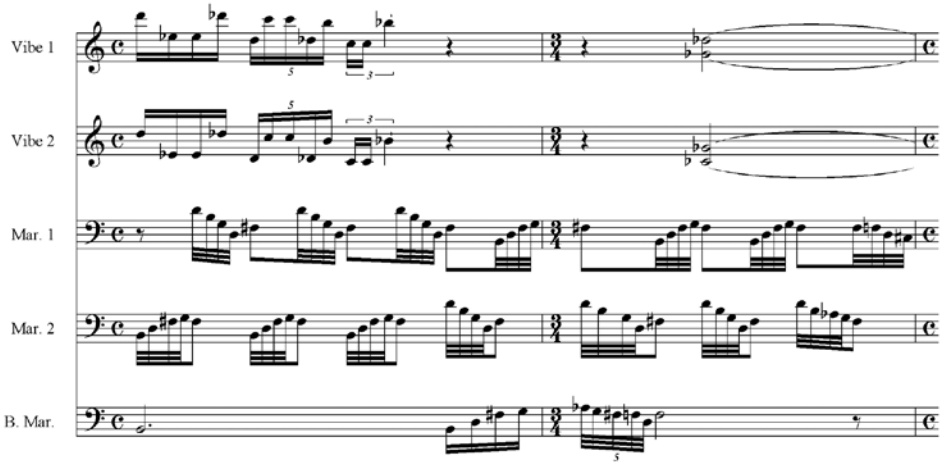


Figure 10: "Montana Music" mm. 83–84 of first movement; interlocking keyboard arpeggios



"In Lonely Fields," features vibraphone, one of many similarities with the aforementioned pieces. "In Lonely Fields" is a fifteen-minute, single-movement work for seven percussionists and chamber orchestra (see instrument list in Appendix). Maslanka designates Percussion 1 and 2 as soloists, positioned in front of the orchestra, with the other five percussionists surrounding the back and sides of the orchestra. Robert and Mary Sue Lowman commissioned the piece as a memorial for their son, Bradley Lowman, a member of the Robert Hohner Percussion Ensemble who died in an auto accident in 1991.[28]

Maslanka drew on the natural world and the Bach chorales for inspiration. He writes:

> The title "In Lonely Fields" arises out of many solitary walks in the fields and mountains near my home in western Montana. During such walks a progressive meditation developed on the life force of Bradley Lowman—on its urgent and lively sense of itself, its need for resolution and movement, and on the needs of family and friends who have been left behind.[29]

The score reflects the influence of Maslanka's walks at measure 75, where he has written "blue sky, white clouds, autumn leaves."[30] The influence of the Bach chorales is unmistakable, as the piece is structured around three chorale melodies "Christ ist erstanden" ("Christ has risen"), "Herr Gott, dich loben wir" ("Lord God we praise you"), and "Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist" ("Now we ask the Holy Spirit"). Maslanka writes that:

> [The chorale melodies] are woven into the musical fabric of my composition and serve as structural supports for the span of the piece. The first [chorale melody] suggests that life is forever, the second that in all things is the presence and hand of God, and third that the spirit of highest love arises out of deepest grief and loss.[31]

The three large sections are marked in the score with the chorale melody titles at measures 31, 128, and 283. The vibraphone and crotale texture in the third section may remind listeners of the vibraphone and glockenspiel texture in the interlude section of "Crown of Thorns" (see Figures 11 and 12) just as the interlocking keyboard arpeggio passages beginning at measure 104 are reminiscent of similar textures in other Maslanka percussion works.

The programmatic effects of "In Lonely Fields" are especially poignant, given the piece's dedication. The Percussion 2 and 4 parts include sections on practice pad, alluding to Lowman's study of percussion. The flutter-tongued flute notes represent a telephone ringing, a reference to the devastating phone call the Lowman family received on the night of the

Figure 11: "In Lonely Fields" mm. 283–286; vibraphone and crotale texture

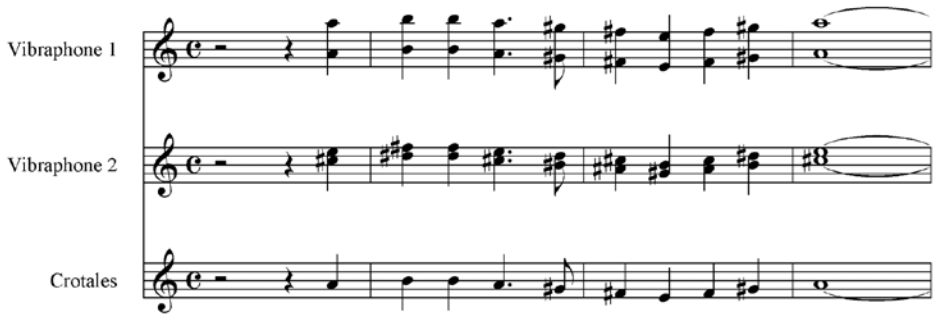


Figure 12: "Crown of Thorns" mm. 152–155; vibraphone and glockenspiel texture

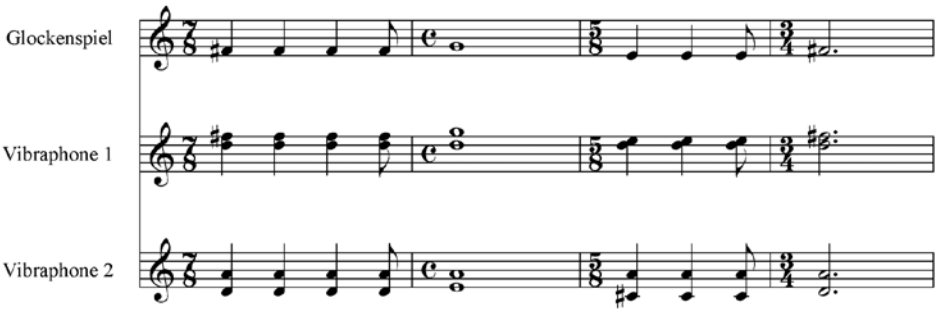
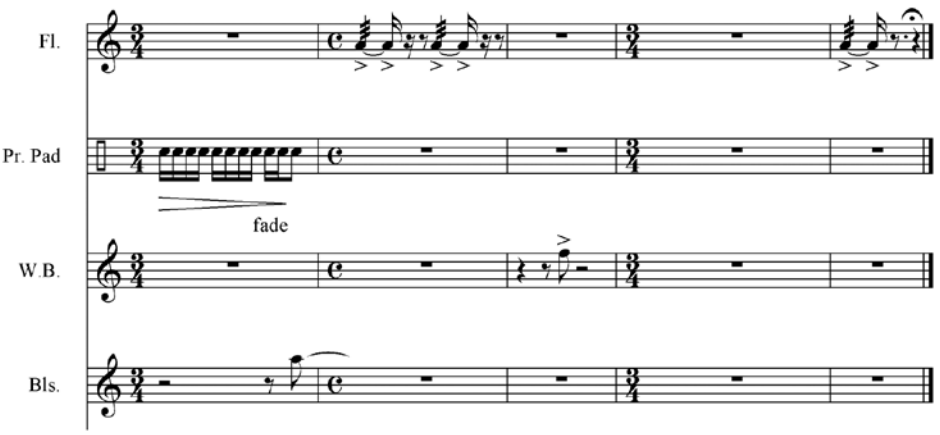


Figure 13: "In Lonely Fields" mm. 321–325; practice pad fades and flute continues "telephone ring"



accident. The piece ends with the practice pad fading away as the flute continues the "telephone ring" (see Figure 13).

Maslanka's most recent work for percussion ensemble, "Hohner," is a memorial piece dedicated to Robert Hohner. The single-movement piece lasts approximately twenty-two minutes and calls for twenty-one players.[32] The orchestration includes twelve keyboard parts, seven percussion parts, piano, and double bass (see instrument list in Appendix). Most of the instruments required are conventional, though Maslanka writes for three hand bells in the Percussion 5 part. An unusual sonority occurs in measure 10 when the performers speak the name "Hohner" in a loud whisper.

Similarly to Maslanka's other works for percussion ensemble, "Hohner" is in large ABA form. Maslanka describes the form as follows:

"Hohner" begins with a long, slow,

mournful presentation of the hymn "O Sacred Head Now Wounded." The music rises to a very animated and exuberant middle section—a tribute to Bob's extraordinary life as player and teacher—and finishes with a second rendering of "O Sacred Head," now very quiet and interior, each phrase presented against a backdrop of silence.[33]

While the middle section does have some interlocking keyboard arpeggios (see, for example, measures 117–146), interlocking scalar passages and unison rhythms are more common (see Figures 14 and 15). In Figure 14, Maslanka layers a rhythmically complex melody over the interlocking scalar passages, reminiscent of the vibraphone melody layered over the marimba arpeggios in the first movement of "Montana Music" (compare Figures 14 and 10). The harmonies throughout the piece are mainly triadic and supported with root notes in the double bass part, while two timpani parts frequently play echoing soloistic lines instead of harmonic roots.

From this brief overview, one may see how "Arcadia II," "Montana Music," "In Lonely Fields," and "Hohner" share several characteristics of Maslanka's most famous percussion ensemble work, "Crown of Thorns." These features include interlocking keyboard arpeggios, triadic harmonies, large ternary forms, and programmatic elements reflecting on natural life.

Since these pieces share so many similarities, one may wonder why "Crown of Thorns" has become more popular than the others. Perhaps one reason could be ease of performance. The score and parts to "Crown of Thorns" are readily available for purchase from the University of Oklahoma Percussion Press, while one can only rent scores and parts to "Arcadia II," "Montana Music," and "In Lonely Fields" from the Theodore Presser Company. "Hohner" is available for purchase through Keyboard Percussion Publications, but its requirement of twenty-one highly skilled players is a daunting challenge to most ensembles. Likewise, the plethora of instruments needed to perform "Arcadia II," "Montana Music," and "Hohner" could make performance impossible for many groups. "In Lonely Fields" involves a chamber orchestra, adding to the difficulty of scheduling rehearsals and finding adequate rehearsal space. Although Maslanka's lesser-known works for percussion ensemble present organizational issues, they also provide new and gratifying musical challenges to ensembles that have enjoyed learning and performing "Crown of Thorns."

Figure 14: "Hohner" mm. 88–89; interlocking scalar passages

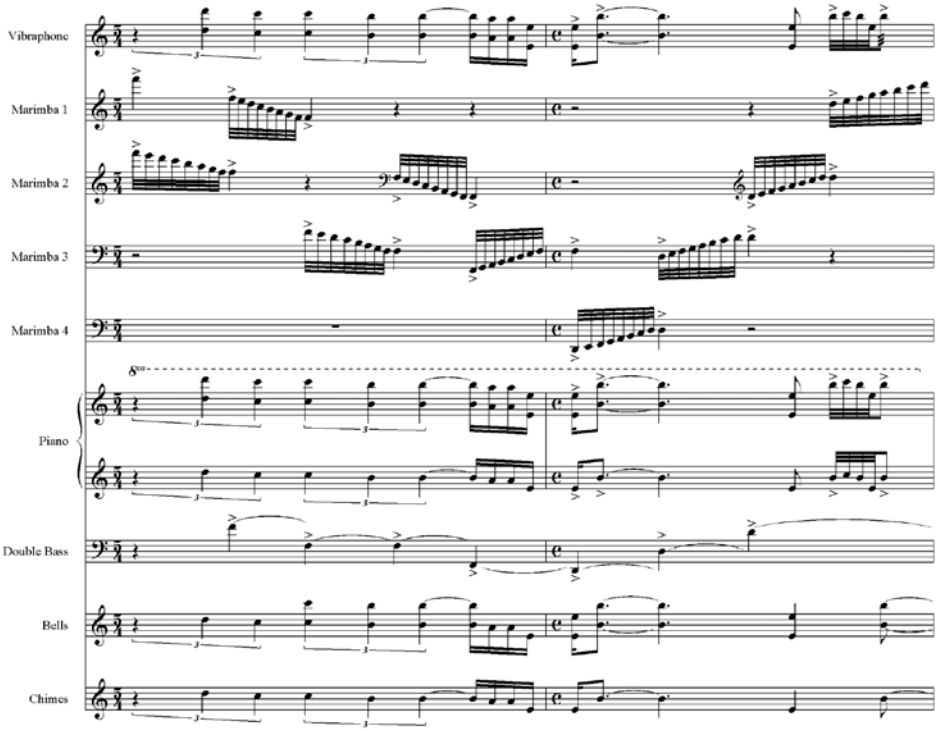
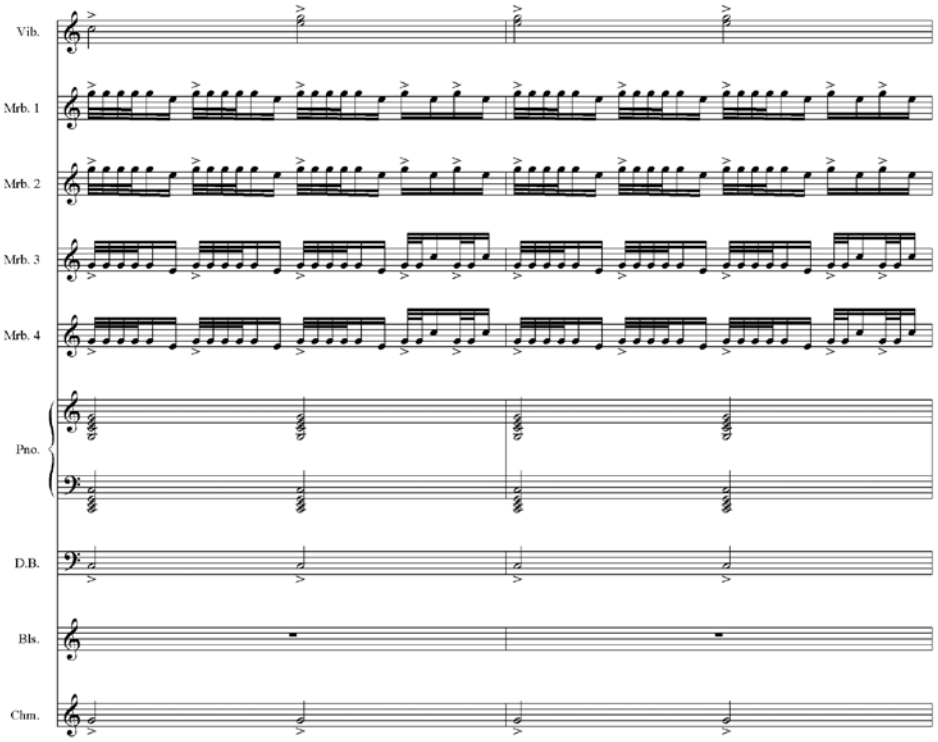


Figure 15: "Hohner" mm. 105–106; unison marimba rhythms



END NOTES

[1] Lisa Rogers, "Choices: Research Percussion Ensemble Literature," *Percussive Notes* 42, no. 6 (2004): 64-68.

[2] Raymond Helble's "Diabolic Variations" (1985) also received nine nominations and shares the top spot on Harris' list with Maslanka's "Crown of Thorns."

[3] Wyre uses three marimbas, bass marimba, vibraphone, and crotales in "Marubatoo."

[4] Jerome Rosen, "Review of Three Pieces; Clarinet and Piano," *Notes* 42, no. 3 (1986), 649.

[5] David Maslanka, "Some things that are true," Keynote address at the Society of Composers Incorporated Region VIII Conference. 20 Nov. 1998, <davidmaslanka.com> (5 November 2007).

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] H. Owen Reed co-authored *Scoring for Percussion and the Instruments of the Percussion Section* (Prentice Hall, 1969) with Joel T. Leach. It is one of the finest texts on percussion scoring and notation.

[9] David Maslanka, "Bio" and "Curriculum Vitae," <davidmaslanka.com> (5 Nov. 2007).

[10] David Maslanka, "Thoughts on Composing," Excerpts from letters to young composers, <davidmaslanka.com> (5 Nov. 2007).

[11] In addition to these pieces, Maslanka has written a large work for steel drum band entitled "Time Stream" (2002). This piece was commissioned by James Coviak and the Steelheads Steel Drum Band of Mott Community College in Flint, Michigan. "Time Stream" still awaits its premiere. Two works not originally written for percussion, "Arcadia" for cello quartet (1982) and "Montana Music – Fantasy on a Chorale Tune for Violin and Viola" (1993), have been performed on marimba quartet and vibraphone and marimba duet, respectively, with Maslanka's permission and under the direction of Jeffrey A. White.

[12] David Maslanka, <david@davidmaslanka.com> "RE: Questions," Personal e-mail (16 Oct. 2007).

[13] David Maslanka, "Hohner," <davidmaslanka.com> (6 Nov. 2007).

[14] Even more instruments are needed if the players choose not to share instruments.

[15] Michael L. Varner, *An Examination of David Maslanka's Marimba Concerti*, DMA Dissertation, University of North Texas, 1999, 18.

[16] Ibid., 19.

[17] Maslanka, "RE: Questions."

[18] Varner, 27.

[19] David Maslanka, "Arcadia II" (New York: Carl Fischer, 1992): program notes.

[20] Maslanka, "Arcadia II," 1.

[21] Maslanka, "Arcadia II," 32.

[22] Russell Peterson, "An Interview with David Maslanka," *Saxophone Symposium* 24 (Fall 1999): 106.

[23] David Maslanka, "Montana Music – Three Dances for Percussion" (New York: Carl Fischer, 1996): program notes.

[24] The other "Montana Music" pieces are "Montana Music – Fantasy on a Chorale Tune for Violin and Viola" (1993), "Montana Music – Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano" (1993), and "Montana Music – Chorale Variations for Wind Ensemble" (1993).

[25] Maslanka, "Montana Music," program notes.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., 3.

[28] Lowman performed on the premiere of "Arcadia II" in 1988.

[29] David Maslanka, "In Lonely Fields" (King of Prussia, PA: Theodore Presser Company, 1997): program notes.

[30] Ibid., 15.

[31] Ibid., program notes.

[32] It is possible to use twenty players, with two (instead of three) players on the Marimba 1 part.

[33] Maslanka, "Hohner."

APPENDIX
Instrumentation Lists

"Arcadia II – Concerto for Marimba and Percussion Ensemble" (1982)

Solo Marimba – amplified

Percussion 1: 2 or More Small Indian Bells, Vibraphone (need double bass bow)*, 2 Slide Whistles, Xylophone*

Percussion 2: 2 or More Small Indian Bells, Vibraphone (need double bass bow)*, Temple Blocks*, 4 Gongs (small to large)*, 3 Suspended Cymbals (small, medium, large), Hi-hat Cymbal*, Bass Drum, Claves, Small Tom-tom (wire brushes), Large Cymbal (on table), Marimba (need double bass bow)*, Ratchet*, Small Snare Drum, Orchestra Bells*

Percussion 3: 2 or More Small Indian Bells, Marimba*, Tenor Drum, Bass Drum, Tom-toms (full set)*, Xylophone*, Crotales, Orchestra Bells*, Temple Blocks*, Small Suspended Cymbal, Vibraphone*, Bongos, Tom-tom set, Snare Drum, Small Snare Drum*, 2 Woodblocks (small, large)

Percussion 4: 2 or More Small Indian Bells, Marimba*, 4 Gongs (small to large, need double bass bow)*, 3 Suspended Cymbals (small, medium, large), Bull Roar*, Orchestra Bells*, Roto-toms*, Snare Drum*, Small Triangle, Small Snare Drum*, Ratchet*, Anvil (on table)*, Small and Large Woodblocks, Small Suspended Bell, Slide Whistle, Tambourine (on table)*, Vibraphone*

Percussion 5: Snare Drum*, Bull Roar*, 3 Suspended Cymbals (need double bass bow)*, 4 Gongs (small to large)*, Crash Cymbals, Ratchet*, Bass Drum*, Orchestra Bells*, 2 Woodblocks (small, large), Hi-hat Cymbal*, Tam-tam*, Sandpaper Blocks, Large Tom-tom, Tenor Drum, Small Snare Drum*, 4 Bamboo Sticks (ca 2 feet long and 1 inch in diameter; substitutions such as heavy field drum sticks are possible)*, Bell Plate, Tom-toms*, Slide Whistle

Percussion 6: 2 or More Small Indian Bells, 3 Suspended Cymbals (need double bass bow)*, Anvil (on table)*, Small Triangle, Large Triangle (on table), Antique Cymbals (or crotales), Orchestra Bells*, 4 Gongs (small to large)*, Temple Blocks*, Tam-tam*, 2 Woodblocks (small, large), Ratchet*, Bass Drum with Cymbal*, Bamboo Sticks*, Slapstick

* Players share instruments. Duplicate instruments or sets may be used if available. Three sets of three Suspended Cymbals and three Bass Drums useful, though one will do.

"Crown of Thorns" (1991)

Glockenspiel
Vibraphone I
Vibraphone II
Marimba I
Marimba II
Marimba III
Marimba IV
Bass Marimba

"Montana Music – Three Dances for Percussion" (1992)

Percussion 1: Vibe 1, Three Smaller Gongs (untuned; designated small, medium, large)

Percussion 2: Tuned Gongs (c4, e4, f4), Vibe 2, Chimes, Tam-tam, Three Larger Gongs (untuned)

Percussion 3: Crotales (at Perc. 5 station), Marimba 1, Medium Gong, Small Gourd Rattle

Percussion 4: Small Suspended Cymbal, Marimba 2, Bull Roar, Large Suspended Cymbal

Percussion 5: Two Bongos, Conga set (2 miniature, 1 high, 2 medium, 1 large), Snare Drum, Tenor Drum, Bass Drum, Small Cabasa, Very Small Shaker, Bass Marimba, Crotales, Crotale on timpani head (Perc. 6 station), Anvil (suspended), One Maraca

Percussion 6: Crotale on timpani head, Small Bull Roar, Timpani, Triangle on timpani head, Bull Roar, Small Suspended Cymbal, Cabasa, Large Suspended Cymbal, Log Drum, Temple Blocks, Crotales (at Perc. 5 station), Very Small Shaker, Claves
Percussion 7: Small Cabasa, Large Gong, Bass Drum, Tuned Gong (d4), Bamboo Rain Tree, Large Claves, Small Claves, Two Log Drums, Tenor Drum, Bass Drum, Large Cabasa, Small Suspended Cymbal, Tam-tam, Ratchet
Piano: In addition, Piano plays: Three Larger Gongs (at Perc. 2 station), Large Woodblock, Small Triangle
Double Bass: In addition, Double Bass plays: One Small Maraca, Small Woodblock, Gongs (at Perc. 1 station), Small Triangle, Crotales (at Perc. 5 station)
Percussion 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 need cello or bass bows
Third Movement: one extra player is needed *offstage* for Siren and Marimba part

"In Lonely Fields" (1997)
Orchestra: Flute, Oboe (dbl. English Horn), Clarinet in B-flat, Bassoon, Horn, Trumpet in C, Trombone, Strings (approx. 54331)
Percussion 1: Vibe 1
Percussion 2: Marimba 1, Woodblock, Very Small Shaker, Practice Pad
Percussion 3: Vibe 2, Log Drum, Tenor Drum, Slapstick
Percussion 4: Tambourine, Bass Drum, Small Suspended Cymbal, Very Small Shaker, Practice Pad, Congas, Tam-tam, Large Suspended Cymbal
Percussion 5: Maraca, Very Small Shaker, Triangle, Cabasa, Timpani, Small Crash Cymbals, Woodblock
Percussion 6: Suspended Cymbals (small, medium, large), Crotales (need cello or bass bow), Bongos, Tenor Drum, Large Tom-tom, Small Crash Cymbals, Medium gong, Chimes
Percussion 7: Marimba 2, Three Small Tom-toms, Large Suspended Cymbal, Bamboo Rain Tree, Orchestra Bells, Woodblock

"Hohner" (2001)
Vibraphone 1
Vibraphone 2
Vibraphone 3
Marimba 1 (3 Marimbas, 4 1/3 octave)
Marimba 2 (2 Marimbas, 4 1/2 octave)
Marimba 3 (2 Marimbas, 4 1/2 octave)
Marimba 4 (2 marimbas, 5 octave)
Piano, Maraca
Double bass
Percussion 1: Timpani, Tam-tam
Percussion 2: Small Gong, Rain stick, Orchestra Bells, Bell Plate (or large bell)
Percussion 3: Medium Gong, Tam-tam, Chimes, Large Suspended Cymbal, Anvil
Percussion 4: Tam-tam, Small Snare Drum, Snare Drum
Percussion 5: Small and Large Suspended Cymbals, Bass Drum, 3 Hand bells, Crash Cymbals
Percussion 6: Snare Drum, Large Suspended Cymbal, 2 Toms, Tenor Drum, Bass Drum, Crotales
Percussion 7: Timpani, Tam-tam
All Vibe and Marimba players have Shakers or Rattles of various sizes

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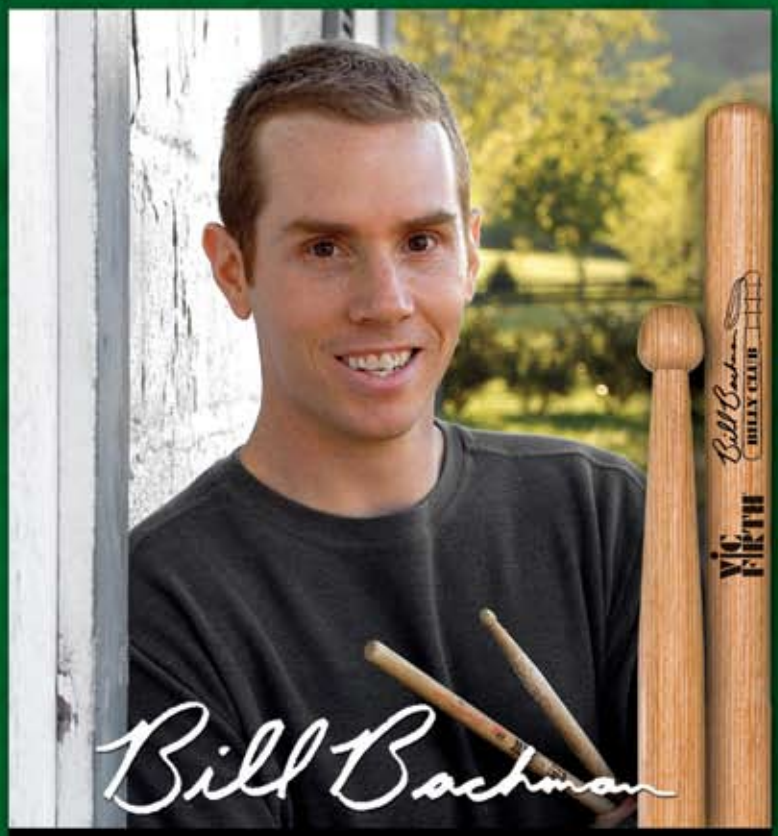

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Tips on Performing for the Young and the Elderly

By Christopher Wilson

Right before my graduation from the Boston Conservatory, I had an interesting discussion with my instructor, Nancy Zeltsman. I was in the Masters in Marimba program, and I had one thing on my mind: finding gigs. She gave me guidance on how to seek out opportunities and where to find them. Her advice was that I needed to work from the ground up, and that I wasn't going to start off booking concert halls and college clinics, so I needed to check my ego at the door and take what I could get. One of her main suggestions was to perform for two very specific age groups: children and the elderly.

I often find that audiences from the collegiate age through middle age approach a classical music concert with some sort of baggage. Some audience members are there because they've been forced to attend and come in with the blanket idea that all classical music is boring. Many of us musicians have encountered the audience member who knows more than we do and has a pretentious demeanor. At the collegiate level, some members of the audience may be there for recital credit and couldn't care less about what's being performed.

By contrast, the young and the elderly are extremely easy to please. Children are almost always open and excited about new experiences, including new music. Their level of enthusiasm cannot be matched by any other age range. With the elderly, there is a built-in advantage that most of them grew up when classical music and jazz were popular styles in America. Therefore, if you are looking for an audience that will be enthusiastic and entertained by classical music, there is no better place to look than at a K–12 school or a home for the elderly (e.g., assisted living centers, retirement homes, and unassisted living centers).

BOOKING THE GIG

Sending a promotional packet works very well with most schools. In the packet, I include a detailed description of my assembly program, a biography with a professional photograph, and my artistic résumé. In the packet I also direct the school to my Website, where they can view videos of me presenting my assembly program.

When promoting my offerings, I have discovered that e-mailing does not work. Although I want to be able to contact potential employers without wasting paper and spending money on postage, e-mailing is very tricky. With schools, you run the risk of the e-mail never reaching its intended party, since most schools have their spam filters set very high, so an e-mail from outside of the school system is very likely to be blocked (especially if it has attachements).

In terms of promotion, each school is different. Some schools prefer a packet to be sent directly to the principal, whereas some schools have a specific activities director. Many schools would like materials sent to the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO, or in some areas, the PTA). In general, it's better not to send a packet to the band director. This is not for any personal reasons, but because they are usually not in charge of what music assemblies are presented at their schools, and they are almost never in charge of funding for such presentations. My suggestion is to call ahead and simply ask where that school would prefer the materials sent.

When trying to book a gig at an assisted living center, I will usually call and ask to speak to an activities director. They are usually not looking for a packet, but would like to speak over the phone. They will want to know the specifics of a program and will want to chat and make sure they are speaking with a pleasant, decent person. Musicians scarcely offer to perform for homes, so they will more than likely book this type of concert as long as it fits in their price range.

PAYMENT AND FEES

The number-one reason I began performing for the elderly was that the gigs paid, and paid well. When I began my professional career, I was living in Boston, which is not a cheap place to live, so I needed to take gigs for which I was making money, not losing money. Performing a public concert (such as in a library, museum, or church) will oftentimes come with a charge for renting the space. In order to offset the monies spent, either charging admission or selling CDs is a way to earn money. If you do not have a CD out and charge admission, you run the risk of low attendance. I don't discourage these types of performances, but when you are first starting out, this can be risky.

This, however, brings up the most difficult decision of any gig: knowing what to charge. Every place is different, and both types of venues are different. It would be nice to have a blanket fee, but up-and-coming artists must be flexible. Some places have a very small budget; some have a very large budget. If you are flexible to your situation, then you are likely be hired again. I hesitate to suggest a specific fee, because not only is each situation different, but also different regions have very varying standards for fees. When I moved from Boston to Iowa, I discovered that I could charge twice as much in Boston as in the Midwest, and I scared off many assisted-living centers in Iowa.

When I started performing for children and the elderly, I did two important things. First, when asked by assisted-living centers how much I charged, I asked them honestly what they normally pay. Even if this was an opportunity for them to lowball me, I've found that they will give a good ballpark figure. Second, the first school I gave an assembly to informed me that they had no budget for performance. Since it was my first performance, I said I would do it for free, provided I could videotape the performance. That way I was able to put clips of my assembly online, and show examples of my performance to other interested schools.

When dealing with money, a blanket fee can scare someone off. If the fee is too high, the venue may think they can't afford it. Then again, if a fee is too low they may not take the performer very seriously. This is why I prefer to speak on the phone with someone and let him or her know I am flexible to his or her particular situation.

PRESENTATION AND ATTIRE

No matter what the gig is, it is important to be as professional as possible. This means being punctual (early, not just on time!), well prepared, and well dressed. When performing for either the young or the elderly, I wear dress slacks and a button-up shirt. At a school, if the performer doesn't look professional, the school will be upset that the performance isn't taken seriously. The elderly tend to dress nicer on a day-to-day basis than most people in our modern culture, so it's better to err on the side of being too formal.

When performing for these age ranges, I like to think about the total package. I perform almost entirely on marimba, and often times it's the first opportunity the audience has had to hear the instrument. I feel it's very important

to explain the instrument to the audience and to demonstrate on it a little before beginning the performance, as this is an opportunity to share my knowledge on the history of the instrument to an interested audience. Because audience members are usually curious and will want to come up and take a closer look, I also leave room at the end of each performance for questions (most of which revolve around the marimba).

While there are many similarities between presenting to the young and to the elderly, there is one fundamental difference. When performing for a school, the performer is being asked to entertain and educate the students. When a school takes time out of their day, they do not want to pay for someone who isn't going to help their students grow; they want them to stay in an educational environment. It's important to make the students feel like they're having fun, so I always try to find ways to include them in the action through questions and audience participation, so that they are enjoying themselves while learning.

For the elderly, though, I try very hard not to approach my performances like an educational experience because I feel that those performances fall under the category of community service. I am not only giving them an afternoon of entertainment, I'm taking time out of my day to converse and spend time with them. Many of the places I perform at are assisted-living centers where the residents don't often have a chance to go out. They desire the entertainment, but also want communication and friendship. While they are often very entertained and eager to learn about the marimba, they will become bored if I spend too much time educating them about the instrument.

PERFORMANCE AND REPERTOIRE

This is the category where there is the most difference between audiences. As a marimba soloist, I usually only bring the marimba to my concerts for the elderly. These performances are more like intimate recitals, so it works to only perform melodic and soothing music on the marimba; however, when I play for kids, I always bring drums. It helps excite them and keep their attention by breaking up the flow of the concert. Plus, I will often have them come on stage to learn some hand-drumming music, which keeps them excited.

I perform a wide variety of repertoire for both settings. For assisted-living centers, I usually perform a mixed concert of classical pieces, a few jazz standards, and many songs from early Broadway musicals. With kids, I try to find a theme that is both entertaining and educational. Right now, my assembly program centers on the history of the marimba, so I perform marimba music from Africa, Central America, and Japan. Some of these pieces are standards, some are transcriptions, but I also include hand drums to teach about West African drumming.

There is also a difference in the way I perform for both audiences. I alter my dynamic spectrum and stage presence for each group. For older audiences I use a smaller dynamic spectrum, and approach the performance in a less dramatic fashion. My goal is to present a soothing and intimate experience—though I was once warned by an activities director at an assisted-living center to not mind if my audience fell asleep. She explained that the time at which I was performing (early afternoon) was right after they were given their medicine, which makes some of them drowsy. Therefore, it wasn't me boring them, it was uncontrollable.

For children, I use a much larger dynamic spectrum and a much more dramatic approach. This helps me to keep the environment lively and fun. I don't view this as sacrificing my true intentions for the music. Instead, I see it as an opportunity to go in many different directions with each piece I perform, and I choose to present music in the manner in which it will best be received.

When people ask me why I perform so often for children and the elderly, I say it started as a thing of necessity and grew into a passion. You may never feel love for your music more than when you play for either of these two audiences. They are both caring and appreciative and will enjoy your performance as long as you give them a good show.

Christopher Wilson received a bachelor's degree from Eastern Washington University as a student of Marty Zyskowski, and studied marimba with Nancy Zeltsman while receiving a masters degree from the Boston Conservatory. Since graduation from the Boston Conservatory, Wilson has entertained audiences around New England and his native Iowa, performing to public audiences who are unfamiliar with classical music and the marimba. PN

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Four-Note Groupings, Part One

By Ed Saindon

Four-Note Grouping is an improvisation technique that uses major and minor triads along with specific passing notes as a means of generating lines. The concept of Four-Note Groupings allows the lines to be more "out" and stretch the possibility of available notes over a chord due to the structural integrity of the triad-based line. Another benefit of this concept is that the improviser can work on the concept and specific sound of Four-Note Groupings without falling into the trap of playing licks and repetitive phrases. The fact that this is a broad concept and there are many possible four-note grouping choices creates a "deep well" from which an improviser can draw.

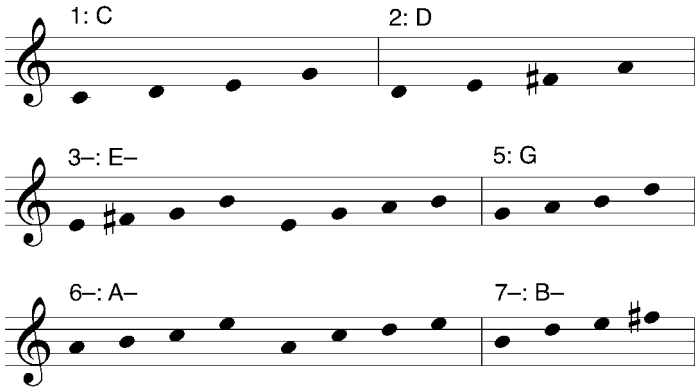
In this focused study we will limit ourselves to the following four-note groupings:

Major triad: 1, 2, 3, 5

Minor triad: 1, 2, flat-3, 5; or 1, flat-3, 4, 5

For the purpose of studying and identifying four-note groupings, the groupings will be labeled according to how the root of the triad is related to the scale of the underlying chord. A minor chord will be indicated with a minus sign (–). Here is an example that lists all of the four-note groupings that are available over a C Maj 7 chord using a Lydian scale:

C Maj 7 chord (Lydian scale): 1, 2, 3–, 5, 6–, 7–



FOUR-NOTE GROUPINGS CHART

A few considerations regarding the following chart:

• Dom 7 sus 4 chords include four-note groupings that may include the third degree of the scale

• Certain triads listed under the Min 7 chord category include four-note groupings that may include the sixth degree of the scale

• Be careful when choosing whether to use the 1 2 flat-3 5 or 1 flat-3 4 5 pattern for a minor triad since an incorrect selection may sound an "avoid" note over the underlying chord.

Major 7
Ionian: 1, 3–, 5, 6–
Lydian: 1, 2, 3–, 5, 6–, 7–

Major 7 #5
Lydian Augmented: 3, 7–
Lydian Augmented, Add Natural 5, Omit 6: 1, 3, 3–, 7–
Bebop: 1

Minor 7
Dorian: 1–, 2–, flat-3, 4, 5–, flat-7
Aeolian: 1–, flat-3, 5–, flat-7
Phrygian: 1–, flat-3

Minor 6
Melodic Minor: 1–, 2–, 4, 5

Minor-Major 7
Melodic Minor: 1–, 2–, 4, 5

Dominant 7
Mixolydian: 1, 5–, 6–
Lydian flat-7: 1, 2, 5–, 6–
Altered Natural 4 & Natural 5: flat-2–, flat-6
Altered: flat-2–, flat-3–, flat-5, flat-6

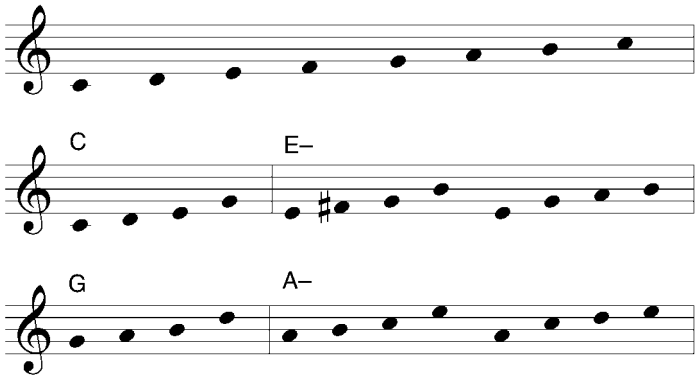
Dominant 7 Sus 4
Mixolydian: 1, 2–, 4, 5–, 6–, flat-7
Mixolydian flat-2, sharp-2: 1–, flat-3, 4, flat-7–
Mixolydian flat-6: 1, 4–, 5–, flat-7
Altered Natural 4 & Natural 5: 1–, flat-2, flat-2–, flat-3, 4–, flat-6, flat-7–

CONSIDERATIONS WITH FOUR-NOTE GROUPINGS

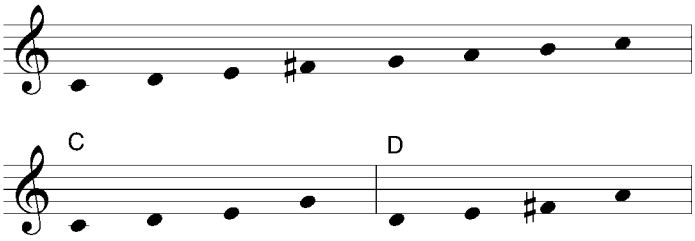
Four-Note Groupings in the Key of C

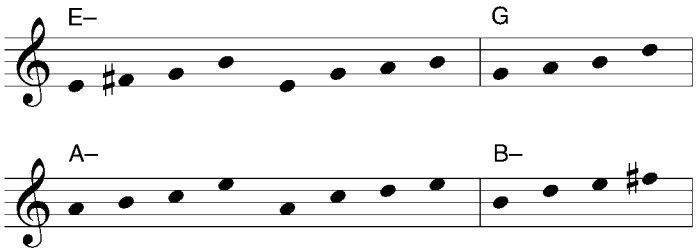
Here is a listing of all four-note grouping possibilities in the key of C according to each chord type and corresponding chord scale as listed in the Four-Note Groupings Chart.

C Major 7
Ionian

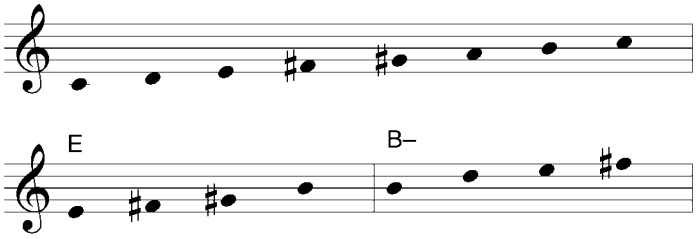


Lydian

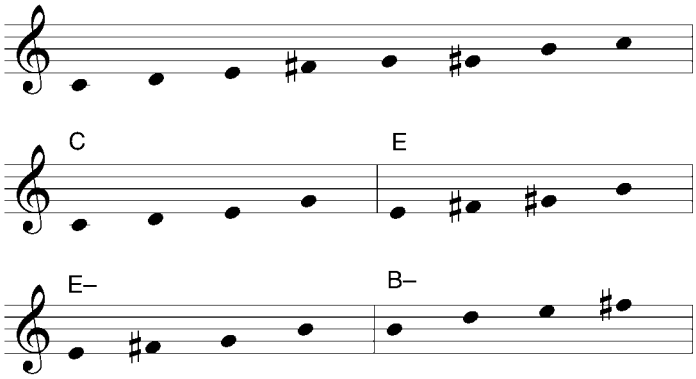




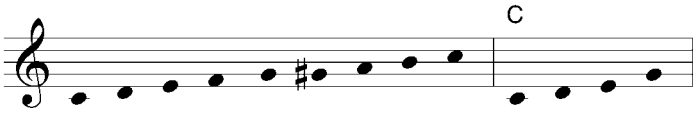
C Major 7 #5
Lydian Augmented



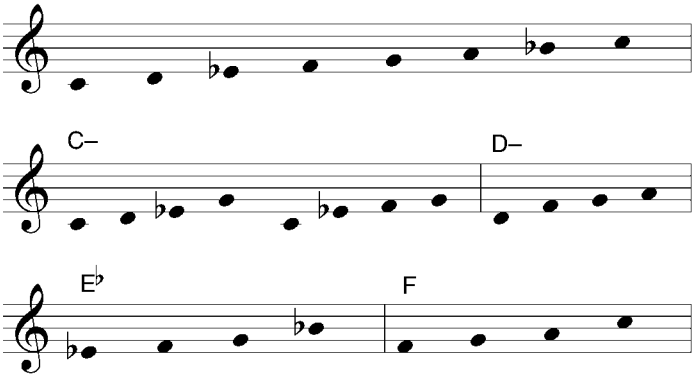
Lydian Augmented, Add Natural 5, Omit 6

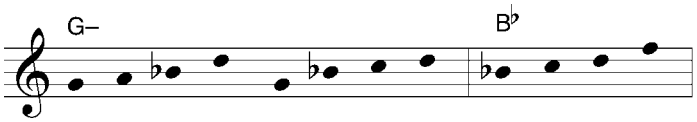


Bebop

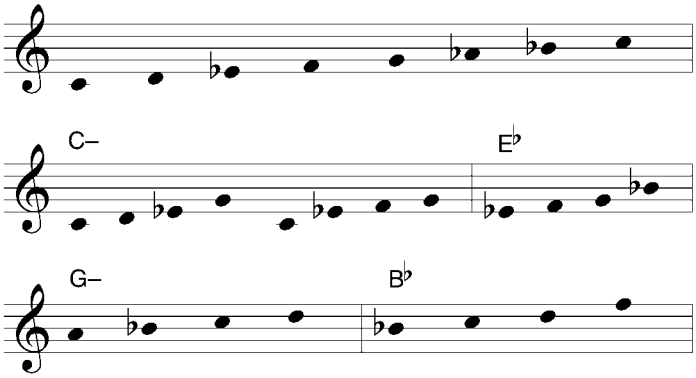


C Minor 7
Dorian

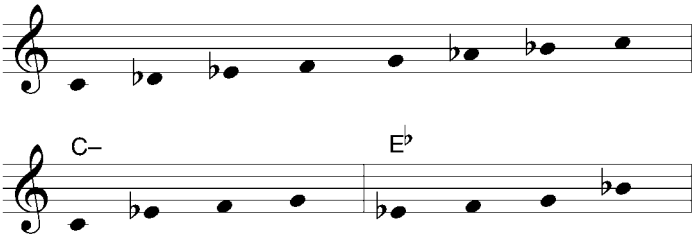




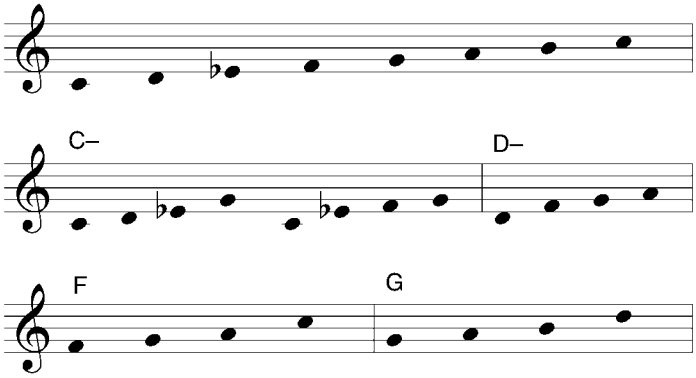
Aeolian



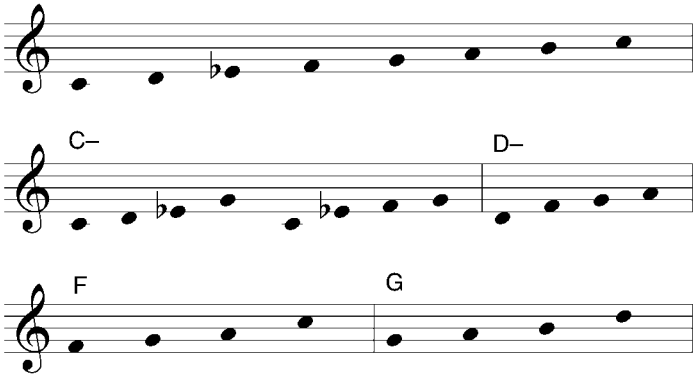
Phrygian



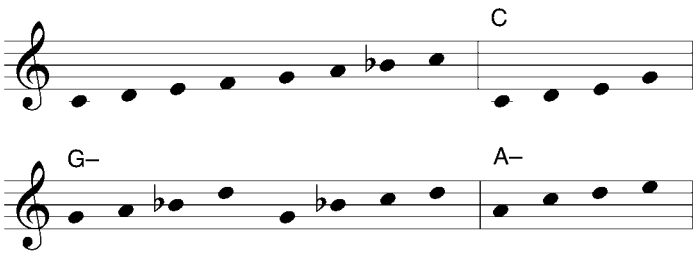
C Minor 6
Melodic Minor



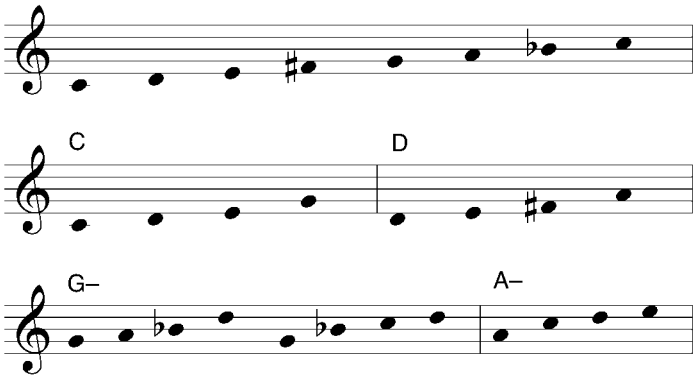
C Minor-Major 7
Melodic Minor



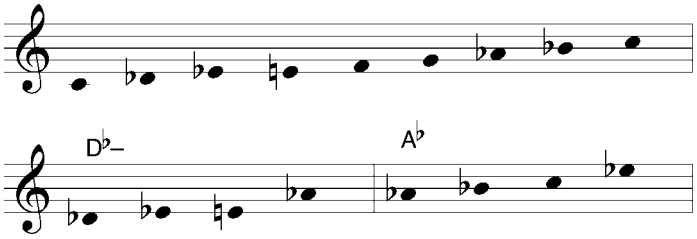
C Dominant 7
Mixolydian



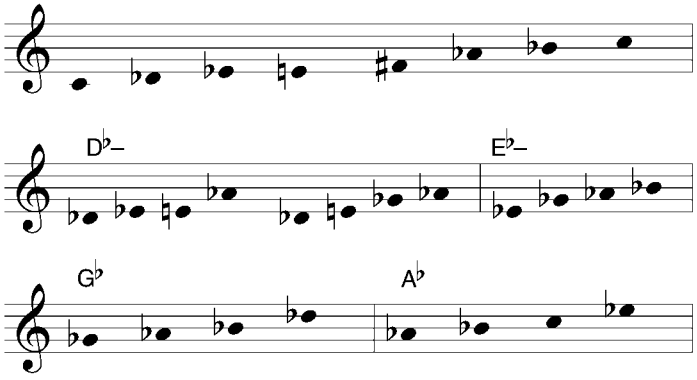
Lydian flat-7



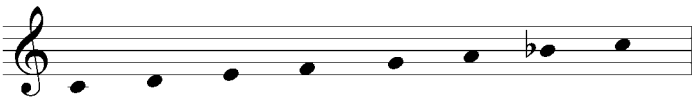
Altered Natural 4 & Natural 5

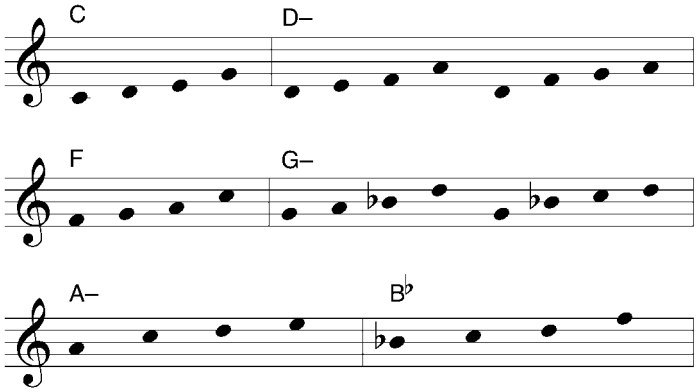


Altered

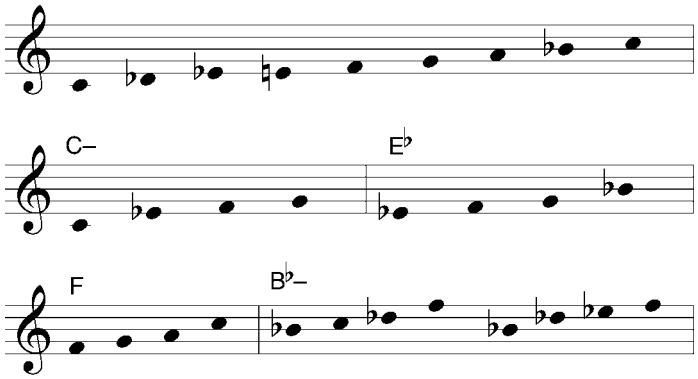


C Dominant 7 Sus4
Mixolydian

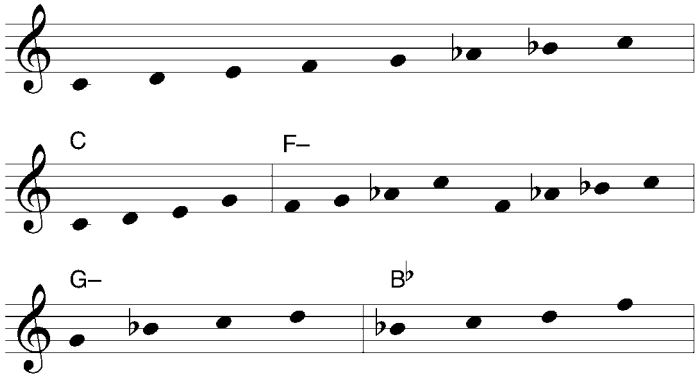




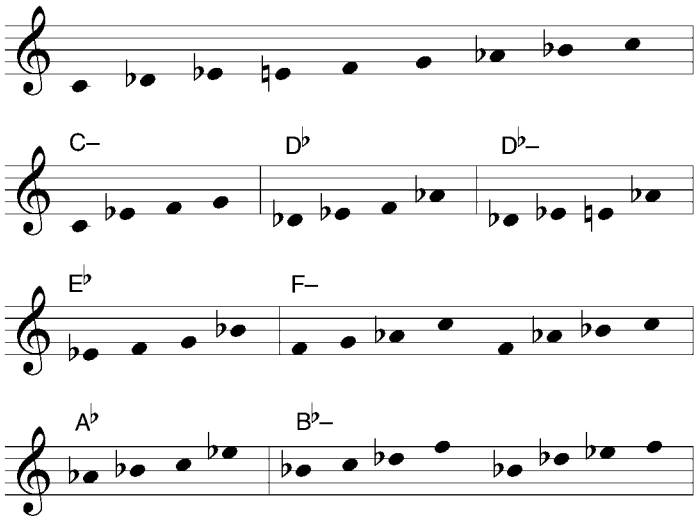
Mixolydian flat-2, sharp-2



Mixolydian flat-6



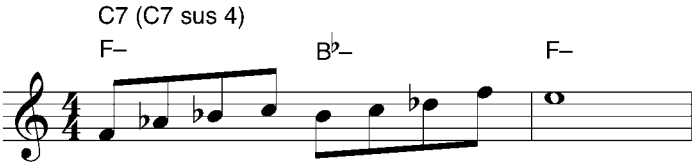
Altered Natural 4 & Natural 5



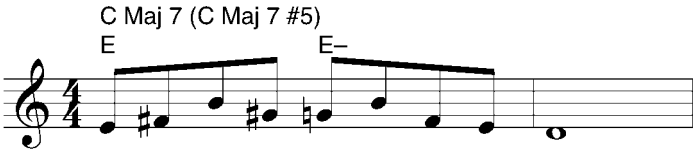
CHORD ALTERATION

The structural strength of a four-note grouping allows the improviser the freedom to alter the original chord while still maintaining clarity and direction in the melodic line.

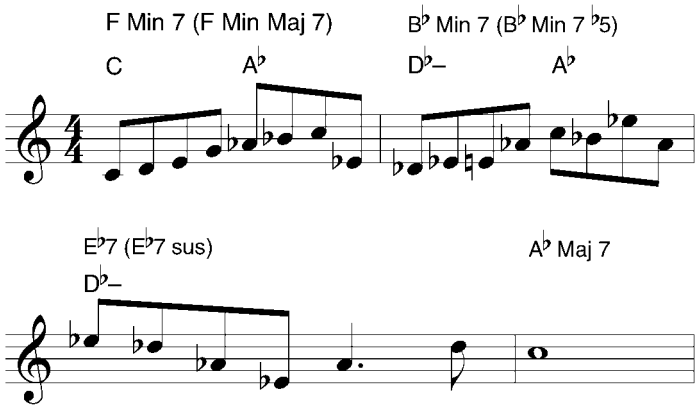
A Dom 7 chord and Dom 7 sus chord can be interchanged. In many situations, a Dom 7 sus chord will sound more interesting and open than a Dom 7 chord. A Dom 7 sus chord with a four-note grouping that sounds the chord's altered tensions can create a unique sound and mood. Note: the chords in parentheses are the altered chords.



A Maj 7 chord can be altered to a Maj 7 #5 chord. Notice the resolution of the #5 of the chord back to the natural fifth. This may or may not be necessary depending upon the musical situation.

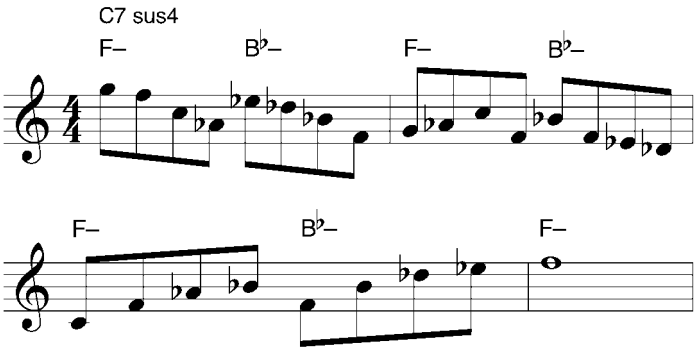


The next example continues with the same concept of chord alteration. The Min 7 in the first measure is altered to a Min Maj 7, the Min 7 in the second measure is altered to a Min 7 flat-5, and the Dom 7 in the third measure is interchanged with a Dom 7 sus chord.



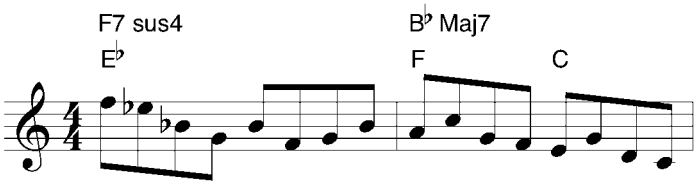
HARMONIC ACTIVITY

Four-note groupings not only bring to the melodic line a sense of direction, they can also create a sense of active harmony over a static chord change. The following example illustrates this concept via the use of two alternating minor triads over a Dom 7 sus.

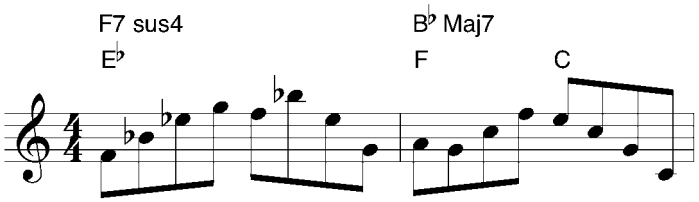


ANGULARITY

Not only can four-note groupings create lines that are based on small intervals, they can also create lines that are very angular. The next example illustrates the use of small intervals.

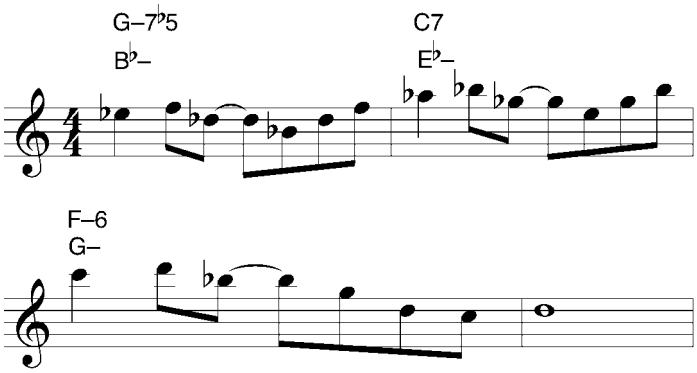


The following example shows the use of more angular lines.



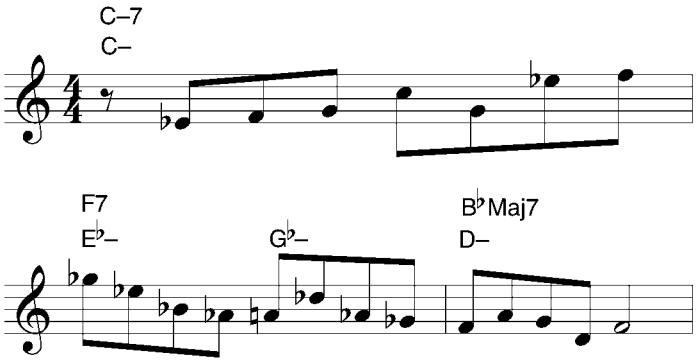
MOTIVES

The use of the triad along with the passing note is a motive in itself. However, the improviser should be able to create and develop clear motives throughout a solo in order to make for strong compositional-type lines.

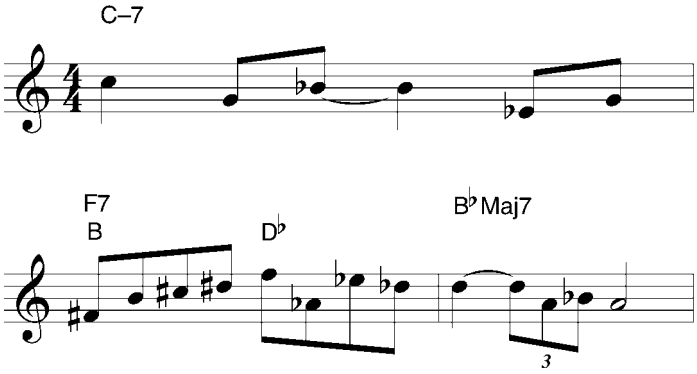


TENSION BALANCE

The improviser should strive for balance in terms of varying degrees of tension. Try to contrast more "out" lines via rich triads with the resolution of more "in" triads in order to maintain a sense of balance with tension.

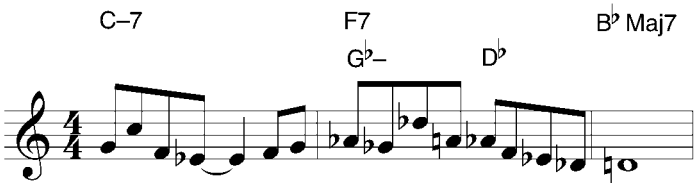


For the purpose of this study in Four-Note Groupings, we are exclusively focusing on the use of this specific technique. In actual practice, it would be more common and musical to use a variety of improvisational devices. With this in mind, it would be good idea to balance the tension of four-note groupings with a technique that involves more stable notes, as in Chord Tone Soloing. This next example illustrates the use of four-note groupings along with Chord Tone Soloing.



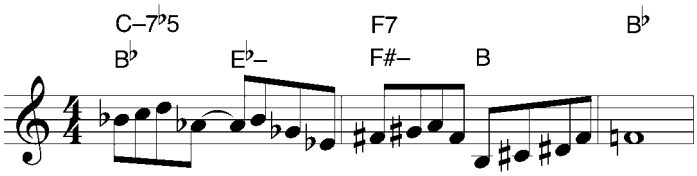
CONNECTING FOUR-NOTE GROUPINGS

In order to create a sense of flow and continuity in the lines, it helps to connect four-note groupings from measure to measure via stepwise motion and/or to lead a four-note grouping into a chord tone of the following chord also via step wise motion.



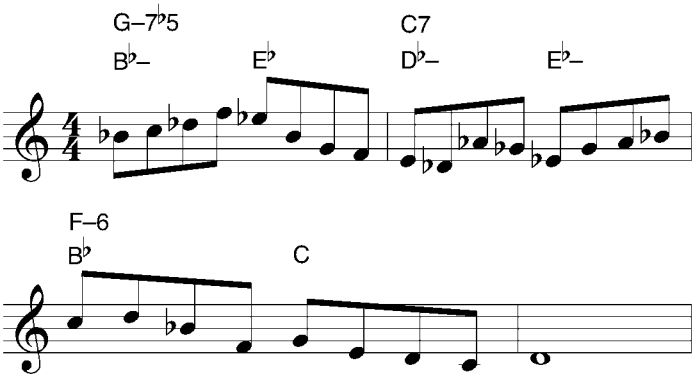
INCOMPLETE FOUR-NOTE GROUPINGS

Lines may sometimes use incomplete four-note groupings while retaining a clear sense of flow and direction. This next example sounds an incomplete four-note grouping of the B-flat triad on the C–7 flat-5 chord and an incomplete four-note grouping of the F#– triad over the F Dom 7 chord.



EMPHASIZING TENSIONS AND GUIDE-TONE LINES

Emphasizing specific notes of a four-note grouping over the chord can make for strong lines from a vertical perspective. The improviser should be able to emphasize specific tensions as well as bring out important guide-tone lines from chord to chord.



Part Two of this article will continue with Four-Note Grouping Combinations on Dom 7 chords as well as two choruses of a solo that uses four-note groupings over the progression of a well-known standard.

Ed Saindon is a Professor at Berklee College of Music. Vic Firth recently released his Signature model mallet for vibraphone and marimba. The complete study on Four-Note Groupings as well as other studies on improvisational techniques are available from Ed on his Website at www.edsaindon.com. PN

Zildjian Family Opportunity Fund

The Zildjian Family Opportunity Fund, established by the Zildjian family in 2001, is a permanently endowed trust managed and administered through the Percussive Arts Society. Awards ranging from $500–$3,000 provide funding for percussion-based presentations directed to underserved youth, ages pre-school through high school. All services funded are free of charge to participants and take place in local community settings.

To download an application:
www.pas.org/experience/grantsscholarships.aspx

An Interview with Colin Currie

By Tracy Wiggins

Colin Currie was born in 1976 and took up the piano and percussion at an early age. In 1990 he began his studies at the Junior Department of the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. In 1992 he won the Gold Medal of the Shell/LSO Music Scholarship, performing Panufnik's concerto in the finale with the London Symphony Orchestra. In 1994 he was the first percussion finalist in the BBC Young Musician of the Year Competition, at which he gave the first performance of Errollyn Wallen's "Concerto for Percussion." In the same year he began his studies at the Royal Academy of Music.

He has appeared as a soloist with major orchestras throughout the world, and has had a number of works written specially for him, including the concerto by Michael Torke, the first performance of which he gave in 2001.

I first heard of Colin several years ago when he won the Shell/LSO competition in London. Since then he has gone on to a major career as a solo percussionist, performing in many of the great halls around the world. When I heard that he was coming to North Carolina to perform I contacted him about visiting my school. In the course of conversations over the summer while planning his master class, I started to inquire about his life and career.

Wiggins: *What influenced you to start playing percussion?*

Currie: Hard to pinpoint, but I have tapped and drummed from a very early age. I think I had an innate response to rhythm in music, and at first wanted to play the drums more than anything. I saw Buddy Rich live on his last European tour before he died, and I still remember how insanely exciting that was.

Wiggins: *Tell us about your early percussion or musical studies.*

Currie: At age six I took up drum lessons—first with just a snare, then gradually along came a hi-hat, a cymbal or two, then my first drumkit. Aged 12 or so I got itchy for orchestral instruments, and I became interested in tuned instruments. From the local music library I learned some pieces to take an audition for the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama Junior School in Glasgow. I was successful there, and was then blessed with the single most important and enduring piece of good fortune in my musical life, namely meeting, then working with, Pamella Dow [percussion] and Sheila Desson [piano]. I cannot overstate what these two astonishing teachers did for me. Within two years I was in London participating in the Shell/LSO music scholarship and won the gold medal, aged 15. There I met members of the LSO who also took me under their wing, especially Neil Percy, who is now my colleague at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where I am Visiting Professor in Solo Percussion.

Wiggins: *Who are some of the biggest influences on your musical career?*

Currie: My parents and teachers. I have been very fortunate in both areas, and can't imagine having achieved anything without their support.

Wiggins: *What qualities do you look for in a great teacher?*

Currie: To allow students to flourish in their own way and not to impose too strongly on their development. To give them encouragement and patience.

Wiggins: *As a young percussionist, what were your biggest challenges while developing as a player, and what did you do to help overcome these?*

Currie: I found the snare drum very difficult. I changed from traditional grip to matched grip at age 17, and it took a while to catch up to where I should have been, technically. Also, I hate the xylophone, which I also find difficult now having played so much marimba. I just played a big Messiaen piece on the xylophone, so that was actually very good for me. In the end, practice is the only key for solving technical issues. Musical inspiration can come from many places.

Wiggins: *What are some of your favorite pieces to perform?*

Currie: Joe Duddell's concerto "Ruby," written for me in 2003, the Higdon concerto, and anything by Dave Maric.

Wiggins: *Jennifer Higdon's "Percussion Concerto" recently won a Grammy, and you played the solo part on the recording. How did you become involved with this work?*

Currie: The work was commissioned for me to premiere with three American orchestras: Philadelphia, Indianapolis, and Dallas. I'd come to know Jennifer's work through her publisher and agent and took an instant liking to it, so we pursued the commission. She had the strong link to the Philadelphia Orchestra, and I was able to bring Indianapolis and Dallas to the table with my connection to those orchestras. A consortium of groups is always best—more performances and a shared bill!

Wiggins: *Were you very involved in the design and scoring of the solo percussion part?*

Currie: Not this time, but I frequently am with premieres. It just depends on the composer in question; some need to be held by the hand through the whole process and others, like Jennifer, go away and then send the finished product as if "out of the blue." Both approaches can work; normal is to be somewhere in the middle of these extremes.

Wiggins: *What do you remember in particular about recording this with Marin Alsop and the London Philharmonic Orchestra?*

Currie: It was very exciting, as it was made

from a live performance. I felt confident, as we had also recorded the morning dress rehearsal, and I had "covered" all my tricky corners. But in the end, the evening concert just took off, and I think we got something very real and very lively for posterity. We only used two edits, I believe, to correct minor ensemble issues.

Wiggins: *How many performances of the concerto do you think you have done now?*

Currie: Nearly fifty. The work has proved to be incredibly popular, and rightly so. There are at least a dozen more currently planned, and it crops up all over the place. I recently gave the Asian premiere in Seoul.

Wiggins: *What is the rehearsal experience like when trying to prepare this piece, or any concerto, for a performance with a new orchestra each time? Do you find any common difficulties that arise consistently?*

Currie: It is a question of ensemble and balance by the time I come to rehearse with the orchestra. These challenges also include deciphering a venue's acoustics, something I have come to be more and more considerate of, I hope, as time goes by. Each orchestra is different, and that lends a real joy to the rehearsals. The end result is truly up for grabs; the more detail we put into the rehearsal, the more the audience will hear and react.

Wiggins: *You told me you were preparing "Kontakte" for the BBC Proms. How did this come about? Have you found it any more challenging to get audiences or concert groups to program more challenging works like this?*

Currie: This was a direct invitation from the BBC. I will be playing the work as part of a Stockhausen tribute on August 2. Since his death in December 2007, I have been asked to play the work several times. We are finding that there is quite a core interest in this composer, and I'm putting together a concert program now, along with British pianist Nicolas Hodges, of Xenakis, Birtwistle, and Stockhausen. Any takers?

Wiggins: *What elements do you look for in a composition as you are deciding whether or not to perform it?*

Currie: Musical clarity and conviction, regardless of style. I am open to a range of music, but practicalities are also very important in percussion scores. I will not consider any score, even if musically strong, if it will not allow me to make an acceptable quality of sound. Of course, I often work in conjunction with composers, and initial technical grievances can be ironed out. I do not consider myself closed to huge technical demands if I have enough time to work on the new piece. Simon Holt's recent percussion concerto, "a table of noises," is a case in point.

Wiggins: *Have you found any challenges in getting composers interested in writing for percussion?*

Currie: I have not always had immediate positive responses from certain composers I have approached for concertos and solo works. This is not always anti-percussion however; some shy away from solo works in general, and others don't have time. In general, the response has been very good.

Wiggins: *What is your process for learning a new piece?*

Currie: Identifying the truly troublesome spots and practicing them intensely. I have so very little time now for practice that I have to be savagely economical with my time. I seldom "run" things until very close to the concert. I much prefer to work on detail. Musical and interpretive ideas are often best worked at away from the instruments. This side of things does not need a huge amount of actual practice time.

Wiggins: *What is your typical practice routine like?*

Currie: I was very pleased to recently find out that my routine is somewhat like Stravinsky's—my hero in music! In the morning I work on learning new pieces, while in the afternoon I revise repertoire for upcoming events. Igor would compose in the morning and orchestrate in the afternoon, so there is a similarity, I like to think. I'm always working by 9:00, and try to finish by 5:00. I take an hour off for lunch, and then have a nap if necessary, though there has not been much time for that recently!

Wiggins: *What have been some of your biggest moments as a musician that have left a lasting impression on you?*

Currie: The two competitions that aided me as a teenager: The Shell LSO Music Scholarship in 1992 and the BBC Young Musician of the Year in 1994. The various premieres over the years, Joe Duddell's "Ruby" at the BBC proms in 2003, the Higdon and Steve Mackey premieres in 2005, and recently the Simon Holt concerto. Also, it has been a great pleasure to play in some spectacular halls. I adore the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and Carnegie Hall in New York; they both stand alone.

Wiggins: *What have been some of the major challenges you have found with having a solo percussion career?*

Currie: One challenge in constantly having to adjust to different equipment—especially marimbas. At first I found this incredibly tricky, but it has become easier over the years. Then, in general, getting access to gear on the road can be tough as well as getting rehearsal space.

Wiggins: *What advice would you give students hoping to start a solo career in percussion?*

Currie: No long-term goals! That is easily my first piece of advice. This business is so unforgiving that it would be foolish for anyone to proclaim themselves on some kind of inexorable path to becoming a soloist. My advice is truly to work on each concert as hard as you possibly can and see where that will take you. If you play well, it is likely someone who can help you will be there to listen one day. So I stress again: Work on a project-to-project basis, and make sure you sound great for everything you do.

Wiggins: *What do you consider to be some of the most significant recent developments in percussion?*

Currie: Generally, the astonishing proliferation of the art form and the wonderful standard which now exists in the colleges and conservatoires world-wide. There have also been some great additions to the repertoire, but work, and support, is still desperately needed in this area.

Wiggins: *Where do you see the development of percussion going in the next five to ten years in terms of both instruments and repertoire?*

Currie: On a technical level we have reached a plateau, so it now needs creative intelligence more than ever to push the envelope. Collaboration will be key.

Wiggins: *What is your personal approach to teaching students who want to have careers as percussionists?*

Currie: I am at their service to help them as best I can achieve their goals.

Wiggins: *What is the most common area in need of growth you see in percussion students of today?*

Currie: Diversification and open-mindedness. Too many students feel the pressure of technical development and forget the magic of discovering new and surprising works of music. I encourage a holistic approach to music and all the arts. Even hard work and dedication are meaningless unless inspired by the art form itself.

Tracy Wiggins is coordinator of the percussion program and assistant marching band director at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke and principal timpanist of the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra. He holds degrees from Oklahoma State University, the University of New Mexico, and the Hartt School. Wiggins is vice-president of the North Carolina PAS chapter. PN

TERMS USED IN PERCUSSION

Magpie Calls, Keyboard Xylophones, Collapsible Bass Drums, and Other Curiosities

By Michael Rosen

Let's start off with the terms used in "Erwartung" by Arnold Schoenberg and then we'll get to the fun. Note that all nouns in the German language are capitalized.

Hauptstimmen des Orchesters beginnen beim Z eichen H—und enden bei: The main voice [of the tone row] in the orchestra begins at letter Z and goes to H (indicated by an H). [When Schoenberg wanted to indicate the principal polyphonic voice of a tone row he put H‾ for Hauptstimme above the notes at the beginning of the passage and when he wanted to indicate the secondary polyphonic voice of a tone row he put N‾ for Nebenstimme above the note at the beginning of the passage. This is what this sentence in the music is referring to.]
Tam t.: tam tam
Tamtam: tam tam
Becken: crash cymbals
grosse Trommel: bass drum
kleine Trommel: generic term for snare drum
Ratschen (Rtsch): ratchet
Triangel (Trgl.): triangle
Glockenspiel (Glcksp.): orchestra bells
Xylophon: xylophone
Pauken: timpani
hart: hard mallets
Becken mit einem KtrbssBogen gestrichen: suspended cymbal played with a bass bow
Wie vorher: as before
Becken mit dem Schlägel: cymbal struck with a snare drum stick (although Schlägel is a generic term for a stick, when it is used without a modifier it indicates a snare drum stick
Holzschlägel: a wood stick
mit den Tellern: plates; crash cymbals
sehr rein gestimmt!: the note should be damped quickly and completely [This is on the timpani part at a place with consecutive eighth notes.]
Schlägel: generic term for a stick or mallet
Schwammschlägel: soft mallet
gut gestimmt!: short, well dampened [This occurs on the timpani part where the timpanist uses wood sticks.]

GAZZA LADRA

As we all know, the Overture to the "Thieving Magpie" ("Gazza Ladra") by Rossini starts with a loud snare drum roll, and then a soft one follows. Sometimes it is played by one player, but often it is played by two players whose snare drums are set up at opposite sides of the orchestra at the back of the stage. I have played it both ways and also by myself using two snare drums—one with gut snares for the *forte* roll and another with wire or thin cable for the *piano* roll.

When I was in Italy a while ago I came across what was called a Magpie bird call. When I played it I couldn't help but notice the similarity between the bird call and a snare drum roll. It sounds much like a wind machine, and I have used it as such in several pieces. It seems to me that Rossini might have known about this bird call and used a snare drum to imitate the sound. It's only a theory, but I'm kind of attracted to the idea! In any case here is a photo of the bird call and the famous "Thieving Magpie," in addition to a note from Michael Skinner who told me that, "I read somewhere that Rossini's use of the snare drum, whilst not unique, caused much comment at the time. Apparently, some wag christened him 'Signor Tambourossini.' Rossini had the last laugh; he'd made so much money by his middle age that he retired from composing and devoted himself to the good life."—and eating lots of Tournedos Rossini, I might add!

Magpie Birdcall

The Thieving Magpie

BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE

I have always been puzzled by the xylophone part in "Bluebeard's Castle" by Bela Bartok. It consists of a group of notes in octaves that are very fast.

One day, Arnie Lang sent me the following information that illuminated the quandary: "I was surfing the Internet when I found this ad in a wonderful deco British magazine called *Rhythm*. I have never seen a keyboard xylophone or was even sure that it existed…but here it is! 'Bluebeard's Castle' was written in 1911, and the ad for the instrument is dated as late as 1928. I did a little research and found the following: 'On a recent Philips recording with the Budapest Festival Orchestra, Iván Fischer, cond., the Budapest State Opera loaned this very rare keyboard xylophone.'"

Arnie also sent me this advertisement that appeared in the same magazine for a collapsible bass drum—great for gigs in New York when you have to take the subway, or in London

A keyboard xylophone

where you take the Underground, and it's tested and approved by leading London percussionists! Notice how cool the guy on the right is.

And as if that weren't enough, from the same magazine he sent another ad for, of all things, a square bass drum plus an ad for a Besson xylophone with Teddy Brown in all his pulchritude playing the instrument.

Teddy Brown (1900–1946) was a terrific American xylophonist who began his career in the early 1920s in the New York Philharmonic and moved to Great Britain in 1926, where he

The Quadra drum and Teddy Brown

was quite the hit. You can find several videos of him playing if you search Teddy Brown on YouTube. Don't miss his one-handed action. I don't know how he got around the instrument, but these videos are not to be missed!

I always enjoy getting mail from readers to help us all do a better job of using the appropriate instruments and making our crazy terminology more clear. As always, thank you all for sending in your questions and comments about "Terms Used in Percussion." If you would like me tackle a question about terms you are not sure of, please send it to michaelrosen@oberlin.net and I will answer you directly, then put my response in a future article.

Michael Rosen is Professor of Percussion at Oberlin Conservatory of Music and is Director of the Oberlin Percussion Institute. He was Principal Percussionist with the Milwaukee Symphony from 1966 to 1972 and has performed with the Grand Teton Music Festival, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and the Concertgebouw Orchestra. He was a member of the Board of Directors of PAS and is an Associate Editor of *Percussive Notes*. He has recorded for Opus One, Bayerische Rundfunk, Albany, Lumina, and CRI labels and is a sought-after clinician for marimba and cymbals. PN

Performing With Ease, Part 2

Relating the Alexander Technique to Activities of a Percussionist

By Rob Falvo

As percussionists, we typically perform on all our instruments with excess tension. We go through our life practicing and performing without any real change. Instead, we adopt methods of relaxation or stretching in hopes of keeping our career alive until we are ready to stop. We might justify our aches and pains by saying, "My shoulder hurts regularly because three years ago I dislocated it and…," or "I practiced six hours today and my arms are aching. Well, no pain, no gain," and then carry on, knowing in the back of our minds that we are not being truthful with ourselves. When we misuse our bodies, especially as we grow older, there is a tendency to feel pain or discomfort.

MISUSE AND OVERUSE

There is no such thing as overuse; it is all misuse. When we are not aware of how we are moving, we will practice our instruments in the same habitual, conditioned way. We practice for the end result without being aware of the process. This is what F.M. Alexander called "end-gaining." We would not misuse our bodies if we weren't end-gaining.

For most of us, moving percussion equipment is a big part of our job, and it is a good example of how we end-gain. We just want the equipment moved to where it needs to go without paying much attention to how we are moving it. Next time, instead of lifting instruments unconsciously, begin to notice how you are using your body. When you reach down to grab marimba bars, are your knees locked and hips fixed while you bend from your lower back, or are you flexing at the hips, knees, and ankles, allowing your hips to move back? When you are carrying tom-toms in your hands and against your chest, are you tightening your neck, lifting up, and pulling in your shoulders, or are you letting your arms release down and away from your torso, allowing the drums to be supported equally between your arms and body?

ACCENT THE PROCESS RATHER THAN THE END RESULT

We end-gain less when we pay more attention to the process and let the end result take care of itself. There are ways of practicing to become aware of what is happening in your body.

1. Become aware of your breath and the quality of your breathing. Is your breathing shallow, stuck, interrupted, or are you breathing fully, with ease, and with an easy flow? Whenever you become aware of your breath, thoughts are let go, your mind becomes clear, and end-gaining disappears. As a result, your neck becomes less tense, your shoulders drop down, and in general your body lets go of excess tension. The next time you practice music, be aware of your breath and notice changes in your body tension.

2. Become aware of how you are moving your ankles, knees, hips, and top joint of your spine. The top joint, called the A/O joint, is found between your ears and behind your nose. The hips are found lower on your body than where most people think, and understand that there is no major joint at your waist. (See my first article on Alexander Technique in the August 2008 *Percussive Notes* for in-depth discussion of the joints.)

3. Begin to notice how conditioned the mind is and understand that your conditioned thoughts always influence your movement. If your mind is agitated, you are going to move with excess tension, and that will affect everything you do.

Since we were old enough to falsely believe that we are separate from people and things around us and began to use words like "I, me, and mine," our minds began to be conditioned by fear and we began to hold tension in our bodies. At this time, we began to imitate people and take on their habitual patterns of movement. This is why many family members walk, talk and, in general, move around in a similar fashion. It is very interesting to watch yourself and your own family members move, noticing similar habits of tension.

CHANGE YOUR DEFINITION OF SUCCESS

We are programmed through our musical training to go for the end product. We have learned this very well from almost everyone. As percussionists, we have learned that to be successful we need to achieve our highest technical ability. We practice to have the fastest hands. We play our routines on xylophone, snare drum, drumset, etc. to achieve this as best we can. Many times we aim to match the speed of our favorite recordings.

There is nothing wrong with practicing this way except that we are typically practicing for the end result rather than paying attention to the process. When I changed my mind about what success really means to me (performing effortlessly), I changed the way I approached practicing on all percussion instruments. This has improved my overall performance of any piece on any instrument. It is not about speed any more, it is about the process.

Paradoxically, speed can and has improved as a result. I understand that to shift your thinking to process rather than outcome can feel like you are taking a big chance. It is not something that was part of your musical training. Students wonder how they will get anything done if they are not aiming for the end. Well, when you are ready to take a chance and approach practicing in this way, you might find that the constant chatter in your head to get things right and get it now takes a backseat and you become less tense. As a result, there is clarity in what you are doing, there is easiness, lightness in your body, and there is direction in what needs to be done. You begin to understand that you do not need to force anything.

As an instructor, this might change how you teach because teaching now becomes process oriented. Of course, your students still need to put in hours of practicing, but the way they practice changes. By teaching in a process-oriented way, students are nurtured to notice their tendencies or habits, and practicing becomes a journey into self-awareness. This is not to say that there is no accountability for what happens in their juries or recitals. All that is there, with one major difference. There is no personal judgment of the student, no criticism, no blame—only observation and understanding. Nothing is personal, and everything that happens on stage matters. The teacher becomes a mirror for the student to reflect back to the student how he or she has performed with empathy, honesty, directness, and openness.

GIVING UP JUDGMENTS

When we stop judging ourselves (in other words, stop trying to be right), and instead notice what is actually happening in our body, excess tension drops away. It is only through observation and acceptance that we begin to

change. You do not need to do anything but become aware of when you are using excess tension for change to occur.

How do you do that? Be honest and notice that you would rather fix the situation than just observe it. When excess tension is seen in the body as interfering with your ease of motion, it will let go and you will be free of it.

Whenever there is a judgment of right or wrong, good or bad, etc., there is fear, and this translates physically as a contraction. Our tendency is to pull in and shorten the body. Notice what is happening in your body the next time you practice a piece of music. Is your neck pushed forward? Are your shoulders pulled into your body and raised up closer to your neck? Is your torso collapsed, shortening the distance from your shoulders to your hips? Typically, we carry ourselves the same way when we are performing on stage.

RELAXATION

When we relax we are actually making an effort, or *trying*, to be easy. Typically this means a collapse in the part of the body we are trying to relax. When this is done, either tension creeps in somewhere else in the body to compensate for the relaxation or we will not have enough muscle tone to play. Instead, we can *release* excess tension—allowing it to be felt throughout our whole body. This way, breathing is easier and our body is more flexible throughout.

Alexander Technique work is not about relaxing in isolation; it has direction and is about using the least amount of tension necessary to do whatever you are doing. This is done by observing how you are moving. Explore and see how much tension is actually necessary to perform any piece you are working on. This doesn't mean that *fff* passages are not *fff*; just notice how much energy it really takes to play one.

THE USE OF IMAGERY

Imagery can be used effectively in many situations, particularly visualization exercises to memorize music. However, in the Alexander Technique work, thinking of images to release muscle tension distracts students from being able to look directly at the quality of their movement. For example, an image to let go of body tension, such as "imagine yourself in your favorite vacation place," is something that is thought of in the mind and is a distraction to true observation. When you identify with thought, it takes you away from the present moment. How can you observe if your mind is wandering? The observer is free from any thoughts and is witnessed from behind the mind. A direct approach is to get to know your habits by seeing them as they occur.

RESISTANCE

A key to moving with ease is in recognizing when you are resisting life. When there is resistance, there is a contraction in the body. When we notice even the smallest amount of contraction when moving about in whatever is being done—talking, performing in recital, walking in crowded hallways, lecturing, etc.—the tension can be let go. We have learned that we must try to get rid of the tension by forcing it away, which only reinforces it.

STATIC ON THE RADIO

Most of us have minds that tend to chatter continuously, and when we perform on stage, the mind may chatter *ad infinitum*. When we try to stop it, it actually strengthens and interferes with our performance. I compare it to static on the radio: the more static, the more interference. When we begin to notice the chatter in ourselves without trying to push it away, we create some space between it and our activity. The more space there is around it, the less it tends to take us over or interfere with our performance. Consequently, the clearer our minds become, and the easier it is to perform.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can Alexander Technique fix the problem?

Whenever we want to fix anything we tend to concentrate, which is a form of end-gaining. We look for a solution that has no problem. It is not a problem to move with excess tension, it is just something that happens when you are not aware. There is no right or wrong here, only being aware or not being aware.

If we should not concentrate, then what do we do? We need to think about how we are moving and, at the same time, think about the notes.

When someone concentrates, it is narrowing in on something at the exclusion of everything else. Rather, we need to see the whole of what is happening, inside and outside the body. By observing, being a witness to what is happening without the mind commenting, there is no interference from thoughts. When you are observing, you can notice your habits and tensions clearly, and in that noticing, tension will drop away. Since you do not need to do anything about it, you are free to focus on the music. I have found that slow practice is best. Move as slowly as you need to in order to notice your whole body and read the music at the same time. Sometimes I just take one measure, play the measure very slowly, rest for a measure observing my body (including my breath), and then repeat.

Can you do this without a teacher?

It is a good idea to take regular lessons from a teacher of the Alexander Technique. However, if that is not possible, you can understand a lot about yourself by being open and willing to explore. It seems overwhelming to do because we are so conditioned to think a certain way. It really is simple once you observe what is happening without placing all the judgments that usually come with it. Practicing in this new way develops a new habit—one of noticing the quality of your movement, and process becomes everything.

CONCLUSION

Can anybody really change? Can you make a change that happens where you seldom, if ever, go back? Some people do not believe this is possible, some do believe this possible, and some people *know* this is possible. The people who know this is possible, know it because it is first-hand information: they have changed, and although old habits might creep back in every once in a while, it doesn't last very long and it is not as dramatic as it was before. Life becomes easier.

Rob Falvo is a professor of percussion at Appalachian State University, where he heads the percussion department. In 2007, he graduated from the Chesapeake Bay Alexander Studies – North Carolina Teacher Training Program and became a certified teaching member of Alexander Technique International. Falvo is a member of the Philidor Percussion Group and has performed with many orchestras and chamber groups based in North Carolina and New York. He earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Manhattan School of Music. PN

Virtual Percussion Festival in Norway

By Allan Molnar with Peter Kates

It is rather ironic that since starting my videoconferencing project I have managed to accumulate more air miles than ever before in my life! I have also had the opportunity to meet and work with many great musicians who have participated in many of my workshops via the ALIVE Project (Accessible Live Internet Video Education).

Morris "Arnie" Lang introduced me to Peter Kates at PASIC 2004. Peter is Associate Professor of Percussion at the Grieg Academy of Music (GAM) in Bergen, Norway, and Principal Percussionist of the Bergen Philharmonic. Peter and I had the opportunity to discuss the rewards and challenges of our musical lives in New York and Bergen.

"Bergen is a beautiful city which has great support for the arts," Kates told me. "It boasts a world class philharmonic orchestra and the Grieg Academy of Music, which is a small but reputable school. The only drawback is that Bergen is situated in a corner of the world which is very difficult to get to. Only a few direct flights daily, and with today's security and the time spent during layovers, it can sometimes take a full day for a visting artist to travel to Bergen—not to mention the cost."

Peter became interested in my distance learning project and invited me to give a jazz vibraphone workshop for his students in Norway. I conducted the session from my home studio in New York.

"My laptop quickly transformed our percussion studio into a 'broadcast' studio which could invite guest artists from anywhere in the world," Kates said. "Allan was our first guest. He presented a jazz improvisation class, and within 10 minutes he was jamming from his apartment in New York City with students in Bergen!"

Our second collaboration was at the "Virtual Percussion Festival" that I coordinated for the University of Manitoba on April 30, 2005. I flew to Winnipeg and conducted this workshop onsite with my friend and colleague Stewart Smith from the University of Manitoba. Peter "beamed in" from Norway via iChat. I wrote an article that detailed this event for the August 2005 issue of *Percussive Notes*.

This project led to collaboration between the PAS Music Technology Committee and the PAS Symphonic Committee at PASIC 2006 in Austin. As Chair of the Technology Committee, I facilitated Peter's participation in the mock timpani audition by setting up a videoconference between Austin and Bergen. I was able to catch a free wireless Internet signal, and everything worked beautifully! Peter's work as part of the panel of adjudicators was outstanding; you almost forgot that he was participating from the other side of the world! During the same PASIC, Peter also participated in the PAS Music Technology Panel discussion via videoconference.

PAS Music Technology Committee Panel Discussion at PASIC 2006 in Austin: (L–R) Norman Weinberg, John Best, Allan Molnar, Peter Kates (on screen)

"What was reassuring and came as no surprise at all was the end result," Kates said. "My grades for the applicants—which concerned musicality, intonation, rhythm, and general knowledge of the requested music—coincided exactly with the grades and comments of the other committee members. In my opinion, the audition was a true success."

Next stop: Norway! Peter invited me to fly to Bergen in September 2008 to expand on the Virtual Percussion Festival. My three-day workshop included the following: Day 1: Technology and the Home Studio; Day 2: Technology in Education; Day 3: Technology and the Global Village.

Each session began with my one-hour keynote presentation on the topic of the day. This was followed by a two-hour series of videoconference visits from my many musical collaborators who joined me in sequence to continue the discussion. I had more than twenty co-presenters during this event—all with the "carbon footprint" of one!

"There wasn't a seat available or even a bit of floor space on which to stand," Peter said. "Musicians, both professional and amateur, had caught wind of what was going on! I quickly realized that in a three-day period, my students had experienced more in terms of clinic presentations then we have had at the Grieg Academy in the past fifteen years."

Two festival highlights included Arnie Lang's orchestral excerpt session with the GAM students and the percussion master class the GAM students presented to the middle-school percussion students at St. John's-Ravenscourt School in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

"I thought to myself, 'There's something here,'" Kates said. "I began to explore the possibilities of using live video conferencing

Conducting an audition live over the Internet allows the teacher to evaluate the students as if they were auditioning in the same room.

not only for bringing visting artists to do master classes and clinics, but for my teaching and even the possibility of auditions."

The most recent follow-up to our ongoing collaborations happened in October 2009 when I beamed in to Bergen to attend the GAM student percussion recital. I thoroughly enjoyed the quality of the musicianship, and I was able to offer feedback and advice on the technical details of beaming a performance such as this to the world!

"I strongly feel that the use of this medium in the early audition rounds of the professional symphony orchestra is not far off," Peter says. "Conducting an audition live over the Internet not only allows the teacher to evaluate the students as if they were auditioning in the same room, but gives both the applicant and teacher an introduction to each other. I always end entrance auditions with a short interview. This can be done using video conferencing."

Allan Molnar resides in New York where he teaches at Lehman College and freelances in the music industry. Previously, Molnar was active as a percussionist and educator in Toronto, Canada. He continues to work as a resource teacher for the Canadian Teachers Federation, is a faculty member of the KoSA International Percussion Workshops, and has served as Chair of the PAS Music Technology Committee. Allan is the cofounder and artistic director of the ALIVE Project (Accessible Live Internet Video Education) and provides arts-oriented distance learning opportunities for students in schools worldwide. Allan's Website is www.percussionstudio.com.

Peter Kates has been the solo Principal Percussionist of the Bergen Filharmoniske Orkester in Bergen, Norway since 1994. He is also a member of the new-music ensemble BIT 20 and is head of the percussion faculty at the Griegakademiet-institutt for Musikk. Peter has given master classes and workshops at numerous universities and schools in the U.S. and Europe, and has organized and hosted several percussion events in Norway. He serves on the PAS Symphonic Committee. Peter holds a master's degree from the Juilliard School and a bachelor's degree from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. PN

The Freelance Musician

By Glenn Steele

Who performs most of the live music heard throughout the U.S. and other places in the world? Freelance musicians. A professional freelance musician is one who usually performs in a variety of locations for a limited time and for a fee. Performing examples include symphony orchestras, opera, ballet, Broadway shows, jazz/big band or combo, rock band, avant-guard ensemble, chamber orchestra, recording studio, drum corps, military bands, and many more. Freelance musicians are the "heart and soul" and "troops in the trenches" of most places where live music is performed. They are the musicians we hear on TV commercials and movie soundtracks, in restaurants, bars, and weddings, in addition to orchestras hired for local oratorios, operas, and Broadway shows. Freelance gigs differ from full-time/yearly contracted positions such as those found in major symphony orchestras, Broadway musicals, or military bands. Successful freelance percussionists have extensive experience on a wide variety of percussion instruments including snare drum, timpani, drumset, accessories, and keyboard percussion, as well as Latin percussion and other world percussion instruments. They represent what the Ludwig Company called a "total percussionist." The freelance experience is often the first professional playing experience that music school graduates will have.

Many professional musicians find that the freelance environment is the most exciting and challenging experience a performer can have. The reasons for this include having to be prepared to perform a wide variety of music in unfamiliar settings, with different arrays of instruments, different conductors and musicians—all within a narrow timeframe. Sight-reading is an important and required skill for success in this career. Some players have left symphony orchestras and returned to freelancing because they found the orchestra experience to be limiting in musical challenges. Freelancers get to perform with some of the most notable musicians, composers, artists, and celebrities on the scene. As a freelancer I've had the chance to perform with such artists as Luciano Pavorati, Tony Bennett, the Swingle Singers, Joan Sutherland, Leonard Nimoy, Barbara Walters, and Zubin Mehta, to name a few.

Freelancing is often a seasonal business. In Philadelphia, the "busy" seasons are October to January 1, and March to July 4. You sometimes have to take as much work as you can handle while you can get it! Being able to make a living as a freelance musician is a complex but doable task. It takes money, time, and patience. Many freelancers maintain active teaching studios and have additional part-time jobs in order to supplement their income.

A freelance musician needs to own a large number of instruments, mallets, sticks, stands, holders, and specialty equipment. These should be gradually purchased as you progress through your education career. Elsewhere in this article I've provided a "minimum requirement" list for instruments, mallets, and sticks, and a job checklist for reference. Freelancers often have to buy "uniforms" for different services, such as a tuxedo and/or tails and a white dinner jacket with the appropriate formal shirts, ties, cummerbunds, and shoes. Special uniforms such as colored shirts and slacks, or a striped Dixieland vest may be required for a particular group identity.

Freelancing requires many career skills in addition to musical/performing skills. These include a responsible/disciplined work ethic, time-management skills, networking, good communication and interpersonal relations, and a basic business sense. Some of the business aspects of freelancing include: marketing (selling yourself), keeping records of expenses, filling out an IRS (U.S.) tax form that includes "Schedule C," finding housing (location central to the performing venues), buying/renting a vehicle (or other transportation), paying for medical and life insurance, food costs (Bring your own? Eat out? Be careful what you eat when traveling; it can be expensive), buying/cleaning uniforms (tuxedo, tails, etc.), buying/maintaining instruments, mallets, sticks, music, etc. A datebook, address/phone book, and business cards are a must. Many of these communication sources can now be done with a good cell phone or PDA.

It is good to do a cost/benefit analysis to determine if you can afford to do a particular job. It may not be worth renting a truck, hauling a load of percussion instruments, and driving three hours to play a four-hour job for $150.00!

I'm a strong advocate of belonging to the Musician's Union—the American Federation of Musicians. I've moved 23 times in my life and have belonged to five musicians' locals (a "local" is the term for the geographical area over which a particular union contact has jurisdiction). The union provides guidelines for job descriptions, job security, wages, cartage fees, per diem (daily living expenses), performance time, working conditions, and legal recourse. Contract specifics vary from local to local. There are also different rates for traveling groups such as touring shows.

General guidelines for different types of jobs are as follows:
(Taken from the Philadelphia American Federation of Musicians, Local 77, *Wage Scale* book, circa. 2004).
Club-date: 3–4 hrs.
Symphony Concert: 2–3 hrs.

THE FREELANCER'S BASIC INVENTORY

Drums
Drumset w/drums, stands, cymbals, cases.
6″ concert snare drum (cable snares/multi-snares) w/stand
Field drum w/stand
Concert bass drum (14 x 28) w/folding stand
1 conga drum w/stand
1 pr. timbales w/stand

Cymbals/Gongs
Suspended cymbals from drumset
1 pr. crash cymbals (18″)
1 Gong (tam tam), 26″ w/stand

Accessories
6″ triangle
Tambourine (10″ to 11″, double row jingles)
Castanets, mounted
Woodblock
1 pr. maracas
1 pr. claves
Temple blocks w/stand

Keyboard Percussion
Orchestra bells (2 1/2 octave)
Xylophone (3 1/2 octave)
Vibraphone
Marimba

Timpani
1 pr. pedal (29″, 26″), portable

Miscellaneous
Drum stool (drumset, timpani)
Music stand
Tray stand(s)
Tray stand(s) top (padded)
Trap case
Mallet/stick case (see page 33)
Hand truck

FREELANCE PERCUSSION MALLET/ STICK CASE

Sticks: 2 pr. drumset sticks, one w/nylon tip; 1 pr. concert sticks; 1pr. double end sticks (wooden tip/felt tip); 1 pr. brushes; timbale sticks; cloth pouch for sticks.

Mallets: 2 pr. bell (med.-hard, hard), 2 pr. xylophone, 1 pr. med.-hard rubber mallets, 1 pr. brass mallets, 2 pr. cord mallets (med.-hard), 2 pr. cord mallets (hard), 2 pr. marimba mallets (medium), 1 pr. double ended mallets (xyl./cord), cloth pouch for mallets, 3 pr. timpani mallets (soft-med-hard).

General Sticks/Mallets: 1 general purpose bass drum mallet, 1 pr. bass drum roll mallets, 1 gong mallet, 1 pr. chime hammers, 1 set (3 pairs) triangle beaters (w/pouch), 1 guiro scraper.

Miscellaneous: 2 triangle clips, pencils, eraser, bass drum/cymbal attachment (for "a due" ["with two," both together] parts), outdoor music clip, drumkey, earplugs, cellophane tape, manuscript paper, small tool kit (pliers, screwdrivers [Phillips and slot], small adjustable wrench, knife ["multi-tool"], string, electrical tape), head-tuning gauge, candle wax, stand light, bandage strips.

Symphony Rehearsal: 2 1/2 hrs.
Opera/Ballet Rehearsal/Concert: 3 1/2 hrs.

Overtime is paid in 30 minute-intervals beyond the maximum time.

In the concert or show world, particularly the classical idiom, the term "service" is used to describe a rehearsal or concert. The common weekly schedule for an orchestra or opera is 7–8 services per week. An orchestra rehearsal usually lasts 2 1/2 hours, and the concert lasts no more than three hours. (This is modified for operas and ballets.)

Freelancers commonly consider being on an orchestra's "extra" list as part of their playing activity. An "extra" is a player that is hired when there are more parts that need to be played than can be covered by the normal section. It used to be that the extras were usually former or current students of the orchestra section members. In the past 20 or so years, it has become common for orchestras to hold auditions to select players for the "extra" pool.

A jazz/rock/commercial service can be called a "gig," "jobbing," "the outside," "club date," "general business gig," "casual," and more, depending on the geographical location. There used to be many playing opportunities for "pick-up" groups—bands that would play for weddings and nightclubs, etc. This type of playing opportunity has been diminished by "top 40" bands (bands that rehearse and simulate the current pop songs), solo or duet groups that use "synthed" (synthesizer/drum machine) accompaniments, and DJs. I observed the most glaring (and insulting) example of this at a club in one of the Las Vegas casinos. There was a five-piece band playing with a drumset set up behind sound reflectors—with no drummer!

A performer in an ensemble is referred to as a "side-man/woman." A contractor is the person who hires you and provides the rehearsal, concert, and salary information. The contractor is usually paid 50% in addition to the usual musician (side-man) fee.

When you play in a different local from the one in which you are a member, you must pay the work dues for the job to that local. Contractors expect you to do the work and not bother them with too many details, although these may seriously affect your being able to function. They have many other musicians' issues and venue technicalities to be dealing with in addition to percussion details. Contractors can get "possessive" about their musicians. When they call you, they expect you to be available to them and say "yes." If you repeatedly turn down a contractor's request, you will be removed from his or her call list.

The Musician's Union regulations provide fee rates for "doubling" and "cartage." "Doubling" is defined as playing more than one primary instrument (or instrument group, like a drumset) per service. For percussion, rates can vary by local but include:
Doubling: 50% additional to regular wage.

Categories: drumset, timpani, keyboard percussion, Latin percussion.
Cartage (examples):

1. 2 timpani: $30.00; each additional drum, $10.00
2. Drumset: $15.00
3. Xylophone, vibraphone, small marimba: $15.00 ea.

In the Philadelphia area there is a cadre of about 200 musicians. They usually function in either the classical music or the jazz/rock/commercial genre. Musicians sometimes work in both genres but often cannot, simply because the performances are concurrent. For example, the classical and commercial performances take place at the same time but with different ensembles in different venues. If musicians do work in both areas, and there is a schedule conflict, they will send in a "double" or "sub" to cover their part. Most contractors frown on this but some will allow it.

In freelancing there is a hierarchy of musicians who are called to play in a certain order. As you progress successfully in the business you move closer to the top of the "call list." This means you have become a "first-call" freelancer.

Beginning freelancers start by playing many jobs for free and then gradually work their way up from minimum to better paying and higher quality groups.

The best way to get a good start in freelancing is to study with a teacher who has had extensive performing experience in the music business. It is common for new performers to be recommended for a job by a teacher who is among one of the first-call players. Most freelancers have gotten their start this way.

The next source for getting work comes from other players who were on a previous job with you, liked your work, and feel comfortable recommending you.

THE PLAYING SCHEDULE

An example of the kinds of services that I played during one busy period is as follows:

Orchestra 2001 (new music ensemble). Program: George Crumb, "Music for a Summer Evening"

Concerto Soloists (Baroque ensemble). Program: Bach, "B-minor Mass"

The Philly Pops (pops orchestra). Program: John Williams, "Themes from Star Wars," Gershwin, "Rhapsody in Blue," Copeland, "Hoedown," guest artist's "book" (the scores and music that the artist brings)

Club Date: jazz quartet

Some orchestras, like the Philly Pops with Peter Nero, feature soloists or entertainers who bring in their own rhythm section (piano, bass, drums). This means that when you are playing in the orchestra, you have to know when not to play some of the drum/percussion parts found in the orchestra music (e.g., Bernstein, "West Side Story Symphonic Suite"). You need to check with the drumset player to see what parts they are covering.

A common experience for freelance percussionists is playing jobs that require a large battery of instruments and performers, but only two percussionists are hired. Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" (5–8 players) and Orff's "Carmina Burana" (7 players plus timpani) are good examples. Italian opera parts are notorious for having parts for seven or more players—one part for each instrument. You have to decide what parts can be left out by seeing if other instruments (e.g., piano, woodwinds) are doubling your part, and by checking with the conductor. You have to know how to compress the parts and notate them in the main part so you can cover as many instruments as possible.

One of the banes of the freelance experience is having to read from instrumental parts that are in poor condition. They have poorly printed or written manuscript, are too old and falling apart, have been damaged by misuse, or have scribbled pencil (or even ink) markings from previous performers. You have to become accustomed to dealing with this and have a good eraser!

It is essential that you can perform basic emergency repairs of equipment—such things as replacing a head, fixing a stand, locating and fixing "buzzes" or "rattles" that can occur with the larger drums and timpani or vibraphone.

The "Freelancers Checklist" that accompanies this article is based on a type of list that I used when freelancing. It represents most of the questions you need answered before taking a job.

Reality Check! Some of my colleagues bemoan the fact that "the business" has changed. This is true. But it's always been true. Thirty years ago no one could have imagined that someone would be called to play steel drum, djembe or MalletKAT. New music and musical genres continually emerge. There may not be the same kinds or numbers of music jobs that existed in the past, but there is still a strong demand for talented, well-prepared, and properly educated percussionists. One has to be musically, mentally, and physically prepared, remain aware, be proactive, have a positive attitude, make opportunities happen, be willing to work hard, and be patient. This is a tall order, but it can lead to an exciting, successful, and rewarding career.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Balter, Mike. "Play it Again Sam…" *Percussive Notes*, Vol. 25. No. 1. pp. 7–10. Fall 1986.

Gartner, Kurt. "Working with the Click and making

Playing Schedule — One Week

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
10:00		Concerto Soloists, 10:00–12:30 Reh.				Pops, 10:00–12:00 Reh.	Pops, 10:00–12:30 Reh.
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
2:00		Concerto Soloists, 2:00–4:30 Reh.			Orch 2001, 2:00–4:30 Reh.		
3:00							Orch 2001, Concert
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00	Orch 2001 7:00–10:00 Reh.						
8:00				Concerto Soloists Concert	Orch 2001 Concert	Club Date 8:00–12:00	Pops Concert
9:00							
10:00							

This schedule does not include gathering instruments, packing, loading, travel time, setup/tear-down time, teaching schedule, etc.

A FREELANCE PERCUSSIONIST'S CHECKLIST

Contractor name_____

Contractor phone number _____

Contractor e-mail _____

Date of Concert_____

Dates of Rehearsals _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Pay/per – Rehearsal $ _____ Concert/Gig $ _____ Services[1] _____ Total $ _____

Organization/Ensemble _____

Union _____ Non-Union _____

Type of Performance (Classical, Jazz, Avant-Guard, etc.)

Number of Percussionists in Section _____

Section Leader Name _____

Section Leader Phone _____

Service Location(s)

Address _____

Location Phone Number _____

Map Directions _____

_____

_____

Travel Time _____

Parking _____

Music _____

_____

When/How/Where to get the Music _____

Instruments Needed (What does the venue have? What will be rented? What do you bring?)

_____

Mallets/Sticks _____

Preparation/Practice Time _____

Stands/Holders/Misc. _____

Microphone/Monitor[2]_____

Lighting[3] _____

Cases/Trunks _____

Load-In Time _____

Set-up Time (Leave set-up?[4]) _____ Tear-down Time _____

Playing Area (main floor? pit? risers? setup room?) _____

Special Transportation (car, truck, plane[5]) _____

Loading Area _____

Loading Area Access to Performing Location (loading dock/ramp/number of floors?/steps? elevator, door widths?) rehearsal/stage area same? _____

Stage Hands (available/required[6]?) _____

Checklist Notes

[1] "Service" = rehearsal, concert, gig.

[2] Some situations will have your instruments "miked" or you will have to hear the ensemble from a monitor or head-set.

[3] Some venues (performance locations) have stand lighting for the music.

[4] Some services require that you tear down your setup and re-set it for the next service. If so, where can you store your equipment between services?

[5] Air travel has become a serious matter for musicians post 9/11 as well as the recent economic dilemma. Airlines are requiring that all baggage be checked in or they require that you purchase an additional seat for your instrument. Our "stuff" sets off alarms! My aluminum-handle, Hinger timpani mallets gave the guards at the Moscow Airport a scare!

[6] Some venues require that stagehands load-in your instruments.

the Click work for You". *Percussive Notes*. Vol. 42. No. 4. pp. 66–69. Aug. 2004.

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Glenn Steele has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Oklahoma City Symphony, the United States Military Academy Band, the Philly Pops, Orchestra 2001, the Opera Company of Philadelphia, the Grant Park Symphony, and the Mozart Society Orchestra; musicals such as *42nd Street*, *Oklahoma*, and *Man of La Mancha*; numerous jazz/commercial ensembles, and with notable artists such as Tony Bennet, Mel Tormey, Doc Severenson, Chubby Checker, Luciano Pavorati, Joan Sutherland, Rosemary Clooney, Henry Mancini and Leonard Nimoy. He has recorded for the Columbia, C.R.I., C.R.S., Candide and Gasparo labels. He is Professor of Percussion at the Esther Boyer College, Temple University. PN

Mbira Dreams: An Interview with Erica Azim

By John Lane

Erica Azim is a native Californian who fell in love with Shona mbira music at age 16. In 1974, Erica became one of the first Americans to study the instrument in Zimbabwe, then called Rhodesia. She has never looked back; few individuals are as committed or passionate about their art as Erica is to mbira.

Erica founded MBIRA, a non-profit organization, in 1998 and now directs its day-to-day activities. The organization is responsible for the financial support of countless Zimbabwean musicians and instrument makers as well as making the music of the Shona people widely available through recordings, performances, and workshops. Erica has toured the U.S. teaching and performing with such mbira masters as Forward Kwenda, Cosmas Magaya, Ambuya Beauler Dyoko, Fradreck Mujuru, Fungai Mujuru, and Irene Chigamba. She has performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and recorded three commercial CDs—*Mbira Dreams*, *Mbira: Healing Music of Zimbabwe*, and *Svikiro* (with Forward Kwenda)—and is featured as a soloist on the international lullaby compilation *Mama's Lullaby*. Erica teaches regional mbira workshops throughout the U.S. and internationally-attended mbira camps at her home in Berkeley, California, Hawaii, and Argentina. She has written for *The Journal of African Music* and appeared at PASIC 2000 in Dallas, Texas.

By making mbira and its music accessible to American audiences and students, Erica is as much a dedicated and successful educator as she is a performer. The following interview was conducted after hosting Erica for a weekend intensive workshop at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. Percussion students, students from our music therapy program, and those who came specifically to study with Erica attended the event.

Lane: *You first heard and discovered mbira at the University of Washington at age 16. Tell me about those first encounters.*

Azim: As a freshman at the University of Washington in 1970, I began to study Zimbabwean karimba [also known as mbira nyunganyunga], marimba, singing, and dance with visiting Zimbabwean teacher Dumisani Maraire. He taught non-traditional instruments that had been developed at Kwanongoma College for use in Zimbabwean schools. Through Maraire and ethnomusicology professor Robert Garfias, I first heard recordings of the traditional type of Shona mbira that I play now. I loved the Shona music that Maraire taught, but when I heard the ancient mbira, I totally fell in love with it and was determined to learn to play it. This type of mbira is called "mbira dzavadzimu" by ethnomusicologists, but just "mbira" in Zimbabwe.

When Garfias traveled to Zimbabwe in 1971, he brought back an mbira. I begged to borrow it and he agreed. He was able to show me how to hold it correctly and which finger played which keys, but didn't teach me anything more. I took Maraire's marimba arrangements of mbira pieces he had heard on Zimbabwean records and painstakingly figured out how to make six marimba parts fit on one mbira—played by two thumbs and one finger! I didn't have any solo mbira recordings, but I also tried to figure out what was being played on recordings of mbira groups. I didn't have much success with this due to the interlocking parts.

Photo by Brett Stewart

Erica Azim playing mbira.

Lane: *It must have been fascinating, if not a little hostile, to be a white woman in Rhodesia [it was not yet Zimbabwe] when you first went there. Talk a little about your first experiences. How did you decide to go? How did you make it work, plan the trip, etc.?*

Azim: After I determined to go to Zimbabwe to study mbira, it was not easy to make it happen as a teenager. The plane ticket to go the 10,000 miles each way cost the same then as now, but minimum wage was $1.65 an hour. I quit school a couple of times to work and save money for the trip, working the second time for a full year before I had enough to go in 1974. There were no international educational programs in Zimbabwe at that time due to United Nations sanctions on the white government of Rhodesia, so I had to figure everything out on my own.

Because the country was then Rhodesia—very similar to everything you have heard about South Africa under apartheid—I knew that it was illegal for me to live in a village to study mbira. My plan was to live at a mission in an area where a lot of mbira was played, which was the only legal way for me to have access to rural mbira players. Through information from Maraire, I was able to correspond with a mission and get an invitation to live there. However, I was still required to get a permit from the Rhodesian government in order to live at the mission, as it was in an "African Tribal Trust Land," and the separation of white and African was so extreme. The government refused me the permit! I was shocked and devastated after all the effort I had put into getting there.

However, I soon met amazingly talented mbira players in the capital city of Harare, called Salisbury at that time. I had been worried that mbira players would not want to teach a white American girl, but it was quite the opposite. Everyone was eager to teach me and play music with me. My only problems were with the restrictions of the racist government at the time. The Zimbabwean people gave me a warm welcome throughout my 14-month stay in 1974–75. I had many wonderful experiences learning and playing mbira.

Lane: *Tell me about your first instrument. How did you buy it? Who was the maker?*

Azim: My first mbira was one that was sent to

Maraire by mistake. He received a box of mbiras from Kwanongoma College in Zimbabwe, when he had ordered karimbas. He didn't play mbira himself, only karimba; he referred to it as mbira, which is also a general category name for a family of instruments. He gave me one of the mbiras during the time that I was working in preparation for my trip.

The first mbira I purchased in Zimbabwe was made by one of the best mbira makers at the time, John Kunaka. One of my mbira teachers, Mondrek Muchena, was a good friend of Kunaka, and we traveled to visit Kunaka's workshop in a small town to order the mbira. Kunaka was in a rural area that the Rhodesian government didn't allow me to visit. So when my mbira was ready, Muchena bicycled 50 miles to pick it up for me!

Lane: *Talk a little about founding your non-profit organization, MBIRA, and what you are up to these days.*

Azim: I founded MBIRA in 1998, primarily to "give back" to musicians in Zimbabwe, but also to make mbira recordings and mbira education more widely available to the growing number of mbira fans and students in the U.S. and around the world.

This year I am teaching weekend mbira workshops in seven states and eight-day "mbira camp" intensives in Hawaii, California, and Argentina.

Every year I travel to Zimbabwe to make more recordings and release six to twelve CDs. I do all the work mixing the recordings, designing the packaging, and making copies of each CD. The CDs can be ordered online at www.mbira.org and benefit 135 traditional musicians in Zimbabwe. Soon, MBIRA will be releasing its first DVD, *First Mbira Lessons*, consisting of video lessons, audio play-along tracks, and text about the cultural context of the music.

I perform, give lecture-demonstrations about mbira and Shona culture, and offer hands-on mbira workshops with my instruments at universities and schools. Through MBIRA, I also bring traditional Zimbabwean musicians to teach and perform in the U.S. In 2008, two marvelous performers, Patience Chaitezvi and Jenny Muchumi, joined me to tour as Women of the Spirits.

Lane: *How do you spend your time in Zimbabwe now? How are you tracking down these fantastic mbira players/makers? How much are you still studying, performing and practicing?*

Azim: In Zimbabwe, I ask excellent musicians to tell me which musicians play better than them. Then, I ask them to bring those musicians to me to be recorded. I record in several rural village areas as well as the capital city of Harare, and I hope to eventually record in every corner of Zimbabwe where traditional music is still played.

I also spend time playing mbira with Zimbabwean friends, including playing in traditional ceremonies with them. I am still learning all the time. One can never finish learning the mbira repertoire, as it is a vast classical repertoire spanning 1,000 years, including many intricate traditional styles of improvisation.

Many Zimbabwean mbira makers ask me to sell their instruments, but I have to refuse those who aren't very good and are just looking for money. However, I regularly get instruments from twelve excellent makers. It's a challenge to keep up with rapidly escalating demand; MBIRA sold 242 mbiras last year! I spend a lot of time tuning up instruments after their 10,000-mile journey through the mail—probably the most boring part of my work.

Photo by Yukiko Nakamura

Erica Azim, Fradreck Mujuru (one of her teachers) and others in Mujuru Village, Dewedzo, Zimbabwe, in 1999.

Lane: *Specifically, what non-Western ideals/philosophies on music do you impart to your mbira students? Are there any issues that Western students struggle with?*

Azim: I encourage my mbira students to embrace the traditional Shona belief that the musician needs to "get out of the way" and let his or her *shave* [talent] spirit help to play the mbira, and also let the *shave* take responsibility for both excellent playing and mistakes. Students trained in Western music have a difficult time with this, as they are used to a competitive music world where they are personally responsible for every note. When students are able to relax and stop worrying, they learn mbira much faster and play more beautifully. I hope they are able to carry this experience into other areas of their lives.

Personally, I have gradually come to fully embrace the traditional Shona ego-free experience when playing music. I have found that this perspective allows one to have a much deeper musical experience, freed of both the worry that one might play a wrong note and the distraction of pride in a well-received performance.

Although framing the idea of "getting out of the way" as a *shave* is uniquely Zimbabwean, I think the goal is similar to what many types of artists in any culture experience when they are "in the zone" and the art is flowing through them.

Lane: *You talk about learning and hearing mbira the Shona way. Can you elaborate on that?*

Azim: There are a couple of things about how Shona mbira music is organized that are fundamentally different from Western music. One of these is that an mbira piece is completely circular; it doesn't have the beginning or end that Western music, being linear, has. Another basic difference is that Western music is organized in chord progressions—I call this "vertically organized"—while Shona mbira music has many intertwined melodies starting at different points along the circular cycle of the piece—"horizontally organized."

The Western mbira student can't hear most of what a Shona musician listens to and improvises on when playing mbira. To train students to hear mbira in a Shona way, I teach them to sing simple melodies that start at different times in the piece cycle in exactly the way the melodies are being played on the mbira. When singing each melody, it sounds like the mbira is playing a different piece! Our ears tell us that the piece starts where we begin the sung melody. This magical shifting of musical perspective is the basis of extensive Shona mbira improvisation.

Lane: *How do you make the mbira and its music accessible to Western audiences and students?*

Azim: American audiences have been quite enthusiastic about mbira. I have even performed, both solo and together with touring Zimbabwean musicians, in parts of the country where no African music had ever been performed before and had a very positive response. I give audiences some explanation

of the tradition: that the Shona people have played this music for over 1,000 years, the same songs are played century after century due to the requirements of Shona religion, and a vast traditional style of improvisation keeps each performance fresh. Often I'll sing in the way I described for teaching students how to listen to mbira. This also helps an audience to hear the subtleties of the music.

In teaching mbira, I unmask the basis of traditional Shona mbira improvisation so that, ultimately, an advanced mbira student can improvise in a completely Shona way. Of course, this also requires learning to hear mbira in a Shona way, as I described before, and plenty of listening to recordings of Shona mbira players in order to get the feel of the music. I also work with students on the interlocking of the *kushaura* [leading] and *kutsinhira* [intertwining] mbira parts to each piece, and the relationship of each part with the *hosho* [pair of gourd rattles] beat.

Lane: *What about the cross-cultural impacts of learning/playing the mbira?*

Azim: One interesting impact of the spread of mbira relates to its power to heal both physical and mental illness. While mbira's healing power has culture-specific explanations in Zimbabwe, many mbira students here report rapid relief from stress when playing mbira and sometimes relief from more serious ailments, such as a heart condition. A music-therapist mbira student of mine started using mbira successfully with mentally ill patients more than ten years ago. I believe that there is huge potential for mbira music to be more widely used in conjunction with Western medicine. I imagine that some day mbira music will be heard in operating rooms, for example, and prescribed for anxiety disorders.

On a different note, learning about traditional Shona culture gives the student a window into a different worldview. This type of understanding is becoming more and more important as the world grows smaller and cross-cultural understanding becomes critical.

Students often find it refreshing to think of the money that they spend on an mbira and CDs going directly to struggling African musicians, a rarity in our corporate economy. In Zimbabwe, traditional musicians and instrument makers gain self respect from being appreciated worldwide, and some are literally saved from starvation due to sales of a few CDs. I believe that this is a win/win cultural exchange. Our support of traditional musicians also helps to balance out the fact that only pop-influenced mbira players currently receive any financial support, such as recording opportunities, in Zimbabwe.

Some American mbira students report that learning to hear mbira in a new and different way has helped them to hear more of the complexity in Western music. I always remember a retired professional opera singer telling me, with a big smile, "Now I hear so much more when I listen to Bach!"

News reports tell us that Zimbabwe is the fourth most "failed nation" on earth. Playing, supporting, and respecting Zimbabwe's beautiful and ancient musical tradition not only helps the tradition to survive the current historical period, but reminds us of the indomitable human spirit. Musicians manage to give beauty and depth to their communities even in times and places where life is precarious.

Photo by David Locke

Erica Azim and Forward Kwenda performing at Tufts University, Medford, Mass in 1997.

John Lane is the Assistant Professor of Percussion at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. John teaches applied percussion, directs the SHSU Percussion Ensemble and Steel Band, and helps coordinate the annual Contemporary Music Festival. He has been recognized both nationally and internationally as a soloist, clinician, and chamber musician, recently performing at the Hokuto International Music Festival in Japan. His writings have appeared in *Percussive Notes* and *21st Century Music*, and he has recorded for the Klavier and GIA record labels. He is completing his DMA at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and holds degrees from the University of North Texas and Stephen F. Austin State University. PN

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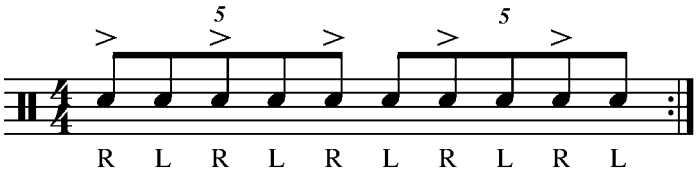
Fun With Odd Groupings, Part 2

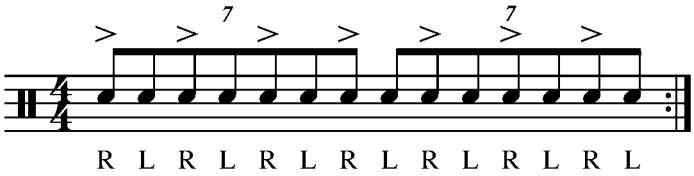
By Ted Warren

In Part 1 of this article (January 2010 issue), we looked at basic quintuplet, septuplet, and nontuplet groupings over a quarter-note pulse in 4/4. Now we will look at ways of applying the odd groupings we worked on in Part 1. First we'll throw some accents in on every other note. The accents then create a one-bar quintuplet, septuplet, or nontuplet (Examples 1,1a, and 1b). Try moving your accenting hand (your right) to different toms, etc. to help you hear the longer odd grouping (Examples 1c, 1d, and 1e).

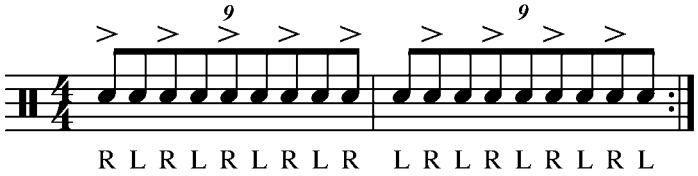
Example 1



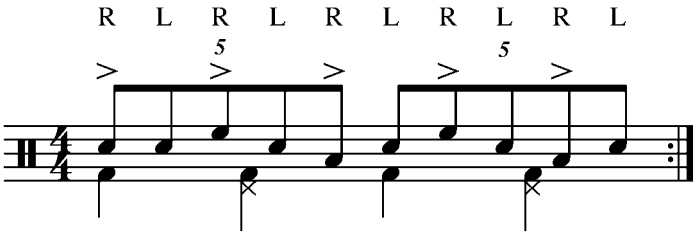
Example 1a



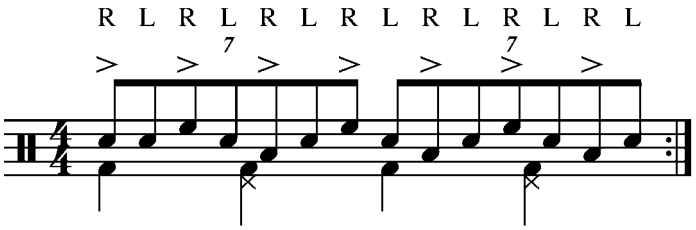
Example 1b



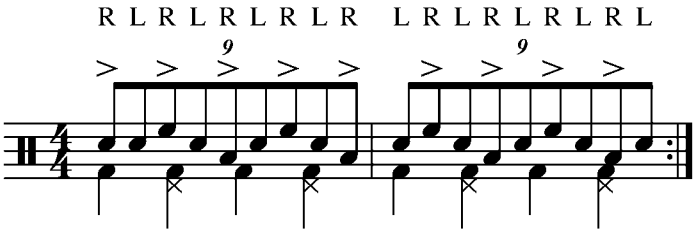
Example 1c



Example 1d

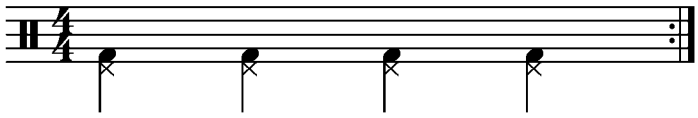


Example 1e

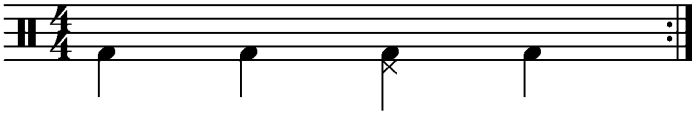


The next step is to play the groupings and leave certain notes out. For the sake of space, I'm only showing this for quintuplets, but try it with all the groupings we've discussed. Try moving this around to different drums and cymbals as well. We will also look at three alternate foot patterns you can try. Use these for Examples 2 to 6 as well as playing the bass drum on all four beats with hi-hat on two and four.

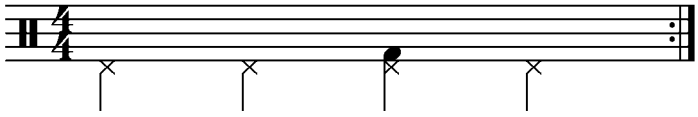
Foot Pattern 1



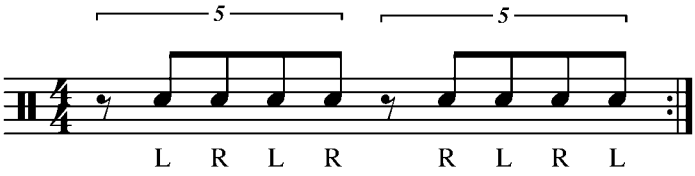
Foot Pattern 2



Foot Pattern 3



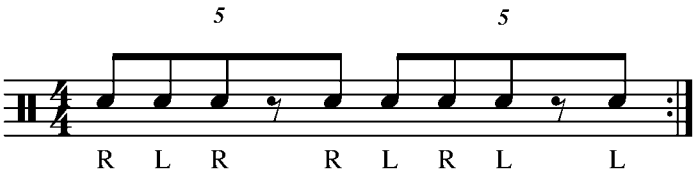
Example 2



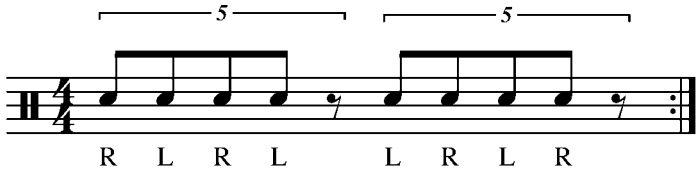
Example 2a

Example 2b

Example 2c



Example 2d



Now, let's double each of the strokes in the grouping. The last example of this group shows all the notes as doubles, which gives us two sets of tentuplets.

Example 3

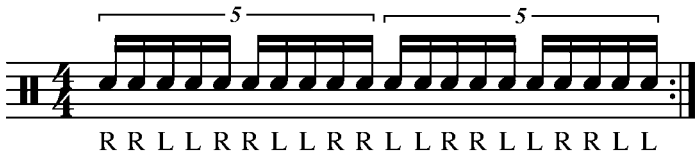
Example 3a

Example 3b

Example 3c

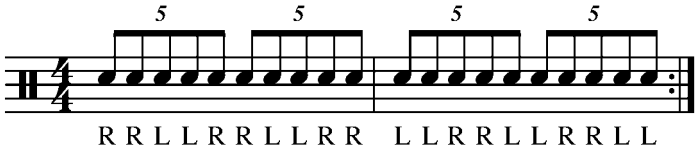
Example 3d

Example 3e

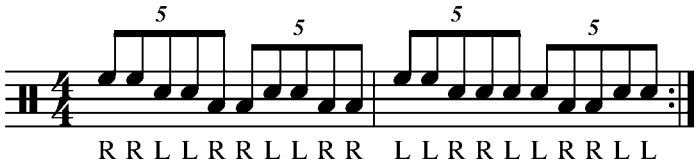


Now, let's go back to eighth-note odd groupings, but let's keep the double sticking. The cool thing about using this idea is that although the sticking is symmetrical (divisible by four), the grouping is not. This creates some very lopsided licks—especially when we start moving it around the drums (Example 4a).

Example 4



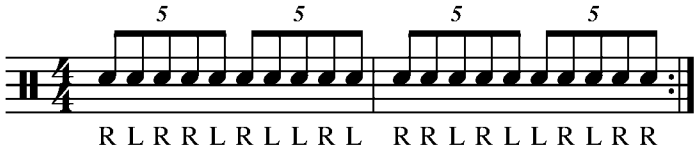
Example 4a



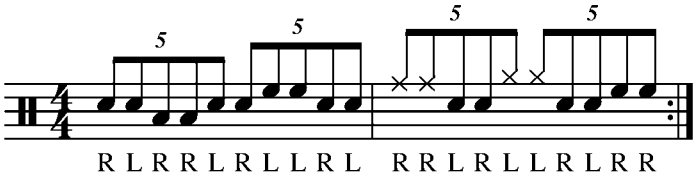
You can also spice this up by "breaking" the doubles between two surfaces (thank you, Paul DeLong!).

Finally let's try this with a paradiddle sticking. In Example 5, I've only written out two bars, but it takes two more to get the sticking back to where it began. Example 5a is just one of the infinite ways we can voice this on the drums.

Example 5



Example 5a



For more work on this concept, try using the first three pages of George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control* for sticking options. Try this with the sevens and nines, too. Have fun, and don't do this stuff with your country band if you want to keep the gig!

Ted Warren is a composer, bandleader, and drummer in Canada's jazz scene. He teaches at Humber and Mohawk College in their Jazz Studies programs and fronts his own quartet, Ted's Warren Commission, who released their second CD, *Songs For Doug (Doctor's Orders)* in 2008. He is also a member of the Mike Murley, Mike Downes, Kieran Overs, and Ted Quinlan groups. He was the drummer for the Boss Brass and can be heard on six of their CDs. Ted studied music at McGill and received a certificate in Jazz Studies from St. Francis Xavier University. He has worked with Slide Hampton, Bob Newhart, Maynard Ferguson, Lew Soloff, Chuck Mangione, Jeff Healey, Norma Winstone, Sheila Jordan, Howard Johnson, Nick Brignola, Kenny Wheeler, and Gerry Bergonzi. He has written articles for *Modern Drummer*, *Canadian Musician*, and *Percussive Notes*. PN

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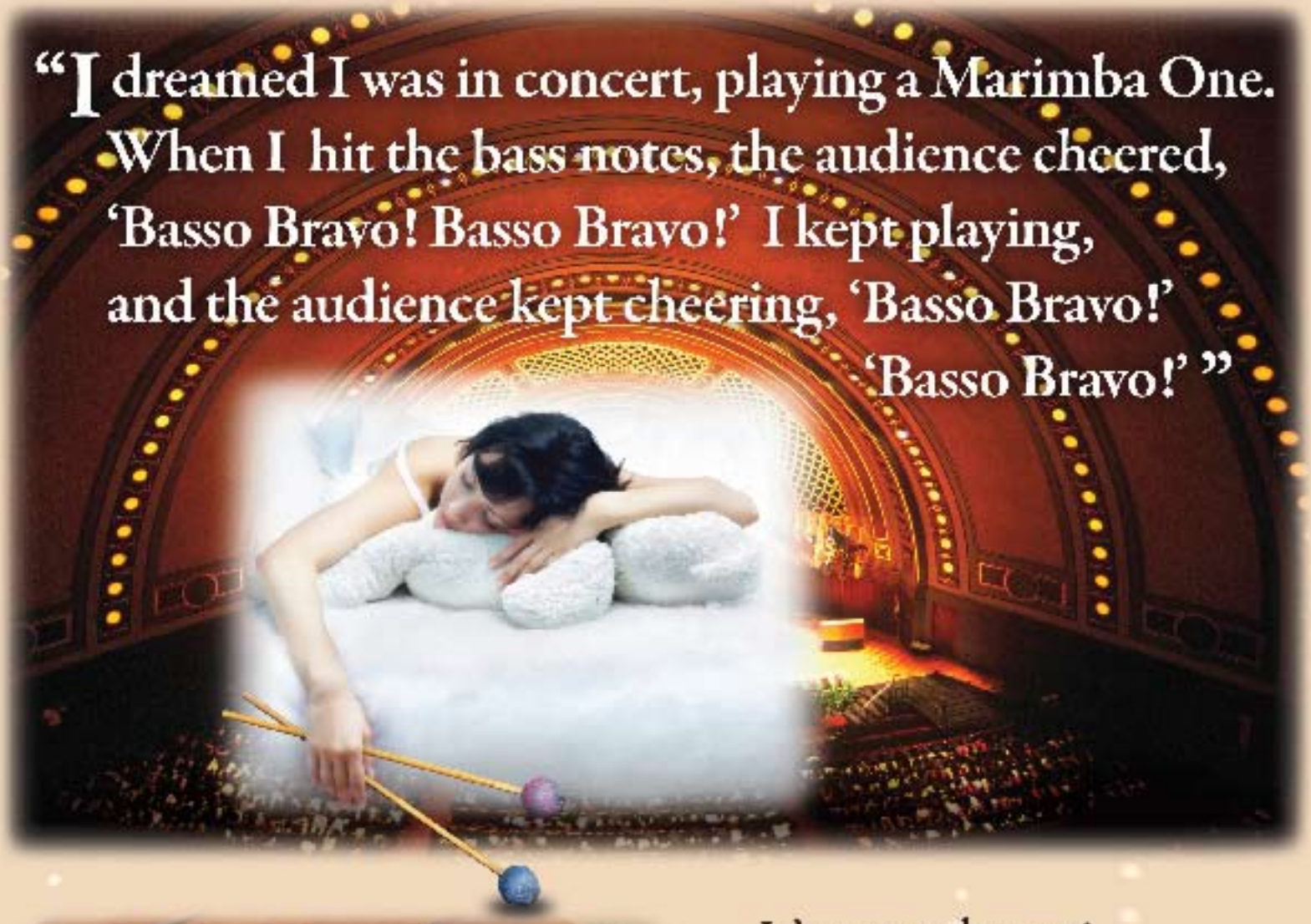

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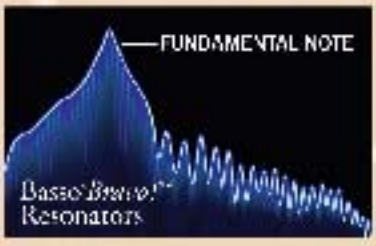

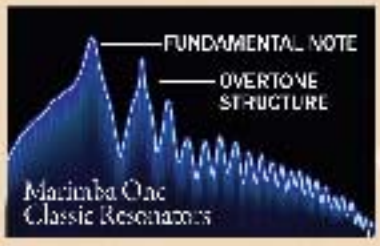

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Building a Smarter Drumline

By Gene Fambrough

As marching percussion continues to evolve into an increasingly sophisticated medium, our approach to teaching technical concepts must increase in efficiency. Although it is important to have technique-building exercises for the hands, it is equally important (and necessary) to have exercises for the mind as well. This "mental approach" is one area that continues to be problematic for students of all ages.

More often than not, students will readily admit that their mistakes are because of lack of focus, not lack of practice. I like to incorporate some additional concepts into our exercise program in order to keep the student from "checking out" during practice. After a full day of classes, work, personal issues, or car problems, it is often necessary to "force" the drumline to focus on the rehearsal at hand. I would like to share a few examples of exercises I have developed throughout my teaching career, geared towards addressing this issue.

HAND MOTION

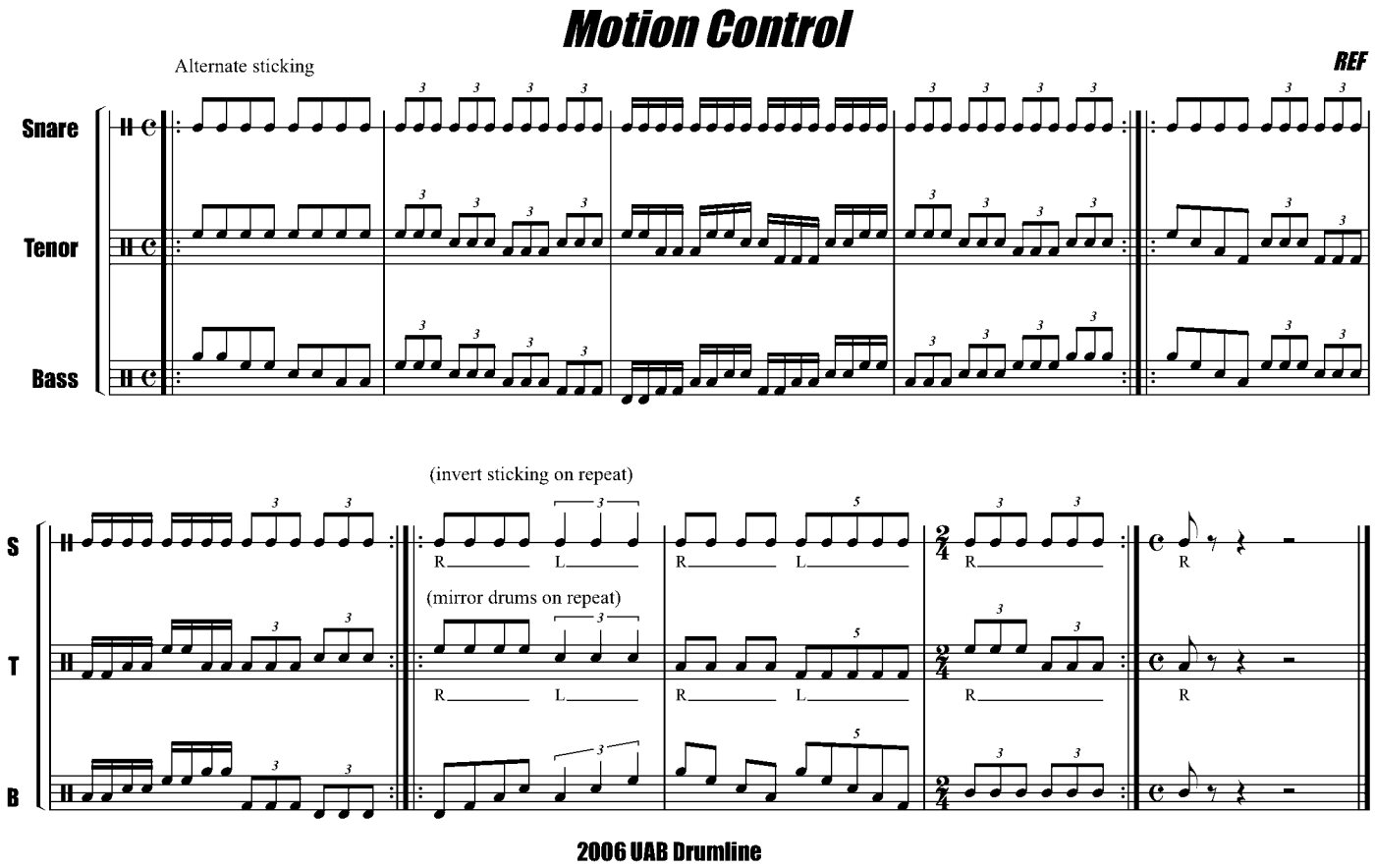
One of the most problematic areas we encounter is the changing of hand speed. In solo performance, hand-speed issues translate into rushing and/or dragging of individual rhythmic figures. In marching percussion, however, hand-speed problems are magnified and equal poor performance (i.e., "dirty" or poor execution). I find that including hand-speed changes periodically in the exercise program makes it less of an issue within musical settings.

Hand-speed changes can be as basic as a simple duple to triple transition, or as complex as your imagination can make it. Below is an extended hand motion exercise to work exclusively on the changes of hand speed one may encounter within a typical chart. Although it is a difficult exercise to play cleanly, it tackles some basic issues that can transfer to many other musical situations.

ACCENT-TAP EXERCISE

The next exercise (see page 47) is an extended accent-tap control study. Although accent-tap exercises are as old and varied as they come, I try to inject some new variations from time to time. The opening five measures of the exercise are typical patterns of eighth-note accents. The first "curve ball" I throw is the change of sticking throughout the pattern: right for two measures, left for two measures, right for one measure, inverted on the repeat. This creates enough of a variation to prevent the auto-pilot syndrome from setting in too quickly.

The second phrase of the exercise begins to incorporate basic changes of hand speed, moving to eighth-note triplets within eighth-



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note accent-tap patterns. Notice measure six has split accents around the sections and measure seven utilizes unison accents. The third measure of the phrase presents a longer triplet figure before the change to the left hand on the repeat.

Measure nine is where the fun really starts: two eighth-note quintuplets (one on each hand) with a rimshot release. Certainly, this is a difficult measure to execute correctly at first. Once the students understand the "5 over 2" concept, however, it becomes a great mental challenge for the entire section. Following the quarter-note rimshot (defined in our line as a 12-inch stroke) the students must re-enter at a three-inch level for the ensuing taps. This brief pause of hand motion is crucial to understand for all members of the line, and serves to introduce the concepts in the last phrase.

A characteristic I have integrated lately is to specify changes of foot motion or "marking time" within any given exercise. We encounter many starts and stops within a single halftime show, and it helps to get the entire body involved in the exercise program as well. With a little forethought, it could be fairly easy to "compose" a section that utilizes a halt and restart of mark time. So to add a little extra spice to the challenge, we stop marking time on measure nine and restart on measure ten. When we use this exercise as part of our "track-work" sessions, this measure becomes an actual halt, resuming "forward march" on the next phrase. This adds enough of a twist to the routine to make the students concentrate harder, all the while simulating drill moves that we will surely encounter in the show.

The final phrase of the exercise presents concepts that are very challenging for many lines, but again, will help the students tremendously. We use the accented figures to work on different stroke types within the immediate vicinity of one another (marked "U" for upstroke and "D" for downstroke). A quick look at the mathematics of each measure will reveal an interesting pattern that evolves in the relationship of the last accent to the next tap: measure 10 presents a two sixteenth-note space, measure 11 presents a three sixteenth-note space, and measure 12 presents a four sixteenth-note space. This space becomes increasingly more difficult to navigate as the gap widens, making concentration a vital part to success. The final measure of the exercise presents a two-handed figure (with a crescendo) meant to incorporate several elements at once, releasing on a 12-inch double-stop stroke.

TRIPLET TRANSITION

Many contemporary drumlines use some variation of diddles within triplet figures as a means of working out the technique for various drag patterns and triplet-based rolls. I have taken a standard variation that works single diddles and five-stroke rolls and inserted a hand-motion change in the middle of the check pattern (see page 48). Our check pattern consists of two counts of triplets, two counts of sixteenth notes, then two counts of triplets. This check pattern appears in all three variations of the diddle sequence, making sure that the ensemble is consistently thinking about the "form" of the exercise.

The fourth phrase incorporates an accent-tap pattern in triple time, expanding the previous concept into hand-to-hand combinations. Although each part (snare, tenor, or bass) is not difficult by itself, the combination of the parts is where the challenge lies. If you look closely at the accent patterns generated by the basses against the accents of the snares, you will find a carefully placed hemiola; although the triplet hand motion continues, the accents generate a slower, duple-sounding groove pattern (notated as "Triplet Transition [duple feel]").

The next challenge in this exercise is the last measure of the fourth phrase, where the hand motion stops at a dotted quarter. This simulates a rhythmic figure that may occur in musical settings and helps the ensemble make better sense of the left-hand reentry after the pause. Finally, the phrasing in the last part of the exercise further resembles figures that may occur within a musical context, offering accented and unaccented roll figures off of the right hand as well as the left.

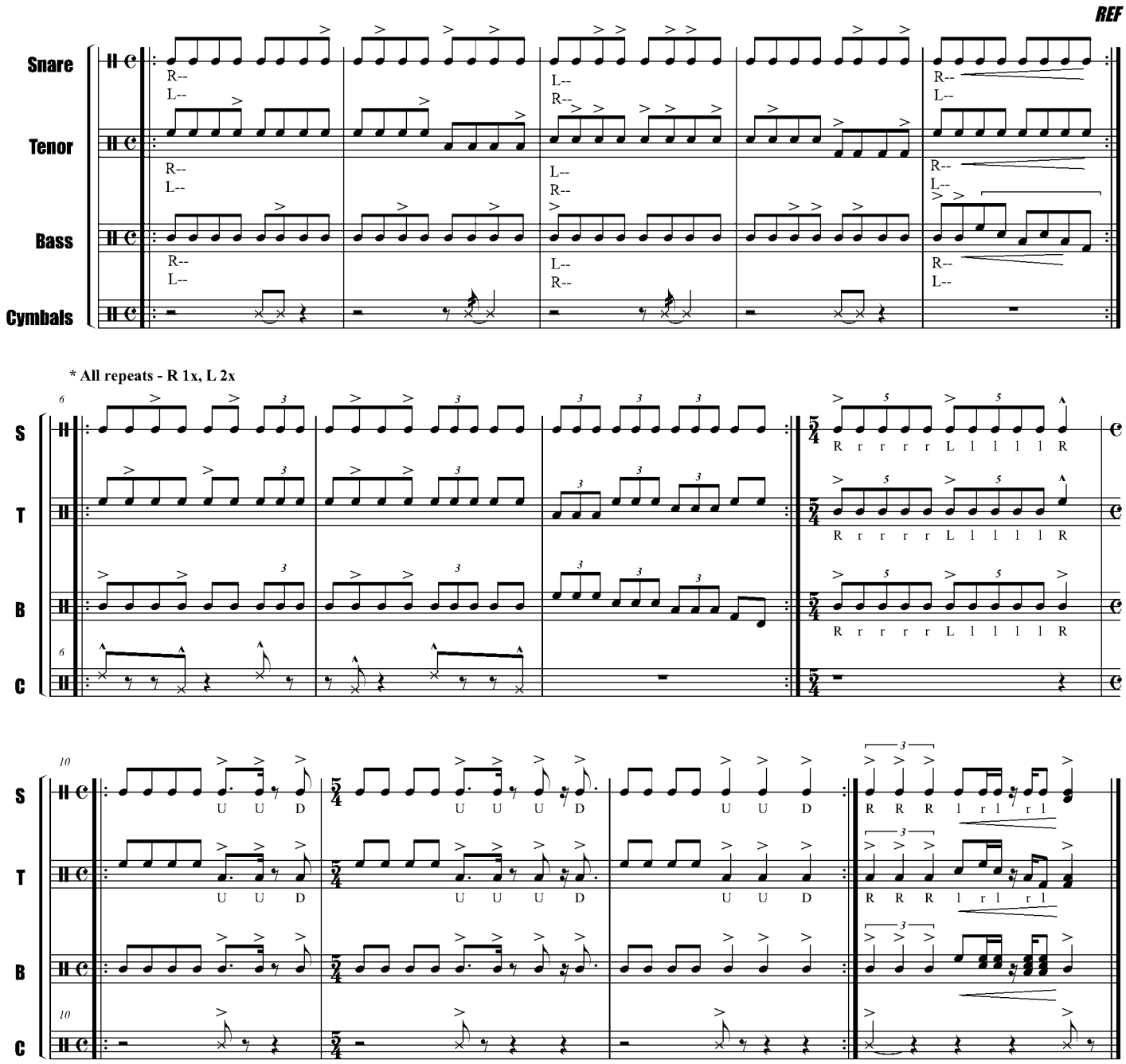
SOME THOUGHTS ON METRONOMES

It is fairly common these days to use an amplified metronome for rehearsal purposes. Although the benefits are obvious, there can be some other ways to use the metronome that can provide a needed change of pace.

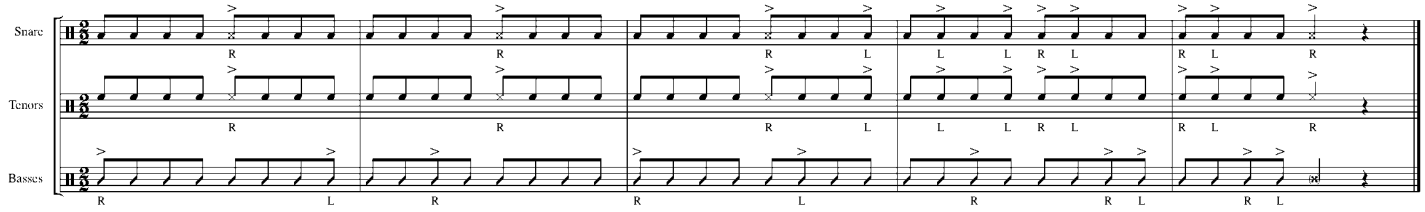
The practice of "burying the metronome" is a great teaching tool, and many people use it with individual practice time. It can also be used with the marching percussion section. Too often, the volume of the metronome is turned up to assure that all members can hear the pulse, resulting in a fairly loud situation for all involved. If we turn the volume down to a level less than the volume created by the instruments, it becomes more obvious when the players are not in time. This makes the students' listening skills come into play, rather than "beating" the pulse into them. Although it can be difficult and take extra time, it is well worth the effort.

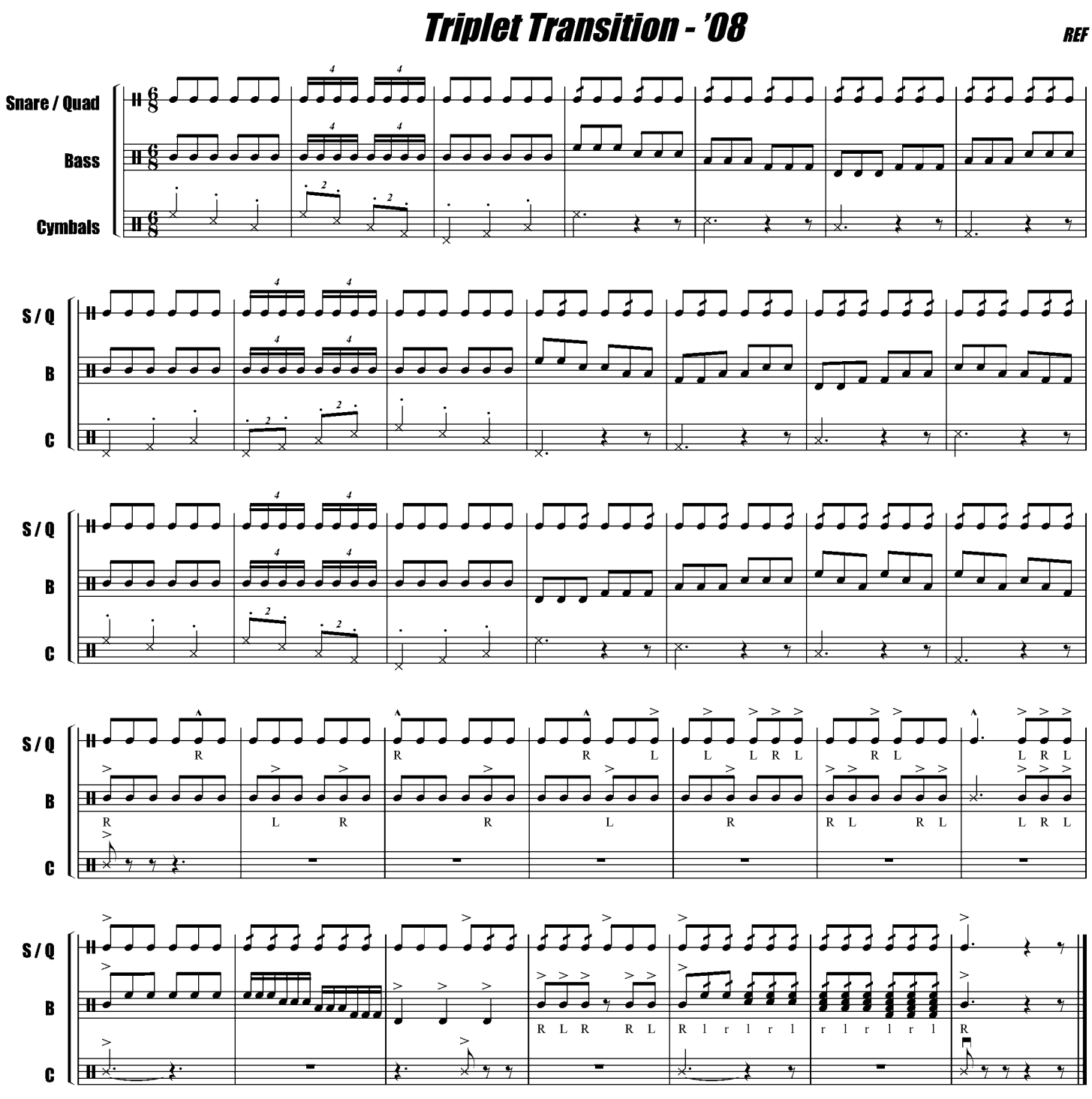
Another approach is to set the metronome to the half note, or, if the tempo is fast enough, even the whole note. This makes each audible click of the metronome occur with less frequency, making the students responsible for more chunks of the tempo at any given time. If

Tap-Accent Groove



Triplet Transition (duple feel)





the piece you are working on contains drumset or groove-style playing, you could call the half note metronome clicks "2" and "4" in order to mimic the backbeat.

CONCLUSION

If we approach our marching percussion exercise program a little differently and begin to challenge the students mentally as well as physically, the demands of the music become easier to meet. In any given setting, we want to have more technique than we need; this makes the music look "easy" to the audience. The same applies to "mental" technique as well; develop the mind so that fewer repetitions are necessary. Incorporating these types of challenges will help your ensemble develop into a more mature group, and will help all of the students in musical situations beyond the marching field.

Gene Fambrough, DMA, is Assistant Director of Bands and Assistant Professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He directs the UAB Percussion Ensemble, Steel Band, Electro-Acoustic Percussion Group, and serves as percussion arranger/instructor for the Marching Blazers. He holds degrees from the University of Georgia, East Carolina University, and the University of Alabama, and has served as marching percussion instructor and arranger at each institution as well as for the Spirit of Atlanta Drum and Bugle Corps. PN

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Research and Preparation in the College Selection Process

By Adam Groh

Thousands of students interview and audition for college percussion programs around the country each year, yet many students either fail to research each school in depth or know what questions to ask. While the audition experience itself can be quite stressful, one of the most challenging and important aspects of the process is identifying a list of programs to investigate further, months or years in front of the audition itself.

For the purposes of this article, the process of choosing and perfecting audition repertoire, coping with audition anxiety, or any other audition-specific strategies will not be addressed. Instead, we will deal with identifying prospective schools and gathering information to make an informed decision about which school to attend. The following points will give students a set of basic guidelines to assist them in making the best college decision possible.

FINDING AND RESEARCHING POTENTIAL SCHOOLS

This process starts with a thorough self-examination. Do you want to pursue education or performance? Music as a major or minor? Are you looking for a curriculum that is specifically focused on orchestral playing, keyboard, timpani, world percussion, jazz, or any other form of percussion? Based on your initial information, what programs seem to fit your goals? If you are interested in performing on Broadway, perhaps one of the colleges in New York City would help you establish connections in that field. If you want to be an orchestral player, which schools have major and regional orchestras nearby?

Start with the people most familiar to you. Private teachers and high school band/orchestra directors can help you generate an initial list of reputable music and percussion programs. Additionally, friends from your high school program pursuing music in college can and will share their opinion of schools they considered—especially the school they ultimately chose to attend. This input is especially valuable since their application and audition process was just recently completed. If you take part in any honor bands or orchestras, all-district or all-state ensembles, youth orchestra, or any other musical group outside of your high school program, use your acquaintances from those groups to also generate a list of schools. Your peers may be considering programs that could also be potential destinations for you!

Use other resources to discover schools to investigate. If you are reading this article, you have already taken a big step in that direction by joining PAS. Attend PASIC and observe the college programs and teachers that are performing or participating in clinics and lectures. You can also search *Percussive Notes*, *Percussion News*, and the PAS Website for advertisements and news related to colleges. Conventions other than PASIC, such as your state's music education convention or the Midwest clinic, may have booths promoting schools from your home or a bordering state, and you may even be able to talk to the percussion teachers at these events.

If you want to be really creative in finding programs, try watching a day of college football or basketball. For each school you see playing that day, find their music and percussion Website online and spend five minutes learning the basics about their program.

Another strategy for finding teachers and programs is to "Google" the artists on your favorite drumsticks or mallets and spend a few minutes finding more information about them. Perhaps they teach at a school that you would be interested in learning more about. These strategies can quickly generate a long list of programs that you can eventually condense to a short list of places to consider.

Visiting a variety of places may clarify what features you are looking for in a school. Explore large and small schools, urban and rural, conservatory settings and public colleges, and places close to home and far away. Use your experiences at these varied places to help narrow your focus. One additional note: The "hot" programs, like any trend in society, are constantly evolving. With changes in faculty, administration, budgets, and a multitude of other variables, college music and percussion programs may undergo massive changes in only a few years. As such, a fresh, unbiased look at the state of programs may be extremely helpful.

Some students choose to designate one school as a "safety" school—perhaps a less-competitive program where the students feel relatively confident they'll be accepted. While there are a variety of stances on the idea of a safety school, it should be acknowledged that some students do think in these terms; however, the overarching theme behind a safety school could be inaccurate self-image, therefore causing difficulty in generating an appropriate list of schools that correspond to a student's ability level.

As you develop your final list of schools, be realistic with yourself. Consider not applying solely to top-tier, conservatory-level programs that are ultra-competitive. Although you may be a talented student who is capable of succeeding at this type of program, there will be many others just like you who are auditioning there as well. If you are not accepted you will be left with little or no flexibility in choosing your place to study.

However, do not be intimidated by these programs. If you have the desire to attend a particular program, nothing should prevent you from applying, even if it seems unattainable. Balance a couple of these elite, conservatory-level programs with a few schools that are high-quality but may be more realistic. There are great programs and teachers throughout the United States (not to mention abroad), and many of them would be great additions to your list. Having a diverse set of schools to choose from in the end will help you make the best possible choice after deciding what the most important aspects of a program are for you.

APPROACHING YOUR AUDITION

Now that you have narrowed your list, it is time to do your homework. While seeing the campus and music facilities and faculty on an audition date is a great idea, it might not provide the most realistic view of what happens on a daily basis. You may want to schedule a campus visit. That way you can observe rehearsals, lessons, and get a good idea of what life would be like on a typical day. If you live close enough to a potential school, try to go see a concert or recital. Checking for videos on YouTube and percussion Websites, as well as seeking out commercial recordings of the school's percussion ensemble may also be a good way to gain perspective concerning what they do. Some schools even post videos

No matter how good the facilities, instruments, teacher, peers, or anything else may be, you want to make sure that when students leave the program they are competitive in whatever field or genre they choose.

and sound files on their Website for you to take advantage of.

Another important element is how you will work with your prospective teacher. While you may have exchanged e-mails, talked on the phone or in-person, and could audition for one or more teachers, none of those is as valuable as a lesson with those teachers. Can you work with them in a productive manner? Does their teaching style work well with your personality and learning style? Do you like their ideas and the way they articulate those concepts? By scheduling a lesson you may be able to quickly decide whether you want to spend the next four years of your life working with and emulating a specific teacher, and that is incredibly important.

As you go through the audition and selection process, you will have questions to ask the teachers. Here is the most important question: What do your students do after they graduate? No matter how good the facilities, instruments, teacher, peers, or anything else may be, you want to make sure that when students leave the program they are competitive in whatever field or genre they choose. Are education majors getting teaching jobs at reputable secondary programs? Do performance students go on to highly-regarded graduate programs or professional playing appointments in symphonic ensembles? Are graduate students from the program competitive in the job market? Are students successful in summer music festival auditions, solo competitions, drum corps auditions, or any other activities off-campus? All of these are indicators of the program's ability to prepare you for post-graduation goals, therefore it is important to feel that this school could be your launching pad. No teacher can guarantee anything; it is still largely up to you. Know that the success of previous students is a sign of a good learning environment, but it is up to each individual to put in the hard work and dedication that will eventually lead to success.

Other important questions include whether or not you will study with a graduate student or the full-time teacher. If with graduate students, do they work with students on the same material as the primary teacher, or is their instruction focused on complementary skills such as world music, jazz improvisation, drumset, or steel pan? How long do students study with graduate students before moving on to the primary teacher? What is the emphasis of the overall percussion curriculum? Do students spend most of their time on one or two instrument groups, or do they get to study a wide variety? If the teacher has seen you audition or play prior to your discussion, you may ask about his or her initial plans and goals for you in your first year on campus.

An additional consideration for graduate students is the issue of assistantships and fellowships. The difference between these two types of financial aid is that an assistantship requires some sort of work arrangement, while the fellowship does not. If you are in the running for an assistantship, you should ask about the responsibilities for your position. Whenever possible, ask the current graduate assistants about their work load. Can they find time to practice and study for classes on top of their responsibilities as graduate assistants? Assistantships and fellowships could be a large factor in choosing a school, but be sure you choose a school because it is the right place for you to develop your skills and not just because it is the best bargain.

Some schools may offer special solo or chamber music opportunities for graduate students. Find out what you have to do to apply/audition for these groups if you are interested in them. In addition to on-campus performance groups, find out if your potential school has students constantly performing around town or in the region. If so, you may be able to generate some extra income. Many large universities can serve an entire city or region with additional players for all types of ensembles, ranging from regional orchestras to string quartets at weddings. Will you be able to develop your performing career while still a student?

Aside from preparing and performing a great audition there are some other things to consider on your audition date. If you have not yet visited the campus, this is your opportunity to look around. Some programs may even have orientations and tours already set up for you; however, the most important task during your audition day (aside from a great audition) is meeting current and fellow auditioning students. Obviously you want to ensure the current students are people that you can envision yourself working with. It is also critical to make contact with them so that you can ask them further questions about their school in the future, especially regarding the teacher if you did not have an opportunity to take a lesson. Some good questions for them are: What do you like about the music and percussion programs? More importantly, are there things you wish you could change about the music and percussion programs? How much are you expected to practice? How do practice rooms work? Is there a sign-out policy or a first-come basis? If they are first-come, are they usually available, or do students frequently have to wait to practice? What is the overall disposition of the studio? The answers to these questions give you a close look at life in that particular studio.

If you have any unanswered questions about a particular school's program, or were not able to meet many studio members at your visit, ask the teacher to put you in contact with current students. Social networking sites such as Facebook can also be a valuable tool for developing a rapport with current students. Talk to as many students as possible, and synthesize all of their responses to develop a general idea of what the program is like.

CONCLUSIONS

At this point you have amassed a large quantity of data about many collegiate percussion programs. Trust your instincts and choose the finalists based upon your own criteria, nobody else's. Your list may be very different from someone else that you know is going through the same process, but that is the point. Now it is time for the next steps: auditioning, and eventually making your final decision about your college destination. Good luck!

Adam Groh is a Graduate Teaching Assistant at The Florida State University where he is pursuing his master's degree in Percussion Performance with Dr. John W. Parks IV. Prior to arriving at FSU, Adam served as a Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant at Truman State University, where he also completed his undergraduate degree in music with Dr. Michael Bump. He has performed with the Tallahassee, Chautauqua, and Northwest Florida Symphony Orchestras and participated in the Texas and Chautauqua Music Festivals.

PN

Teaching Contemporary Percussion for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

By Tom Berich

In February 2009 I was approached by the Young Audiences of Indiana to put together a percussion piece for the Indiana School for the Deaf. It was to be performed in April, three short months later. Reflecting on my knee-jerk hesitation, this certainly appeared to be a daunting task that I felt wildly unqualified for. I did not know American Sign Language (ASL), and I've never spent *any* time around people who are deaf, so I had no concept of the limitations and barriers.

This article is designed to be a guide for first-time instructors of deaf and hard-of-hearing students. To properly explain the reasons behind my suggestions and approach, a little back story on this project is needed.

THE BACKSTORY
(and why the project changed before it started)

I had recently joined the roster of teaching artists for Young Audiences of Indiana, an arts-in-education non-profit organization. Young Audiences and the Indiana School for the Deaf have had a relationship for almost ten years, bringing arts education—including dance, maskmaking, and storytelling—to deaf and hard-of-hearing students. My general program (for public schools) was teaching an interactive evolution of modern steelpan involving African drumming, Tamboo Bamboo, found objects, Pan 'round Da Neck, and Calypso.

Diantha Daniels, the Director of Artist Programs with Young Audiences at the time, felt that the Tamboo Bamboo aspect of my program would be a good fit for this teaching experience because the students would be able to feel the vibrations of the tubes on the ground through their feet. At the time, I couldn't have agreed with her more. I thought that Tamboo Bamboo, as an interactive percussion piece, would be ideal for people whose primary means of interpretation was visual and vibratory. I felt I was ready to give this a shot.

My next step was to see a performance of dance and interpretive sign to get an idea of the types of programs the School for the Deaf usually did. This is when my impressions changed dramatically.

When I was first brought in to observe the performance, the most striking thing I noticed was that the 4th–12th graders in front of me were the most physically charismatic stage performers I'd ever seen. As a former live show producer for Nickelodeon, I was keenly aware of being *there* and in the moment on stage, but...the physicality of the story telling!—the presence! The kids on stage weren't just *there*, they were kinesthetically "*there, damn it*" and the audience was coming along for the ride whether they were ready or not! It dawned on me that even if there wasn't an ASL interpreter there (and there were two), I still would have been completely entertained by the raw on-stage charisma.

This experience quickly forced me to abandon the idea of Tamboo Bamboo, which would have been far better suited for a small group, and think bigger to accommodate the large performance hall aspect, because not only were the performers hard of hearing, but much of the audience would be, too. I began to consider Taiko.

Taiko was definitely the way to go, and I was given four students who jumped into this project with both feet. Since it was new to them as well, it was an excellent opportunity to find out what would and would not work when teaching students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

VISUAL ROTE METHOD
(and teaching music to those who cannot hear it)

Taiko drumming, with its big sound, relatively simple rhythms, and large visual attributes, seemed an ideal choice for teaching almost exclusively by movement and abandoning the sense of hearing. Of course, Taiko is not the only type of percussion that could work, but for a beginning percussion piece a simple Taiko number was hard to beat (so to speak); however, accessing authentic taiko drums was prohibitively expensive. Instead we opted for a much simpler solution *a la Stomp*, including various sizes of garbage cans (replacing the daiko) and one-inch dowels (the Bachi or mallets). The timekeeper (Chanchiki) was a simple brake drum. With its high-pitched frequency—and easy accessibility—it proved fairly simple for the kids to feel, although I had to try a few different ones before selecting the one they were most comfortable with.

The rote method of teaching is nothing new, and being a community steelband teacher, rote method is what I use most. But when the student is entirely unable to hear whether he or she is playing correctly with the ensemble, what does a teacher do?

The solution to this dilemma was to work with the students in a semicircle where they all had constant visual contact with one another. Since there was no conductor, and ultimately

the goal was to use this piece as part of a program to take to the public schools for Deaf culture awareness, the consistent metronomic duties went to the brake drum player. Keren, a bright, energetic, and very expressive student from Honduras, worked out perfectly as the timekeeper/pseudo conductor.

Whoever dictates tempo in your ensemble (even if it is you as the instructor) must have specific, minute visual cues for the members to refer to. Since Keren's pattern was nothing more than a repetitive swung eighth-note phrase, we found that it helped the rest of the ensemble if he was outfitted with different colored gloves. He was playing a brake drum with short steel bars, and this not only helped preserve his hands from calluses, but it helped the other percussionists follow his right hand. Bear in mind that the students could not appreciate what it sounded like, nor did they care; it was only important that they could *feel* it, and what they physically did matched the hand they were following.

The next teaching obstacle was the minute, but varying, visual interpretations of the same pattern. This might be the most frustrating thing for musicians who can hear. I found that the previously stated swung eighth-note pattern was actually interpreted three different ways during the first couple of rehearsals. Giovanni, who had some drumming in his background and was a student I had the opportunity to work with prior to the rest of the group, felt it the closest to the true swung eighth note I had originally planned. When we brought in Malvin, a tall and graceful hip-hop dancer, I was surprised that his initial pattern was far closer to a straight dotted-eighth/sixteenth-note phrase feel. This took a minimal amount of tweaking via repetition, but ultimately worked, and yet when Keren was initially introduced to this pattern his visual interpretation was of straight eighths. So how does the teacher deal with this conundrum, when the students can't hear the difference?

The answer was speed. I quite literally spent two rehearsals with the students playing just the swung eighth-note pattern over and over together and on the same instrument. I had them two at a time facing each other on a single drum and playing the same thing. The more they saw each other, the better. The more they actually connected with each other, both visually and physically, the easier the pattern developed in their hands. The first rehearsal was spent getting the pattern correct at a very slow tempo, and the next rehearsal we brought it up. Just swung eighth notes—for 90 minutes.

VOLUME
(not the same as dynamics)

When I first saw the initial dance and interpretive sign performance, what actually struck me, on the most basic level, was "Holy cow it's *loud*", which was entirely *not* what I was expecting a deaf performance to be. It is true that many deaf students do, in fact, *feel* music through vibration. Solo artist Evelyn Glennie performs barefoot for this reason, but this was not practical for these students. Evelyn performs the majority of her concerts for the hearing public, while many deaf student concerts are primarily for a deaf audience. What is practical for the students is the need to perform extraordinarily loud. Instructors should also be prepared for other programs deaf students will potentially be rehearsing that involve amplified music (dance, interpretive sign, etc.). The volume level for these events is exceedingly high because of the need to *feel* the music. For the hearing public these volumes are teeth rattling. If you are not prepared with hearing protection you might need to run to the nearest lavatory and put as much tissue in your ears as you can fit!

LARGE VISUAL PERFORMANCE

Taiko was definitely the way to go for a number of reasons. It is repetitive, loud, and *highly* visual. Any and all movement on and between the instruments needed to be very large. I specifically moved drums further away from each other and from the students to get more movement out of their bodies. I forced the students to put more physicality into it, and this brought me to two very important instruction points:

1. Any physical/visual actions that the teacher uses need to be *much* larger than he or she may be used to. If you are already an expressive person (either with your hands or animated in general) this will help tremendously.

2. Facial expressions go a long way with the hard of hearing. Hearing persons can express much in vocal inflection, but hard-of-hearing students transfer that inflection to their face and body, while the words go through their hands. Even if you think you are overacting, or expressive to the point of histrionic, it is actually something the students will appreciate.

WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER

When working with an interpreter, you should be aware that explanations need to be very concise. An interpreter is just that: he or she *interprets* what you say, and that may or may not be actually what you mean. The simpler you can make your explanation, the better. Many times the interpreter won't know about or understand music, so your explanations can easily get lost in translation.

Always address the person you are talking to and not the interpreter (i.e., don't say "Tell her I said…"). Not only is it rude but it can be very confusing to the interpreter, who is trying to sort out whether you are telling the interpreter to tell the deaf person something, or whether you are telling the deaf person to tell someone else something. (One exception: it is okay to talk about the interpreter in the third person to the deaf person. You may even hear the interpreter talk about him or herself in the third person; for example, "The interpreter needs to move." This is to reduce confusion about who's talking.)

Kathy Kelly MacMillan, formerly of the Maryland School for the Deaf, offers this handy etiquette list for first-time teachers of deaf students.

- Keep your face and lips visible.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Make sure the deaf person is looking at you before you speak, sign, or gesture.
- Speak naturally. Don't exaggerate your mouth movements or speak too slowly, and don't shout!
- Be careful not to stand with your back to a window or other light source; this makes speechreading and getting information from facial expressions difficult.
- Offer pen and paper to write notes back and forth, but be aware that English is a second language for many deaf people. When writing notes: Keep it simple! Use short sentences and plain language. Don't use idioms and slang. Repeat the question to make sure they understand.
- To get the attention of the deaf person: Tap his or her shoulder or arm. Wave in his or her line of sight.

DEAF CULTURE
(and who you will be dealing with)

Throughout this article I have referred to both deaf and Deaf. There is a difference.

One word (deaf) is based on audiology; the other (Deaf) is based on identity. The Deaf community has a lot more to do with identity and language than it does with actual hearing loss. A hearing interpreter fluent in American Sign Language is a member of the Deaf community, but a deaf person who doesn't sign and doesn't socialize with other deaf people would not be. And a hard-of-hearing person who signed and socialized with other deaf people would be included.

The term "hearing impaired" is actually not a well-accepted term in the Deaf community. "Deaf" or "hard of hearing" are better terms. While "hearing impaired" seems politically correct, it implies brokenness and is actually an outside label placed on the Deaf community by the hearing world.

You may find a few signs helpful, including the signs for numbers one through ten, "thank you," "very good," "faster," "slower," and other simple musical terms. What is wonderful about the Deaf culture is that everyone is very happy to show you these kinds of signs to help you communicate.

CONCLUSION

There are more than 100 schools in the United States alone that cater to deaf students. Many of these organizations have funding for the arts in education but no means of teaching music. Many percussion educators have turned down opportunities to teach these students because they feel overwhelmed. I know this feeling, but there is a wonderful opportunity for educators and a completely untapped resource of students eager to learn, whose talents tend to get overlooked. It is also a great excuse to learn American Sign Language and possess a valuable skill that could come in handy at any time.

Tom Berich, a recording artist, educator, and bandleader, is the founder of PanUSA LLC (www.panusa.us). He received his Bachelor of Music Education degree from West Virginia University where he studied with Phil Faini, Tim Peterman, and Ellie Mannette. He has produced live shows for Nickelodeon, the audio prompts heard on Verizon and Sprint's automated customer service, and engineered the audio tours for the Smithsonian and Boston's Museum of Modern Art. He is also on staff at Indiana University's department of Modern Dance as an accompanist. He can be reached at tberich@mac.com. PN

International PASIC Scholarship Grant

PERCUSSIVE ARTS SOCIETY

Download this application: www.pas.org
Materials must be postmarked by: 03/15/2010

The Percussive Arts Society will provide financial assistance to one student living outside the United States to attend the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) in Indianapolis, Indiana from November 10–13, 2010. The winner will be notified in May, 2010.

Award:
Financial assistance of up to $1,500 (U.S. dollars)*
One year PAS membership renewal
One PASIC registration
One PASIC T-shirt

Eligibility:
Must be an active PAS member at time of application, and if selected, during PASIC 2010.
Student must be 18 years of age or older.
It is not required that the applicant speak and understand English, however it is recommended.
A member of the PAS International Committee will serve as a guide/mentor for the student during PASIC.

Please submit the following materials to be considered:
❒ Completed application information (below)
❒ One-page bio, or resume, stating percussion education, training, experience, and future objectives.
❒ Proof of full-time student status, including latest transcript of grades.
❒ A written statement of 500 words or less in English on "What the PAS International PASIC Scholarship Grant would mean to me."
❒ One letter of recommendation from a percussion teacher, conductor, or colleague.

Name _____

PAS Member ID _____ Expiration Date _____ Birth Date _____

Address _____

City/Province _____ Country _____

Zip/Postal Code _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

*The selected recipient is responsible for obtaining passport, visa or permits from their home country and the United States Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) that are necessary to allow attendance to PASIC. PAS shall make reservations and pay for round trip airfare from a city chosen by PAS to the city that is hosting PASIC, and a hotel room for the time the recipient is in attendance at PASIC, not to exceed the sum of $1,500.00 U.S. dollars. Recipient is required to have a VISA, MasterCard or other credit card accepted at the hotel to be used to guarantee payment of incidental charges made to the hotel room other than the room charge and applicable taxes to be paid by Percussive Arts Society. PAS is not responsible for any changes that the airline may make to recipient's itinerary. Recipient shall be responsible for all travel to and from the airport at both the departure city and the city hosting the convention. Recipient is responsible for all meals and incidental expenses incurred in attending the convention. The difference between the actual costs of the airline ticket and hotel accommodations plus applicable taxes and $1,500.00 will be paid to recipient at the convention to offset expenses incurred while attending the convention. PAS disclaims any responsibility or liability to recipient for anything other than what it is agreeing to provide as part of the scholarship grant.

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New Percussion Literature and Recordings

Selected Reviews

Publishers and composers are invited to submit materials to *Percussive Notes* to be considered for review. Selection of reviewers is the sole responsibility of the Review Editor of *Percussive Notes*. Comments about the works do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Percussive Arts Society.

Send two copies of each submission to:
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110 W. Washington Street, Suite A
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Note: Please provide current address or e-mail, contact information and price with each item to be reviewed. Whenever possible, please include a performance or rehearsal tape of ensemble music. Also, if possible, include a translation if text and CD liner notes are not in English.

Difficulty Rating Scale

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

REFERENCE TEXTS/METHODS

Symphonic Repertoire for Percussion Accessories: Tambourine, Triangle, Bass Drum, Castanets, Maracas, Concert Toms, and RotoToms
Tim Genis
$24.95
Meredith Music
This is a performer's guide to some of the most common excerpts for percussion accessory instruments. Tim Genis' thoughtful and thorough explanation of each excerpt, along with observations from his considerable experience in performing/preparing these excerpts, results in an insightful guide. Along with some of the more commonly called-for audition excerpts such as Dvorák's "Carnival Overture" (tambourine), Rimsky-Korsakow's "Scheherazade" (tambourine), Brahms's "4th Symphony" (triangle), Liszt's "Piano Concerto No. 1" (triangle), Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" (bass drum), and Mahler's "3rd Symphony" (bass drum), the book includes lesser known and/or problematic excerpts such the RotoTom part to "The Rose Lake" by Michael Tippett.

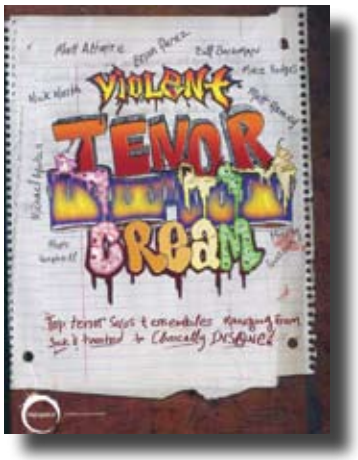
The book contains mostly text with a few musical illustrations of each excerpt, including important instrumental cues. It is an excellent handbook and reference for studying the excerpts, but not necessarily a substitute for having the full part and/or score at hand. Essentially, each section reads like a detailed lesson and assumes the student/player will be at least somewhat familiar with the repertoire discussed. For students serious about studying orchestral repertoire, or for percussionists preparing auditions at any level, this book is an excellent resource.

—John Lane

MARCHING PERCUSSION

Violent Tenor Cream
Various Composers
$24.95
Tapspace
Fans of the snare drum solo collection *Violent Ice Cream* will enjoy this compilation of works for marching tenor drums. The book contains six solos and two pieces for tenor ensembles, written by Matt Altmire, Nick Werth, Bill Bachman, Brian Perez, Colin McNutt, Mike Hodges, and Matt Ramey. Links to video performances of these pieces by the composers themselves can be found at www.tapspace.com.

The book provides a notation key, which is important due to the many effects utilized in the pieces, including, among others, rimshots, cross-overs, buzzed notes, playing on neighbor's drum, back sticking, shanks, stick shots, and "behind the back." In addition, each piece includes program notes, performance notes, and the composer's bio.



These pieces are crazy hard! Each is full of complex rhythmic patterns and a myriad of special effects. They are written at the highest level of the art and should only be attempted by serious, accomplished players. "The 2005 SCV Tenor Ensemble," by Ramey, is particularly interesting as it also includes some keyboard percussion, hand drums, and drumset. This book represents the state of the art in tenor drumming.

—Tom Morgan

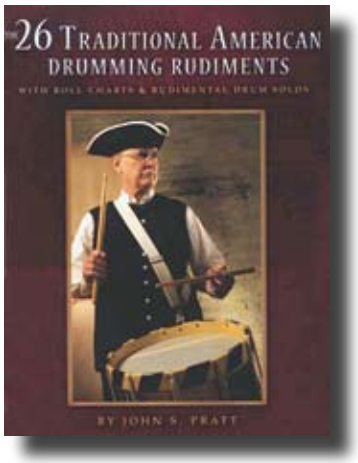
SNARE DRUM

128 Rudimental Street Beats, Rolloffs, & Parade-Song Parts
John S. Pratt
$14.99
Hal Leonard
This re-issue of a 1959 publication from John Pratt is energized by the inclusion of a demonstration CD (dating from a 1968 recording) of the 128 items contained in this 39-page rudimental snare drum collection. Included in this collection are 100 Rudimental Street Beats (each averaging about 20 seconds in length), plus 20 rudimental rolloffs and eight rudimental parade-song parts to such familiar tunes as "This is My Country," "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee," "Oklahoma," and "Yankee Doodle Boy."

The CD recording is clean and quite illuminating in regards to the superb, timeless style and technique, and includes Pratt on snare drum, Willard Putman on tenor drum, Keith Trombly on bass drum, and Glen Gould on trumpet. This superb set of rudimental literature will continue to provide excellent repertoire and a pedagogical resource to 21st-century rudimental percussionists.

—Jim Lambert

The 26 Traditional American Drumming Rudiments
John S. Pratt
$9.99
Hal Leonard
John Pratt's 24-page instructional/pedagogical book contains two large sections:



1. the 26 traditional American drum rudiments (organized by rolls, flams, ruffs, ratamacues, and paradiddles and their associated variations); 2. two rudimental solos: "The Sons of Liberty" and "The All-American Emblem." Pratt is quite adamant in his preface that these 26 "American" rudiments are the product of the National Association of Rudimental Drummers, and his publication seeks to preserve these American rudiments without denying that other "international" rudiments are currently in use.

The two solos are outstanding representations of Pratt's superb rudimental style and would be rated a grade IV difficulty. Either solo would be an excellent contest selection.

—Jim Lambert

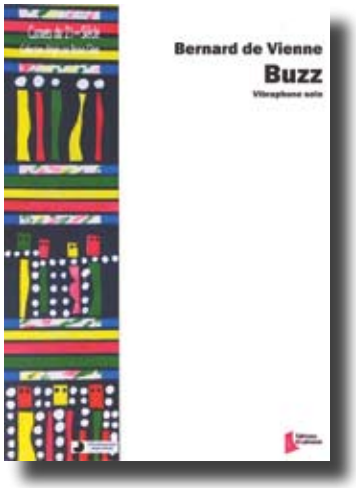
Rudimental Snare Drum Grooves I–IV
Johnny Lee Lane and Richard L. Walker, Jr.
$16.99
Hal Leonard
This book is based on the drum corps warm-up concept of playing short, repetitive exercises focusing on a particular technical issue. Each exercise is written as a two-measure pattern and is presented in the same form on the accompanying CD. Students can hear the groove exercises performed on the CD and practice along with it as well. The book is divided into "One-Hand Grooves," "Single Stroke Combination Grooves," "Diddle Rudiment Grooves," "Flam Rudiment Grooves," "Drag Rudiment Grooves," and "Rudiment Combination Grooves." Stickings are included with each exercise. Students familiar with drumline warm-ups will relate well

to this book. It could also be used by directors looking for new warm-up ideas for their drumlines.

—Tom Morgan

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION

Buzz **IV**
Bernard de Vienne
€6.50
Editions Francois Dhalmann



Although this composition for solo vibraphone is brief (approximately three minutes), it provides a bundle of musical challenges. The composition's melodic structure is based upon the opening statement: B, F, E-flat. This three-note motive permeates the composition, supplying a sense of continuity to a somewhat chaotic piece. The motive is disguised between dissonant trills, grace-note figures, and interspersed between tri-tone arepeggiations. It requires the performer to have mastery of various pedaling and mallet-dampening techniques to achieve clarity of the opening motive between these various "buzzing" effects.

The piece requires four-mallet facility, although the majority of the composition can be executed with two mallets. In the score, Vienne has provided suggested pedal markings along with a description of how much and when to pedal, as well as very detailed dynamics. This piece is appropriate for intermediate to advanced university percussionists. The majority of its difficulties involve the musical content rather than technical demands.

—Eric Willie

Carmen Fantasy **IV**
Georges Bizet
arr. Eric Sammut
$16.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
This arrangement of Bizet's well-known opera adapts the following familiar excerpts from the classic work to 5-octave marimba: "Chanson Boheme," "Entráct to Act II," and "Prelude to Act I." The movements maintain their original character but are adapted to the marimba in an idiomatic style. Sammut's unique adaptation demands excellent control of double-lateral strokes and octaves. The work would be an appropriate study piece for an advanced high school student or college undergraduate.

—John Lane

Musetta's Waltz **V**
Giacomo Puccini
arr. Eric Sammut
$12.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
This marimba work is an adaptation of "Quando me n'vò" ("Musetta's Waltz") from Puccini's opera "La Boheme." Eric Sammut has arranged this popular aria to fit on a 4.6-octave (low E) marimba. Instead of providing a literal transcription of the aria in its original ABA form, Sammut has rearranged the form to give the piece an intro. Permutated variations and arpeggio passages are improvised on the original chord progression, which have been used to portray both the original solo singing melodic lines and the instrumental accompaniments. The piece requires the marimbist to have a well-trained four-mallet technique and the ability to play expressively. Sammut has created a quality arrangement for the advanced college marimbist's repertoire.

—I-Jen Fang

The Oregon Variations **V**
David Johnson
$69.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
This is a composition for solo marimba (5.0 octave) accompanied by two mallet-keyboard parts and two percussion parts. The two mallet-keyboard parts can be performed on a single 4.5-octave marimba. The first percussion part is scored for various toms, cymbals, and triangles, while the second part requires an Irish bodhran. Johnson states that the bodhran should be played "with a traditional tipper and plenty of improvised pitch bending."

After the introductory solo, the composition progresses through two sections that employ percussion colors (bowed cymbal, triangle strikes with bowed crotales, etc.) that accentuate the accents from the soloist. The subsequent section is faster and introduces the bodhran. Here, the bodhran player is asked to keep brisk, gallop rhythms while encountering a steady flow of meter changes. The other performers will find it difficult to execute their parts in these faster sections due to the ever-changing bodhran rhythms, as well as the syncopations encountered in the marimba and percussion parts.

The piece continues with alternating "rubato" and "molto ritmico" sections until the pieces concludes. Besides a brief percussion solo section, the piece functions on the premise of percussion colors that accentuate the solo part.

This piece will be rewarding for the intermediate to advanced university percussion ensemble. It is very organic in sound and has wonderful amalgamations of percussion colors.

—Eric Willie

The Revolutionary **V**
Frederic Chopin
arr. Eric Sammut
$15.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
Eric Sammut has arranged Chopin's piano etude "The Revolutionary" (Op. 10, No. 12) for solo marimba. This work also appears on Sammut's *Four-Mallet Ballet* CD. As opposed to being a simple transcription of the original piece (which might prove impossible, given Chopin's virtuosic writing for the piano), this version is a unique combination of Chopin's melodies and Sammut's inventiveness. This is achieved through the addition of meter changes, key shifts, original material and voicings that are idiomatic to four-mallet marimba techniques. Sammut's tempo marking indicates a quarter-note value of 124–132, while Chopin's urtext edition dictates that of 160 (both the composer and arranger give the textual indication of "Allegro con fuoco"). Sammut's version is also 44 measures longer than Chopin's due to the many liberties the arranger has taken. Several expressive markings differ between the two versions, which might lead the performer to study the piano score in order to gain alternative insights into the piece.

The performer uses four mallets throughout and should be very comfortable with rapid single independent, double vertical, and double lateral techniques. The piece can be performed on a low-F instrument, with the exception of the final chord, which requires a low C. While not a literal translation of Chopin's famous work, this new rendition of "The Revolutionary" is accessible to the marimba and embraces the spirit of the original.

—Jason Baker

Sight Reading for Mallets
Emil Richards
$12.99
Hal Leonard
This new edition of Emil Richards' classic method book, originally self-published in 1992, is a brighter, cleaner edition of the text. The original 33 sight-reading etudes are here with brief explanations and performance notes. Each of the etudes has a jazz tilt complete with chord changes. Primarily written for two mallets, the book includes four four-mallet etudes. While some of the etudes are in odd meters such as 10/4 and 11/8, most are in common meters and the phrases are clear and enjoyable to play. These etudes are designed for the intermediate musician and would be an excellent resource for sight-reading material. Written by one of the all-time studio greats of percussion, this is an essential resource with which students can stretch their reading and improvisation skills. No studio should go without it!

—Mark Ford

KEYBOARD PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Symphony No. 5, "Adagietto" **II**
Gustav Mahler
arr. Jeffrey Grubbs
$30.00
Tapspace
"Adagietto" is a transcription of the fourth movement of Mahler's "Symphony No. 5." It is scored for one vibraphone and four marimbas (4.3 octave). No multiple-mallet technique is required of the performers.

Grubbs has done an excellent job transferring Mahler's orchestration to percussion ensemble. All harmonies are clearly audible and melodic material is distributed appropriately, keeping to Mahler's original voicing hierarchy. To maintain Mahler's lush sound, Grubbs requires the marimbas to roll throughout the majority of the transcription, except for grace-note figures.

Careful consideration of Mahler's tempos and phrase descriptions are adhered to by Grubbs, having provided English translations throughout the score. In addition, he provides brief performance directions on certain articulations. Grubbs kept the arrangement in the original key, suggesting that the harp part may be added as an optional enhancement. This transcription will be an excellent supplement for teaching musical expression in a percussion ensemble setting. Due to its simple technical demands, it will be appropriate for almost every percussion/mallet ensemble.

—Eric Willie

TIMPANI

Recreations Volume 1 **III–V**
Daniel Sauvage
€50
Editions Dhalmann
This collection of 12 etudes for two, three, and four timpani was written to address the type of challenges found in orchestra performance. The etudes, which are described as "recreations," are graduated in difficulty. Each is preceded with a short exercise designed to address the materials found in the etude. There are a few sticking suggestions, as well as some

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motives to be played in both the normal and center of the timpani, and occasional phrases that call for performance with the fingers. There are several contrasting meters, some within the same study, and different tunings are used, including tuning changes within some of the etudes. This collection is very creative, well presented, and should be of value for teachers and students alike.

—George Frock

MULTIPLE PERCUSSION

Echo Song **V**
Gene Koshinski
$20.00
Self-published
"Echo Song" is a multiple-percussion solo with optional assistant percussionist. The instrumentation is kick drum, four octobans, bongos, and splash cymbal. The optional antiphonal percussionist, who is to be placed at the back of the hall (as far away as possible), plays bongos and a kick drum.

According to the composer, the piece was inspired by Renaissance composer Orlando di Lasso (1532–1594), who wrote a work for antiphonal choirs entitled "O la, o che bon echo!" ("The Echo Song"). In this case, the antiphonal percussionist plays an "echo" of the soloist's part during pauses throughout the work.

The soloist must have a strong command of single and double strokes and navigate through some difficult semi-improvised hand/foot coordination passages. Essentially the piece consists of lively syncopated gestures on the bongos that are echoed by the antiphonal player, interwoven with ostinato/poly-rhythmic groove-like passages between the octobans, bongos, and kick drum. It is written in an idiomatic manner and could be appropriate recital material for an advanced undergraduate or graduate/professional.

—John Lane

DRUMSET

Afro-Cuban Percussion Play-along **III–IV**
Trevor Salloum
$9.99
Mel Bay
For players wanting loops with which to practice rhythmic patterns, individual instrument parts (e.g., congas, timbales), or soloing in Afro-Cuban music, this 23-track play-along CD will prove useful. Each three-minute track is recorded in two different tempos (between 100–200 bpm), and features three conga patterns (marcha, bolero, cha-cha), son and rumba clave, the bongo bell pattern, guiro, maracas, bongo *martillo* pattern, 6/8 bell pattern, and cascara pattern. Only the recorded rhythmic patterns are provided, so the user must be familiar with or have some particular Afro-Cuban patterns in mind to practice before working with each track. Bassists and pianists could also use this CD to practice soloing or *montuno* patterns.

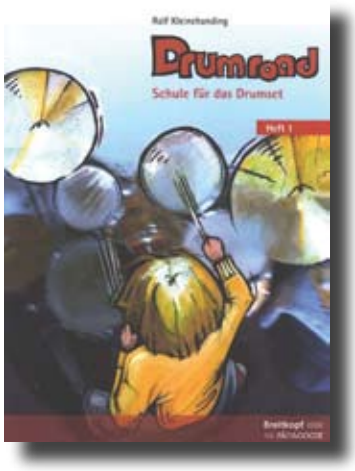
—Terry O'Mahoney

The Commandments of R&B Drumming Play-Along **II–V**
Zoro
$19.95
Alfred

This instructional package contains a "greatest hits" list of 11 funky tunes from the 1970s to 1990s plus three original tunes from Zoro. In the 65-page text, a chapter is devoted to each tune and includes a chart, main grooves, historical info on the song, style analysis, and recommended listening. Styles covered include two-beat gospel, blues shuffle, New Orleans second-line, 4/4 Motown, syncopated eighth-note feel, one-handed sixteenth-note feel, two-handed sixteenth-note feel, disco, go-go, New Jack swing, '90s urban R&B feel, and hip-hop swing. The CD contains mp3 files with two versions of each track (with and without drums). One of the best features of the package is the "Tone and Tempo Changer" software that is included on the CD. It allows listeners to change the tempo and key of the play-alongs to suit their level, loop playbacks for practice purposes, and mute the drums—a nice touch.

—Terry O'Mahoney

Drumroad **I–III**
Ralf Kleinehanding
$19.80
Breitkopf & Hartel



This beginning drumset method will appeal to the younger student. The text is in German but can be easily deciphered by anyone familiar with drumset pedagogy. The book is oriented toward the rock style and begins at an elementary level with quarter-note grooves. Soon eighth notes are introduced and are used to create grooves and fills. Exercises in 3/4 are also included. The book progresses in a fairly typical way, adding sixteenth-note grooves and fills. Included with the book is a smaller booklet devoted to fills. These exercises augment the concepts covered in the main text.

Also included are accompaniment parts written for piano, marimba, and timpani. These could be played by a teacher or by other students to create a percussion ensemble with which the drumset student would perform. While there is nothing particularly new about this material, it is well presented and progresses logically. The accompaniments add an extra dimension that will make the material useful to teachers.

—Tom Morgan

Metallica Death Magnetic **III**
Transcribed by Scott Schroedl
$19.99
Cherry Lane
Fans of Metallica will be interested in this book of drumset transcriptions from the band. The songs include "That Was Just Your Life," "The End of the Line," "Broken, Beat & Scarred," "The Day that Never Comes," "All Nightmare Long," "Cyanide," "The Unforgiven III," "The Judas Kiss," "Suicide & Redemption," and "My Apocalypse." Each transcription includes the complete drum part and the song lyrics.

—Tom Morgan

Turn It Up & Lay It Down, Vol. 7 (Playin' the Odds) **III–IV**
$12.95
Hal Leonard
Turn It Up & Lay It Down (Volume 7) is a play-along CD that focuses on playing in a hard rock style in odd meters (3, 5, 7, 9, 13). The 13 tracks (without drums) contain heavy bass lines and distorted guitar melodies in tempos ranging from 120–196 bpm. An occasional vocal overdub provides counting cues to assist users who may have lost their place. No suggested patterns or grooves are provided, so drummers are free to create their own drum part to each track.

—Terry O'Mahoney

Delong Way to Polyrhythmic Creativity on the Drumset **IV–V**
Paul DeLong
$24.95
Hudson
Drummer Paul DeLong shares his ideas and concepts of using polyrhythms and their applications in this 100-page instructional text. The book and CD focus on three common polyrhythms (six-against-four, three-against-four, and four-against-three) and the application of eighth, triplet, and sixteenth-note subdivisions to each one to create interesting grooves and fills.

Beginning with snare drum exercises and quickly moving to transcribed examples from recordings, DeLong shows how each polyrhythm is used in advanced jazz and fusion settings by him and other great drummers (e.g., Tony Williams, Billy Cobham, Bill Stewart, Virgil Donati, Antonio Sanchez, and Vinnie Colaiuta). Some drum books merely present the concept of polyrhythms without any context or examples of how they should be used in musical settings. DeLong has avoided this pitfall by providing concrete examples for readers to enjoy, admire, and emulate.

—Terry O'Mahoney

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Pathetique from Piano Sonata No. 8 **V**
Ludwig von Beethoven
arr. Alan Miller
$35.00
Tapspace
This arrangement of Beethoven's piano sonata no. 8, the "Pathetique," is very successful because the scoring captures the style and harmonic structure of the original very well. The arrangement is written for a large ensemble of eight players. The instrumentation includes glockenspiel, three vibraphones, xylophone, three marimbas, and four to five timpani. The keyboard parts include three suspended cymbals to enhance crescendo passages. Other instruments include gong or tam-tam, snare drum, and a concert bass drum with attached cymbal. The publication opens with performance notes that clearly describe how to best perform the work. The marimba 1 part is written for a 4.3-octave marimba, and the two other marimbas need to be low-F instruments.

The parts are equal in difficulty, with each of the keyboard instruments, including the glockenspiel part, requiring four mallets. Each player is challenged

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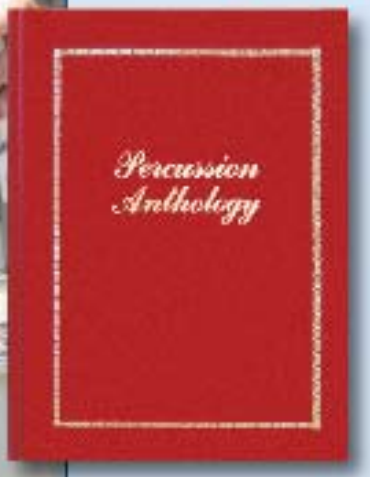

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with four-voice chords and scale passages that are tossed from one performer to another.

Mallet choices are suggested, but the players have the liberty to try others, if desired. The publication comes with a CD, which is a good source to emulate in preparation for performance. The CD also offers the option of downloading your own parts. This is an excellent tool for teaching both style and technique, and should be received well by audiences.

—George Frock

MIXED INSTRUMENTATION

Desert Clouds **IV**
Josh Gottry
$18.00
Gottry Percussion
According to the program notes, this eight-minute trio for flute, violin, and marimba was inspired by the Arizona summer monsoon storms. Using an arch-form, the piece opens with the "dry, scorching summer afternoon" depicted by short, melodic fragments. The "rolling clouds of early evening" follows, with the marimba playing a sixteenth ostinato below a simple melody played by the flute. The "beginning drops of rain" are represented by repeated staccato notes in all three voices. More motion, syncopation, and forward motion lead the piece into the actual "storms," written in 12/8. The marimba has a driving ostinato while the flute plays rapid sixteenth notes and the violin alternates between sixteenths and a dotted-quarter-note accompaniment. Coming down from the climax of the piece, the staccato notes return and lead back into the simple melody and marimba ostinato. The piece ends softly with a short restatement of the opening melodic fragments depicting the last "few raindrops falling off the trees and houses."

—Brian Zator

Marcello **IV**
Eric Sammut
$22.00
Keyboard Percussion Publications
"Marcello" is a five-minute duo for marimba and cello and is included on Jasmin Kolberg's album of Eric Sammut works, *Mosaique*. (The CD states this piece was self-published by Sammut, but "Marcello" is now available through Keyboard Percussion Publications.) Sammut's work is in a simple A-B form. After a short cello cadenza to open the piece, the marimba establishes the tempo with constant eighth notes in d minor. Although the rhythms and patterns of each measure are recurring in the marimba part, the notes change to denote the evolving chord progression while the cellist plays a legato melody line in quarter and half notes. The second part of the A section has the cellist playing steady quarter notes with the marimbist playing a steady eighth-note melody.

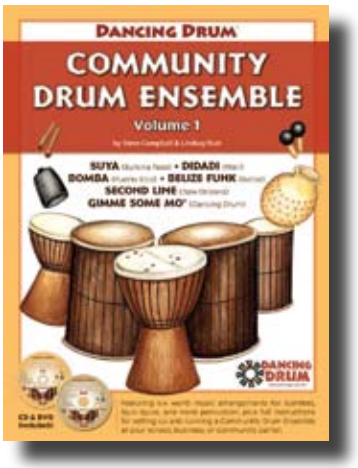
The B section opens with the cellist playing a pattern similar to Bach's "Cello Suite I: Prelude" but in 7/8. This four-bar intro is centered around G Major, and the four bars following them use the same pattern but in A minor. These two patterns are repeated throughout most of the entire B section, leaving room for the marimba to take the lead voice. Although the cello notes remain constant through the repeats, the agogic accents shift between 2-2-3 and 2-3-2 to create interest and support the melody line. A sudden ending occurs after a short 5/8 statement of block chords in the marimba and arpeggiated chords in the cello.

Due to the repetition in the cello part and steady pulse in the marimba, the parts should come together fairly quickly. Although there are a few timing and tight interval demands for the marimbist, Sammut's graceful and lyrical lines make "Marcello" very accessible to performers and listeners.

—Brian Zator

WORLD PERCUSSION

Community Drum Ensemble, Vol. 1
Steve Campbell and Lindsay Rust
$34.97
Dancing Drum
The authors of this excellent book/CD/DVD package take the widest possible interpretation of "community," including material that can serve educators from middle-school level on up to people working with community groups, the elderly, corporations, church groups, or any situation in which people want to drum together. For trained musicians the patterns are written in traditional notation, but there is also graphic notation and "rhythm phonics" that allow people to learn the rhythms in whatever way they are comfortable with and that give instructors different options.



The six pieces are strong on groove and cover a range of styles and geography: "Suya" (from Burkina Faso), "Didadi" (Mali), "Bomba" (Puerto Rico), "Belize Funk" (Belize), "Second Line" (New Orleans) and "Gimme Some Mo'" (original). In addition to the basic grooves, the pieces include calls and breaks.

The rhythms are scored for djembes, djun-djuns, and hand percussion (mostly bells and shakers), but could be easily adapted to other percussion instruments. Djun-djun parts are written in "ballet style"—one player on three drums. For groups who don't have djun-djuns, that part can easily be converted to another djembe part using bass, open, and slap tones, or one could use three tom-toms or RotoToms.

The book includes info on how to start a community drum ensemble, instrumentation, drumming techniques, teaching tools, soloing and improvisation, and directing performances. There are also educational resources such as maps, illustrations, and text providing background info on each rhythm. The CD and DVD provide excellent instruction on individual parts and ensemble performance, and also work well as play-alongs if you don't have a drum circle handy.

—Rick Mattingly

The Spirit of World Drumming **I–III**
Jeff Stewart
$29.99
Mel Bay
This 62-page drum circle facilitator's manual addresses everything from how to start a drum circle to a written exam and certificates of participation. In his proposed year-long curriculum, drummer/author Jeff Stewart also provides examples of easy pieces (written in score form) based on drumming styles from Cuba, Japan, Brazil, the Middle East, Ghana, and Native American cultures. Other relevant topics are provided as well: warm-up exercises that readers can create themselves; eighth, triplet and sixteenth-note rhythmic exercises with syllabic notation; advice on cueing; use of auxiliary percussion; evaluation charts; ideas on how to create and integrate an original rap/percussion tune into a drum circle; instrumental techniques (e.g., riqq and tar); and an evaluation rubric. The accompanying DVD contains footage of warm-ups, techniques, hand positions, and drum circle performances with young school children and other groups.

—Terry O'Mahoney

INSTRUCTIONAL DVD

Drum Setup **I**
Bart Robley
$10.99
Centerstream
If you want complete, step-by-step instructions on setting up a drumset, then this DVD is for you. Bart Robley takes the viewer from opening the boxes to a completely assembled drumset. He covers such topics as assembling the drumset (including putting on the heads and mounts), tuning, hardware, the rug, the bass drum, and muffling and muting. Robley does a great job of going through each step. His teaching style is clear and relaxed, and he communicates a sincere love for the drums. He also covers the importance of ear protection and gives advice regarding choosing a good drum teacher.

Beginning students would benefit greatly from watching this DVD before setting up a drumset. Many common problems could be avoided, and students would have a good understanding of what goes into finding the best setup for them. Even seasoned players will likely learn a few new tricks from Robley's presentation.

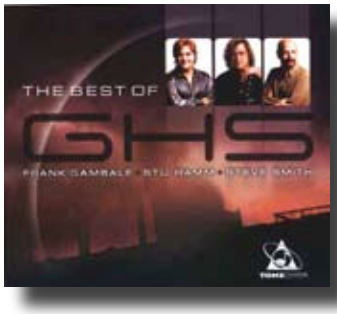
—Tom Morgan

Marimba: Technique Through Music
Mark Ford
Innovative Percussion
Released shortly after the accompanying book was published in 2009, this instructional DVD includes Mark Ford's demonstration of all of the music in the collection. Highlighted among this DVD's contents are Ford's tips on practicing and such topics as "Single Independent Strokes," "Single Alternating Strokes," "Double Lateral Strokes," "Double Vertical Strokes," "Chorales," and "Combined Strokes." Currently, this DVD is part of the published marimba collection. Ford's performance is top quality and quite illustrative of each topic covered in the book version of *Marimba: Technique Through Music*.

—Jim Lambert

PERCUSSION RECORDINGS

The Best of GHS
F. Gambale/S. Hamm/S. Smith
Tone Center Records
This "best of" collection showcases the hard-driving, aggressive retro '70s jazz fusion of GHS (Frank Gambale, Stu Hamm, and Steve Smith). Culled from their CDs dating from 1998 to 2002, the 12 tracks contain the intricate unison rhythmic passages, distorted guitar, high-register bass guitar playing, odd-meter compositions, and heavy backbeat



that are the hallmarks of the jazz fusion style. Recorded "live" in the studio, the recording features a healthy dose of funk and plenty of room for solos by each member of the band. Smith's interaction with the other players permeates each track, but he also has opportunities to grab the spotlight, particularly in the African-inspired drum solo "Spirit of Dun Dun." In addition to the requisite funk shuffles and other interesting grooves, the tune "Sink" sticks out as an excellent example of a funk groove in 5/4.

—Terry O'Mahoney

Compositions for Percussions
Maya Badian
Lucian Badian Editions
Although this CD was released in 2009, all of the pieces were composed before 1990. It is unclear as to when these pieces were recorded, but the sound quality is lackluster on the first two.

The four works on this CD have accompaniment, with two of them being concertos with orchestra. The first work is "Concerto Grosso" for percussion (four timpani), obligato trumpet, and string orchestra. The timpani part is not difficult and does not seem like a true solo part, and the solo trumpet only plays in the third movement.

The second piece is a four-movement work entitled "Suite on Romanian Themes" for marimba, vibraphone, and piano. The folk-like melodies are catchy, but the interplay between the two players is somewhat predictable, with a great deal of simple call-and-response passages.

The three-movement "Chamber Concerto" for horn and percussion is more of a horn solo with a sparse percussion accompaniment. The final work, "Double Concerto for Marimba, Vibraphone, and Orchestra," has three movements in a fast-slow-fast format and is subtitled "Mircea's Song Will Live in Yours," named after Maya's son who suddenly passed away in 1989, the year the piece was composed. This work is the highlight of the album with interesting orchestrations between the soloist and orchestra, and a solo part that challenges and highlights the soloist throughout the work.

—Brian Zator

Eight Two-Part Inventions
Trey Files
Mostly Marimba
These eight duets for a battery of non-pitched percussion instruments were all performed by Trey Files. Liner notes describe Files as an "over-educated rock drummer," but also indicate his being an active New York classical and Broadway percussionist. When listening to the recording and, in particular, when looking at the music samples on the composer's Website, the technical feat is very impressive. The choices of instruments, tempo and dynamics are left to the performer, but all rhythms are specifically notated and each duo involves two separate parts, each calling for four unspecified instruments. The composer specifies one instrument in each group to have a relatively long sustain and the other three to have a relative short sustain. In this recording, the selection of instruments was a collaborative effort by the composer, Daniel Levitan, and Files.

The variety of tone colors on this recording seems to run the gamut of percussion instruments, but the real musical interest is the interplay of rhythms between the two parts. The first and last inventions suggest a driving grove played on a drumkit, but the second invention really brings out the distinction of separate voice lines. The third invention is in a basic 3/4 feel. The forth invention suggests a far more gentle style with a transparent texture. The fifth invention begins with a bright opening that moves into an interesting swing feel, and the sixth invention suggests a strong dance-like groove.

The recording quality is excellent and the stereo effect is particularly effective. The recording is great fun to listen to, and an excellent way to become familiar with these new works and to gather creative ideas as to interesting performance interpretations. The printed music is available from Keyboard Percussion Publications.

—Michael Combs

En Homenaje A Astor Piazzolla
El Frente
Self-published
This CD of "tango music" was recorded by El Frente, a quartet including piano (Julio Cesar Sierra), violin (Manuel Lopez), bass (Paulo Parra), and vibes (Alejandro Ruiz). The eight tracks provide ample opportunities for each musician to showcase his individual talent. The ensemble virtuosity is also evident throughout the various styles presented on the CD. Most of the music on the CD was written by Astor Piazzolla, transcribed by Ruiz, and adapted/arranged by El Frente. Except for "Milonga del Angel," an introspective vibes solo, the works are ensemble oriented and almost frenetic in nature.

—John Baldwin

Eternal Interlude
John Hollenbeck Large Ensemble
Sunnyside Records
Drummer/composer/bandleader John Hollenbeck has an established track record as a composer of exciting contemporary music that defies categorization. Using traditional large jazz ensemble instrumentation (four trumpets, four trombones, five saxes, four rhythm section players) as the basis for his "large group," he makes effective use of woodwind doubles and extra percussion (marimba, bells, crotales) to widen the musical palette and create extended multi-sectioned works that change mood, groove, and tempo.

Rooted equally in post bop, free jazz, classical impressionism and funk music, Hollenbeck utilizes a myriad of compositional and performance techniques to keep listeners on their toes—free melodic improvisation, soloing over odd time vamps, contrapuntal horn lines, dissonant chord clusters, extreme instrumental ranges, unusual timbres (whistling, organ, keyboard percussion) and interesting instrumental voicing combinations. The ensemble frequently changes from sounding like a Stan Kenton style "wall of sound" to a Debussy tone poem—often in the course of one tune. The ensemble work and solos are all top notch and the writing is creative without being trite or contrived. Each section of music seems to logically "grow" into the next.

Through his drumming, Hollenbeck seamlessly guides the ensemble through an ever-changing musical landscape. His playing transcends "big band drumming" and defines what it is to be a "modern shaper of musical textures, colors, and events." *Eternal Interlude* must be experienced to be understood and enjoyed.

—Terry O'Mahoney

The Links Series of Vibraphone Essays
Stuart Saunders Smith
New World Records
Stuart Saunders Smith has composed a series of 11 individual vibraphone pieces, "Links," over the course of 20 years. These pieces are scored in various settings such as unaccompanied solos, duos (with flute, piano, off-stage orchestra bells and chimes), and three vibraphones. All 11 pieces are included in this two-disc CD, with the first track, "Hearing Links" narrated by Sylvia Smith, the composer's wife, who was also the source of the creation for the "Links" series. In 1974, "Links (No. 1)" was created at the invitation of Sylvia "as a commission for a published concert-quality work for vibraphone."

The tracks are: "Hearing Links" (1995), "Links" (1974), "Links No. 2" (1975), "Links No. 3" (1975), "Links No. 4 (Monk)" (1982), "Links No. 5 (sitting on the Edge of Nothing)" (1987) for vibraphone and off-stage orchestra bells and chimes, "Links No. 6 (song Interiors)" (1989) for vibraphone and piano, "Links No. 7 (New England Night Weave)" (1989), "Links No. 8 (Confessions – Witness to 48 Things)" (1990) for vibraphone and flute, "Links No. 9 (Mosque)" (1992), "Links No. 10 (Who are we? Where are we?)" (1993), and "Links No. 11 (Regions I – XXI)" (1994) for three vibraphones.

The performers are Masako Kunimoto, Steve Sehman, Bill Sallak, Steven Schick, Aiyun Huang, Fabio Oliveira, Justin DeHart, Jude Traxler, Berndt Thurner, Ayano Kataoka, Chris Leonard, Dale Speicher and Matt Apanius on vibraphone, Katalin Lukacs on piano, and Gisela Mashayekhi-Beer on flute.

According to Stuart Smith, "The title refers to the entire structure of the work, in that the end of one composition elides to the beginning of the next—a link in a delicate necklace." As such, the "Links Series" can be performed as individual pieces or played together as a concert making for a long 11-movement work (which was done for the first time in 1995).

This CD captures the great sound quality of the vibraphone and also showcases the performers' artistry on the instrument. Insights about the individual "Links" can be found in the liner notes, written by Steven Schick. This is a milestone in the classical/concert vibraphone CD collection.

—I-Jen Fang

Marimba Four Hands
Dan Levitan
Dan Levitan Music
This CD showcases a multi-movement work entitled "Marimba Four Hands" by percussionist/composer Daniel Levitan. While intended as a promotional recording, the CD can stand alone as a part of any percussionist's or marimba enthusiast's library. Scored for two players on one instrument, "Marimba Four Hands" consists of five movements: "In the Night Kitchen," "Soakin' Wet," "Snoozin' Down," "Short'nin' Bread," and "Goodnight Moon." Each title refers to aspects of early childhood, with the two outer movements taking the names of popular children's books.

Levitan has enlisted the superb talents of Nancy Zeltsman and three of her students—Fumito Nunoya, Setsuko Kutsuno, and Brian Calhoon—in the performance of this work. Each movement is performed by two of the musicians. While this CD will hopefully entice many marimbists to perform the work (available through Keyboard Percussion Publications), no information is given regarding required instrument ranges, ability level, or techniques.

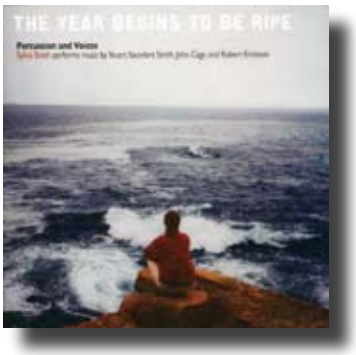
Musically, the first four movements showcase much of the energetic, syn-

copated writing that is often associated with Levitan, as characterized by such works as his popular "Marimba Quartet." The final movement is slow, contemplative, and employs roll techniques throughout.

Whether for the purposes of researching a new piece for performance or simply enjoying the music, experiencing Levitan's *Music Four Hands* (the piece and CD) would be time well spent.

—Jason Baker

The Year Begins to be Ripe
Sylvia Smith
Smith Publications



Included in the 14 tracks on this unique CD recording are seven compositions by Stuart Saunders Smith ("Poems I, II, and III," "In Hours Like These," "Family Portraits: Delbert," "Xylophone Poem No. 1: Went Forth," and "Thinking About Anne Sexton"), six by John Cage ("Forever and Sunsmell," "The Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs," "Nowth Upon Nacht," "A Flower," "The Year Begins to be Ripe," and "Mureau"), and one by Robert Erickson ("Pacific Sirens"). Some of the percussion instruments utilized include brake drums, bells, xylophone, vibraphone, and Cage's "closed piano." Several of the poets reflected include e e cummings, Henry David Thoreau, and Stuart Smith. This recording is an eclectic set of repertoire that will not appeal to some listeners; however, for those interested in the music of Cage or Smith, the recording is excellent quality and is "live and unedited."

—Jim Lambert

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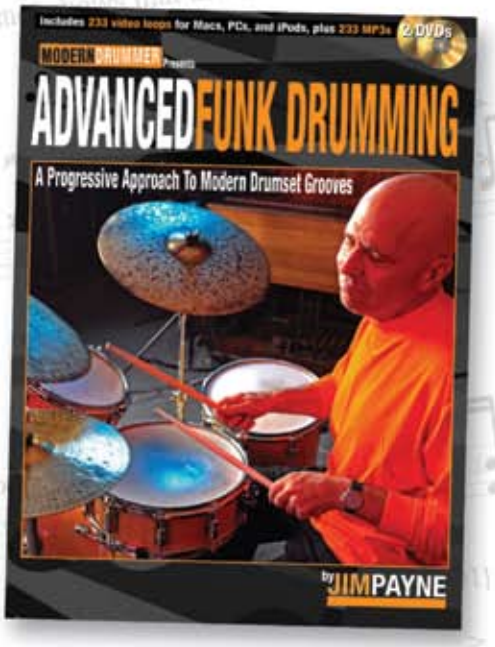

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"JOURNEY OF A RHYTHM" COSTUMES AND INSTRUMENTS

Courtesy of the Raíces Latin Music Museum (Nancy McGary, Collection and Exhibitions Manager) and the Harbor Conservatory for the Performing Arts, New York.

The new Rhythm! Discovery Center's main gallery currently features the "Journey of a Rhythm" exhibit. A portion of this exhibit ties together the evolution and migration of a rhythm—the clave—from Africa and Spain into Latin America and the United States. On loan from the Raíces Latin Music Museum collection, the costumes and instruments on this page illustrate some of the early musical traditions that are evident in the various styles of contemporary Latin American Music.

— James A. Strain, PAS Historian, and Otice C. Sircy, PAS Curator and Librarian

This 10 x 9 inch Abakuá drum, which has a wooden shell and animal-skin head, is tuned by tapping down the wooden wedges on the twisted cotton cords. It bears the inscription "Eddy Montalvo, 2 Apr, P. Afrokan, Cuba" and is traditionally played in sets of four.

Abakuá drum: Gift of Eddie Montalvo to RLMM. PAS Loan 12-2009.

For rumba, the conga (a cylindrical drum), the claves (two wooden dowels of hardwood) and the guagua (a bamboo drum), along with other percussion instruments, are essential for the traditionally improvised singing and dancing. As Cuban musical styles evolved, these instruments became the voice of the clave. This painted wooden conga, which was owned and played by Miguelito Valdes, has a tacked animal-skin head and metal reinforcement rings. It measures 32 3/4 inches in height by 42 inches in circumference around the widest part. This pair of wooden claves, also owned and played by Miguelito Valdes, each measure 9 inches long by 7/8-inch in diameter. The guagua is played with two sticks and typically mounted on a stand.

Claves and Conga: Gift of Mrs. Miguelito Valdes to RLMM. PAS Loans 9-1009 and 10-2009.

Guagua: Courtesy of Louis Balzo and The Harbor Conservatory for the Performing Arts. PAS Loan 14-2009.

Contained within the exhibit are Ochun and Ireme costumes, which illustrate the importance of mythology and the African origins of Cuban music. Ochun, a spirit goddess who reigns over love and marriage, is represented with a costume of yellow, with a detachable waistband. The Ireme costume, which features a tight-fitting garment, a hooded mask, and a broom and staff, symbolizes multiple beliefs of the Abakuá, an Afro-Cuban male religious society with origins in Nigeria and Cameroon. The dances of the Abakuá society, when combined with Bantu traditions of the Congo, provided musical foundations for the use of the clave in the Cuban rumba.

Ochun costume: Courtesy of Xiomara Rodriguez. PAS Loan 13-2009.

Ireme costume: Promised gift of Louis Bauzo to RLMM. PAS Loan 11-2009.




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Materials must be postmarked by: 04/15/2010

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Now in its 37th year, the Percussive Arts Society Percussion Composition Contest is designed to encourage and reward those who create music for percussion instruments and to increase the number of quality compositions written for percussion. Many of the contest winners are considered staples in modern percussion literature. Cash awards totaling $4,500 are distributed each year.

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International Percussion Ensemble Competition

The purpose of the Percussive Arts Society International Percussion Ensemble Competition is to encourage, promote and reward musical excellence among high school and collegiate percussion ensembles. Each year, two high school ensembles and three college ensembles are selected to perform showcase concerts at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC).

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A Message from Craigie Zildjian:

The Zildjian family is pleased to announce the fifth annual Kerope Zildjian Scholarship Competition. This scholarship recognizes an outstanding percussionist, who is currently enrolled in an undergraduate music program.

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Craigie Zildjian